

Hart to Heart Ministries

Christian Training Center

Rev. Joan Hart

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Portage, MI 49002

269-388-8075

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Hart to Heart Ministries is a training center for those who desire to be used by the Lord.

There are conferences twice a year teaching the "How To" of ministry.

There is teaching on the love walk.

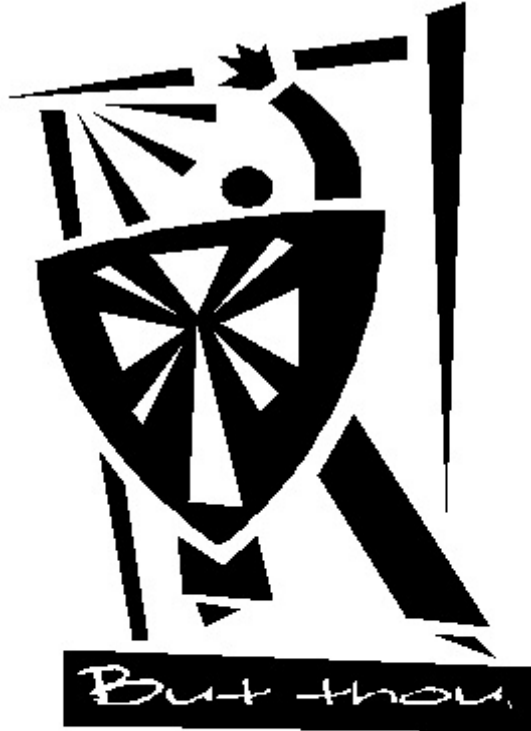
Private pastoral counseling is available, as well as deliverance for those who want to be set free from the past hurts in their lives.

Healing takes place on a regular basis. The Bible tells us by Jesus stripes we were healed. I Peter 2:24

If you need to have your faith come up to the next level, you will find how to do it.

Sunday services begin at 10:00 a.m.. There are opportunities galore for those interested in being a servant.

Bible study meets on Tuesdays at 7:00 - 8:30p.m.
Prayer is at 6:00.



But thou,

O Lord,

art a

shield

for me.

Psalm 3:3

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Challenging Faith

by Rev. Joan Hart

We all know that we have the blessings and benefits of God by faith and we understand the basic principles of faith. But what happens when you're operating in faith and all of a sudden your faith is challenged? Actually, there is no such thing as unchallenged faith!

If you are living by the God-kind of faith, your faith will be challenged. This world will challenge you! The devil will challenge you! Situations will challenge you, and people will challenge you!

Sometimes when people are challenging you, they whisper and gossip about you. Rumors and lies will come out against you and sometimes, you are simply persecuted because you are a child of God. That is a challenge to your faith!

Our faith can be challenged in so many ways. Things will come against you simply because you are a believer. There is no perfect world we get to live in just because we are believers. However, we are of the Kingdom of God and we have to begin to confess the right things, and stand firm in our faith. It's not easy, but anything that's of value is something worth fighting for.

Your relationship with the Lord is the most valuable relationship in your whole life. Without Him you have nothing. You might even blame Him for all your trouble, but He is a good God and only has good for you.

If people would stop blaming God for their trouble and realize the devil has had his hand in their lives and they needed to battle him instead of the Lord, we would be getting somewhere.

Many people do not want to acknowledge there are demons or a devil. The Bible tells us they were angels at one time in heaven. God

kicked them out due to the fact they decided to serve Lucifer and not Him. When that happened, they fell as demons. Lucifer's name changed to satan, and all of them lost their power over Christians when Jesus rose from the dead and went to Heaven.

It is now up to us to take authority over the enemy and stand firm in our faith to the end. We cannot operate in fear, that's where the enemy works. That's his territory. We have to stand in faith using the Word of God that was given to us.

That's why I wrote the book, "How to have Victory through Prayer." It is a tool for you to use in your prayer time. It gives you the right verse to pray for each situation in your life. It is all written out so you can pick this up and begin to pray according to God's will for your life.

If you want one, you can call 269-388-8075 or you can go to our web site, www.hart2heart.net to order it.

Faith is an action! It is always moving. Faith is never stagnant! It is *acting* on the Word of God. If there were no challenges, there would be no need for faith. You could just sail through life and everything would be just lovely. Very easy! Just think, you would never have any accidents, no sickness or disease could ever touch your body, and money would always be in your hands to meet all your needs. You would never have to read your Bible, pray or go to church because you are in this perfect place. That's heaven!

There would be no need of faith because you would have arrived in Heaven. But if you don't get busy in your faith down here, how will you be able to handle heaven? You won't know Jesus very well if you have not read your Bible or talked to Him every day.

So, when does a challenge occur? It happens when you are believing God for something that is rightfully yours and the enemy comes along to challenge you. He decides you can't have that and he begins to take it away from you. He is a bully! He will badger you in your mind to try to get you to give up. He will try to get you to look at all the negatives in your life until you finally agree with him instead of with the Lord. He cannot defeat you unless you let him!

The Lord Jesus Christ is greater than any old bully. He has all authority and all power over the enemy. He has defeated the enemy and He has given all believers that same authority and power over the enemy so we can live victorious lives and not defeated lives.

I John 5:4 says, "For whosoever is born of God overcomes the world and this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith!"

Challenges are supposed to increase your stability and the capabilities of your faith. Don't be afraid of a challenge. When you begin to face those challenges and do your part, then you will begin to see God's goodness in ways you have never seen it before. The grace, the mercy, the love, peace, and the joy that comes with it is worth it!

I also think when a challenge comes, the enemy wants you to think you did something wrong. Don't pay any attention to the devil. He is challenging your faith, and wants to see if you really believe what you say you believe. So in order to deal with that turkey, you just have to make sure you are really operating in faith. Stay in faith, don't let him get you down.

Your faith is a challenge to others. They want to pull you down because your faith is a threat to them. They see what they are supposed to be and they aren't living right. They become angry at those who are living the life of faith. That is what sets you apart from the world or even from Christians who don't walk or live by faith.

We aren't trying to be a threat to anyone, but we are trying to be a blessing. If people are giving you a hard time for your faith, you just keep walking in love and trusting in the Lord. People are going to reap what they have sowed.

People who lie about others better watch out. In the story of Esther, Haman and Mordecai, Esther had the king's favor and she got things turned around for her uncle Mordecai, whom Haman wanted to have killed. He built gallows hoping the king would order Mordecai's execution, but Haman ended up being hung on his own gallows.

Rev. 12:10 says, "...satan is the accuser of the brethren."

It is so easy to go with the flow of those who don't serve God because there are no challenges. It is easy going. But if you want to live the life of faith, you have to be willing to go upstream, against the current. Get out of your comfort zone and forget trying to please the crowd. Don't be distracted from your faith. God has so much good for you. Speak out those things that are in His Word that belong to you. Go after them by speaking the positive instead of the negative.

You can't entertain negative thoughts and fight with faith. Rise up above it all and say, Hey wait a minute, I'm a believer! I don't care what people say about me or think, I am walking in faith according to the Word of God. He is my heavenly Father and He is taking care of me and He is the one who meets all my needs. He is my Provider, He is my Healer, He is my Encourager, He is my best Friend. He saved my soul and He filled me with His Holy Spirit. He loves me. He has special things for you!

Rejoice today and get your faith going!



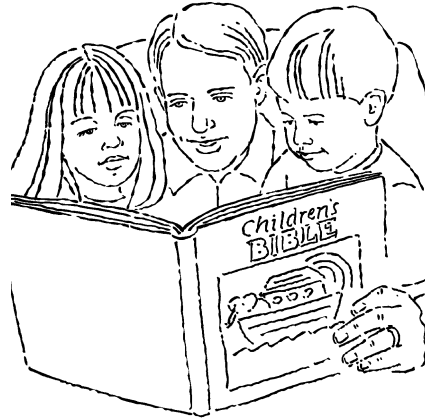
*Holy Spirit, think through me till Your ideas are my ideas.

—Amy Carmichael



* A mother is a person who, seeing there are only four pieces of pie for five people, promptly announces she never did care for pie.

—Tenneva Jordan



Put these words of mine in your heart and soul
Teach them to your children

Deuteronomy 11:18-19, NRSV

Fathers learn fast
When I was a boy of 14, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be 21, I was astonished to see how much he had learned in seven years.

—Mark Twain

Hart to Heart Ministries

This is a happening place!

Tuesday night Bible study at Hart to Heart Ministries is one exciting night. We never know what the Holy Spirit is going to do or who is going to come.

Recently there was a lady set free who had been given a terrible diagnosis. She came in for prayer and God did not disappoint her. She was set free by the anointing of the Lord and the power of Jesus Blood. Her countenance changed instantly and she felt better. Others were also delivered and set free from their infirmities. God is in the business of setting the captives free at Hart to Heart Ministries.

6:00 p.m. Tuesday Nights

2401 E. Milham - Portage, MI

What do you need healing for or to be delivered from? Come on Tuesday nights and allow the Presence of the Lord to touch you and set you free. He loves you!

Parents

Children will soon be off school for the summer and will need lots of creative and good things to do. Take the time to teach them how to read the Bible and apply it to their own life. They will always remember not only what they learned from the Bible, but that mom and dad took special time to be with them.

Get out the Plow

A wise, philosophical man was once asked how he overcame his difficulties. "How do I get through a trouble?" he replied. "Well, first I try to go around it. If I can't go around it, I try to get under it. If I can't get under it, I try to go over it. And if I can't get over it, then God and I just plow right through it."

Don't miss the Joy

Reading the second chapter of Acts recently, I noticed something I had overlooked before. You probably recall the chapter's beginning: "When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting." You will also remember how all of the friends of Jesus were filled with the Holy Spirit and they became so joyful, so filled with wonder and spiritual power that they astonished onlookers.

What had I missed when reading about Pentecost previously? I had glossed over the words "they were all together in one place." The first believers were physically together and spiritually together as well. By making sure that they were together in Jerusalem, in one place, they did not miss one of the greatest spiritual events of all time. Namely, the birth of the Church.

Imagine what they would have missed had they not been with other believers when the gift of the Holy Spirit came upon them. They would have missed the mighty outpouring of God's power. They would have missed the indescribable joy which God had for them. They would have missed the birth of the Church.

Think, too, about what we modern believers might miss if we neglect to worship with the other friends of Christ. Who would want to miss the blessings and the promises of God? Who would want to miss the joy?

—Charles Ferrell



Monkey Business

In Chicago, a pastor was driving behind an older car when both were stopped by a red light.

The pastor noticed the car had a bumper sticker which read, "Jesus Saves."

Curious, the pastor tried to see who was driving the car. He could only see that the driver was a young man probably in his early 20s. He also observed that hanging from the rear view mirror was a stuffed monkey, which bounced up and down.

"Seems about the way we humans often are," thought the pastor to himself. "We put our monkey business up front and put the Lord on the back bumper of our lives."

Why me?

When we're faced with an unexpected hardship, our first impulse is often to ask, "Why me?"

When a blessing comes our way, we happily accept it, yet seldom do we ask, "Why me? Oh, God, why me?"



THE ARMOR OF GOD

The armor of God is the equipment every believer needs to put on daily. Ephesians 6:11 says, “Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

We as believers need to learn about the armor and how to put it on.

Ephesians 6:14 says, “ Stand therefore, having your loins girded about with truth.”

The Belt

The belt was designed to keep other pieces of the soldier’s armor in place, including his sword. Just before going into combat the soldier would tuck his tunic under his belt which gave his legs maximum freedom.

This is a call to be prepared. We are to maintain a good conscience and be ready to give an answer to anyone who asks the reason for our hope.

We are to be firmly established in the truth of God’s Word. Because God’s word is truth, it is the foundation for all the other pieces of spiritual armor.

So just as the soldiers belt provided freedom of movement, you are kept free from the enemy’s lies by abiding in God’s truth.

To be girded with truth is to be truthful, genuine, and sincere before God and others. This involves not allowing deceit and unconfessed sin to separate you from fellowship with God. It also involves being a person of integrity. Doing the right thing, saying the right thing and living the right way.

Breastplate of Righteousness

This piece of armor protects a person from powerful blows. This armor protects our vital spiritual organ, our heart. Proverbs 4:23 says, “Keep your heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life”.

God wants our whole heart and nothing less, for a heart sets the course of a person’s life. Luke 6:45 says, “ Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks”. So why is your spiritual heart so

important? Because Romans 10:10 says, “with the heart man believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation”.

God offers us His righteousness on the basis of faith in His Son. The breastplate of righteousness, is a gift obtained by faith. Today we can enter into right standing before God, by faith, on the basis of Christ’s merits. Our own goodness does not protect our heart. Isaiah 64:6 says, “Our righteousness is as filthy rags.” But God does protect those who are clothed in His righteousness. Isaiah 54:17 says, “ Our righteousness is of God.

The Gospel of Peace

This describes a Christian’s spiritual shoes. He is the firm foundation beneath our feet. We have to be able to be so filled up with His peace that we cast all our cares and anxieties on Him, and yield to His perfect will. If we don’t have the peace that passes all understanding within us, we will not be able to share His peace with others.

We are also told to go and preach the Gospel of peace to the nations. We have to be prepared to go by filling ourselves up first or else we will have nothing to offer others. If people reject the gospel of peace, they are rejecting God’s salvation.

By shodding our feet with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, we proclaim that the Prince of Peace is victorious over the powers of darkness. (Romans 16:20.)

Shield of Faith

The shield is both a defensive tool and an offensive weapon. Faith is taking God at His Word without having seen the visible evidence.

When the enemy comes in to try to destroy us, we hold up our faith and fight Him with the Word of God. So the effectiveness of your shield of faith largely depends on your concept of God. Because Hebrews 11:6 says, “without faith it is impossible to please Him; for He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

If you’re not convinced that God exists or that He

rewards those who diligently seek Him, you will have difficulty putting your faith in God. If you are not convinced that God knows better than you do or that He can still work miracles, you will probably buckle under the devil's fiery darts.

We have learned Scripture so that when the enemy tries to fire a dart into our faith, we quote a verse back at him, and the dart is ineffective.

Helmet of Salvation

The helmet is to guard our mind. It provides hope, and gives us confident expectation that God will keep His promises. We are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man sees, why does he yet hope for? But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it (Romans 8:24-25).

If you are without hope, you are vulnerable to the enemy's lie that life is not worth living. The battles against us happen in our mind. The devil can flash evil and lewd thoughts in our minds, hoping that we will entertain his thoughts and commit sin (James 1:13-15).

He can bombard our thoughts with lies and doubts, and whittle away at our trust in the Lord. He gets us discouraged and down. His subtle strategy is mind manipulation through subliminal messaging. He wants to keep us focused on the things of this world (Romans 12:2). This is another reason we need to continue to read the Word so we renew our mind.

One of the enemy's common tactics in telling us lies is to put the lies in the first person. For example, the thoughts may come: "My life isn't worth living"; or, "God doesn't care about me." "I will never amount to anything". The devil knows we are more likely to believe his lies if we acknowledge the thoughts as our own and start speaking them out of our own mouths. Don't fall for it. Start speaking the promises of God's Word.

The Sword of the Spirit

The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. It takes time to learn how to use the sword of God's Word. But we can't wait until the battle is raging and then begin to use it. We have to store up

Scripture in our minds on a regular basis by reading and rereading, by thinking about it and by speaking it out loud. The more we do this the more confidence we have in speaking the Word, praying the Word and singing the Word. Any Scriptures you learn and hide in your heart and apply to your life will be with you at all times, even when your Bible isn't nearby.

Not reading or neglecting the Word is just an excuse. I don't have time! Everyone has the same amount of time every day. It is a matter of priorities and what is most important to you. Reading books about the Bible does not take the place of reading the Bible either.

Some people are searching and searching in their lives and they work harder and harder, but actually what they are searching for is that fulfillment that only the Word of God can give them. They try to please people, they try to fill a void that only God can fill. How will we understand or know what the will of God is, if we don't read the Word. We will not know how to fight the devil effectively without the Word. God hastens to perform His Word.

Jesus never tried to reason with the devil even when he badgered Him. He simply said, "It is written..." and it defeated the enemy. If it was good for Jesus, then it must be good for us.

The sword is both an offensive and a defensive weapon.

Offensively you hide God's Word in your heart, root out sin, and strengthen your inner man with God's promises before the enemy attacks.

Defensively, you deflect the devil's lies, doubts, and temptations with the truth of the Word.

Spiritual attacks or struggles of the enemy are inevitable for the Christian, but God has provided His protection (Rom 8:37). We are more than conquerors through Him who loves us.

Putting on the whole armor of God is not a one-time lesson: it is a way of life!

II Thess 3:3 says, "But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you and keep you from evil."

By learning to wear and use these powerful garments, we can resist the tactics of the devil, and when the fight is over, we will still be standing.

The Word says, we are to do all we know to do and then stand!

If you need help standing call: 269-388-8075 and ask for Pastor Joan Hart.