



“He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, lest they should see with their eyes, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them.” (John 12:40)

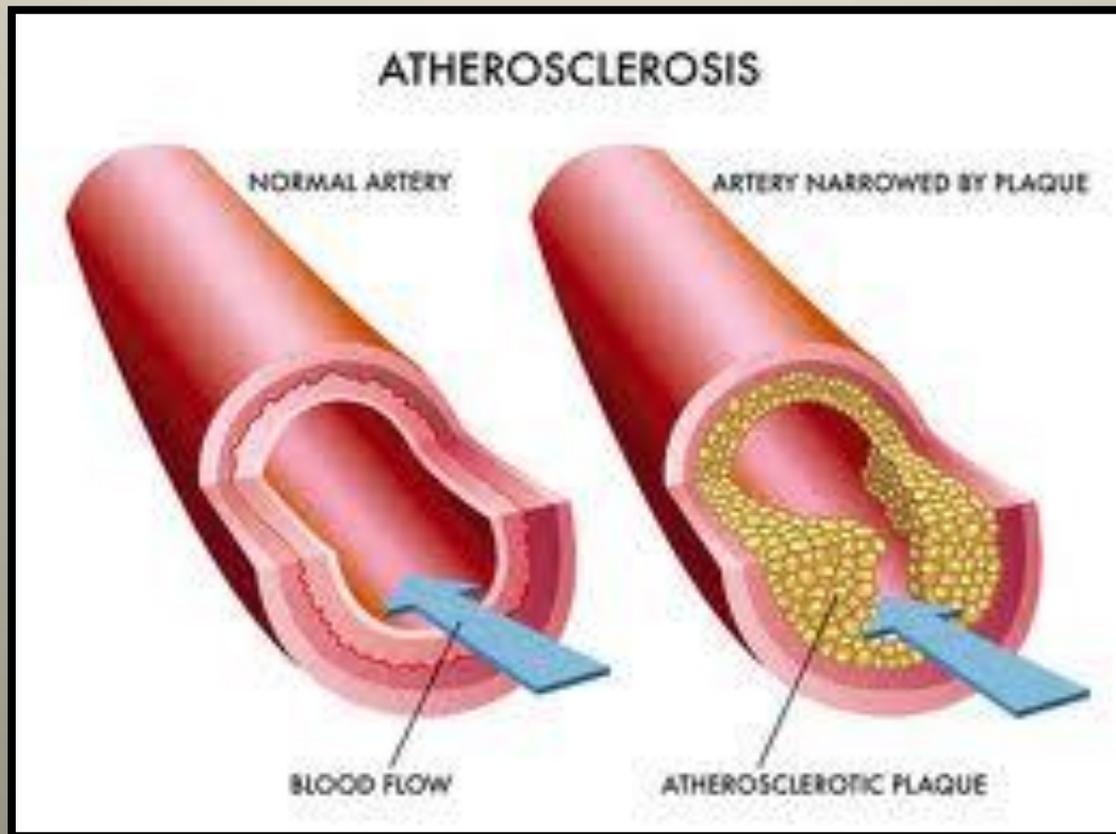
A Transplanted Heart

The Condition

- “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, lest they should see with their eyes, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them.” (John 12:40)
- Their blindness and hardness of heart hindered their healing
- “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.” (Hosea 4:6)
- “A hard heart will suffer ruin in the end.” (Sirach 3:24)

Why does it happen to us?

1. We allow sin to accumulate in our hearts



Why does it happen to us?

2. We are often inclined to do things our way

- “The pride of your heart has deceived you, You who dwell in the clefts of the rock, Whose habitation is high; **You who say in your heart, Who will bring me down to the ground?** Though you ascend as high as the eagle, And though you set your nest among the stars, From there I will bring you down, says the Lord.” (Obadiah 3-4)
- “And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.” (Matt. 23:12)
- “But when his heart was lifted up, and **his spirit was hardened in pride**, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him.” (Dan. 5:20)
- “There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.” (Prov. 14:12; 16:25)

Why does it happen to us?

3. Consumed by ordinary cares and responsibilities of life

- *“If the devil can't hinder our relationship with God by making us immoral, he'll simply make us busy.”* (Anonymous)
- “Surely every man walks about like a shadow; Surely they busy themselves in vain; He heaps up riches, And does not know who will gather them.” (Psalm 39:6)

Why does it happen to us?

4. The pleasures of life become our priority

- *“The soul is wax if it cleaves to God, but clay if it cleaves to matter. Which it does depends on its own will and purpose. Clay hardens in the sun, while wax grows soft. Similarly, every soul that, **despite God’s admonitions, deliberately cleaves to the material world, hardens like clay and drives itself to destruction, just as Pharaoh did (cf. Exod. 7: 13).** But every soul that cleaves to God is softened like wax and, receiving the impress and stamp of divine realities, it becomes ‘in spirit the dwelling-place of God’” (Eph. 2: 22) --(St. Maximus)*



Why does it happen to us?

5. Lose focus

- “And they were greatly amazed in themselves beyond measure, and marveled. For they had not understood about the loaves, because their heart was hardened.” (Mark 6:51-52)



Why does it happen to us?

6. Having a “bad” experience with God



The Transplant

- Operation
- “Then I will **sprinkle clean water on you**, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a **new heart** and put a **new spirit within you**; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and **cause you to walk in My statutes**, and you will keep My judgments and do them.” (Ezekiel 36:25-27)



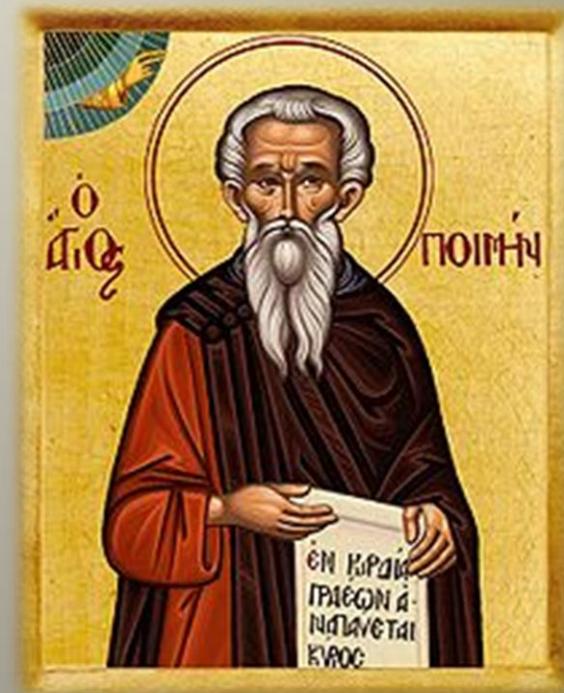
The Transplant

- Place your heart in His hands
 - “My son, give me your heart, and let your eyes observe my ways.”
(Prov. 23:26)



The Transplant

- Scripture
- Abba Poemen said: *“...the nature of water is soft and that of stone is hard. But if a bottle is hung above the stone, allowing the water to fall drop-by-drop, it wears away even the hardest stone. So it is with the word of God. It is soft, and our heart is very hard. But the man who hears the word of God often opens his heart to the fear of the Lord.”*



Summary

- Why it happens to us?
 - We allow sin to accumulate in our hearts
 - We are often inclined to do things our way
 - Consumed by ordinary cares and responsibilities of life
 - The pleasures of life become our priority
 - Lose focus
 - Having a bad experience with God
- Treatment
 - Operation – GRACE
 - Place your heart in His hands
 - Scripture