Malice is a word we may not use every day or even truly understand its meaning so let’s begin by defining it from a modern English dictionary.

**Malice** (mål′îs) n.

1. A desire to harm others or to see others suffer; extreme ill will or spite.

2. Law
   a. The intent to commit an unlawful act without justification or excuse.
   b. An improper motive for an action, such as desire to cause injury to another.

Malice is a noun, it references desire and/or intent rather than a person’s actions. **A Matter of the Heart.** Strong, Vine and Thayer define and associate malice with evil, wickedness, naughtiness, lawlessness, and bitterness. As we observe and consider the following scriptures we find other negative words and actions associated with malice and we can see warning and admonitions to avoid and put away all desires of evil toward others. Malice is like a deadly poison. **Greed, pride, hypocrisy, envy, jealousy, covetousness, despite, wrath and anger are just a few of the things that can lead to malicious thoughts and actions.**

**Acts 8:22-23**  
22 Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.  
23 For I perceive that thou art in the **gall of bitterness**, and in the **bond of iniquity**.

**Romans 1:29-32**  
29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, 30 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: 32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

**Galatians 5:19-21**  19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

**Hebrews 12:15**  Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;
1 Timothy 6:10  For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

1 Thessalonians 5:15  See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.

Titus 3:3  For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

Colossians 3:8-9  8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.  9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

1 Peter 2:1-2  Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings.  2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

James 1:21  Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

Ephesians 4:26-31  26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:  27 Neither give place to the devil.  28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.  29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.  30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.  31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

We can clearly recognize the dangers of malice, we must desire to put away and flee from its influences, overcome it and we must replace these thoughts and attitudes with things which are good. Now let’s observe and consider some scriptures encouraging us and producing desires and thoughts of good toward others. This too is A Matter of the Heart. Love, peace, virtue, self-control, submission, justice, humility, honesty, mercy and compassion are just a few of the things that are associated with and lead to desires and thoughts of goodness.

Romans 12:9  Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

Romans 12:21  Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Philippians 2:3  Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.
Let us ask for God’s help in controlling our thoughts.

**Philippians 4:6-8**  
6 **Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.** 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall **keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.** 8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are **true,** whatsoever things are **honest,** whatsoever things are **just,** whatsoever things are **pure,** whatsoever things are **lovely,** whatsoever things are of **good report;** if there be any **virtue,** and if there be any **praise,** **think on these things.**

As we lay aside malice and its associates we should desire and receive God’s Word.

**1 Peter 2:1-2**  Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, 2 As newborn babes, **desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:**

**James 1:21**  Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and **receive with meekness the engrafted word,** which is able to save your souls.

The result of living by God’s Word.

**Galatians 5:22-23** 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is **love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,** 23 **Meekness, temperance:** against such there is no law.

The characteristics of the love we should have for one another.

**1 Corinthians 13:4-7** 4 **Charity suffereth long,** and is **kind:** charity **envieth not:** charity **vaunteth not itself:** is **not puffed up.** 5 **Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own,** is **not easily provoked, thinketh no evil:** 6 **Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth:** 7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

A growing

**PRESENCE of GOODNESS**

Will result in the

**ABSENCE of MALICE**