

WHAT IS THE HEART?

Lesson 1

The Threefold Nature Of Man

And The Heart Problem

- And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. **1 Thessalonians 5:23**
- For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. **Hebrews 4:12**

Man is a **spirit**, he possesses a **soul**, and he lives in a **body**. This is called the doctrine of the tripartite nature of man. However, the Bible also speaks of man's heart and man's conscience. These lessons will seek to systematically explain the heart and conscience of man.

THE HISTORY OF THE TRIPARTITE DOCTRINE

For much of recent time, modern doctrine viewed the soul and the spirit as the same entity. The Tripartite Doctrine has only recently been rediscovered. Pentecostal pioneers such as Rev. Kenneth E. Hagin and Dr. Lester Sumrall taught it extensively and helped to spread the doctrine. Prior to them, the only two ministers I have found promoting it were the Chinese pastor and author Watchman Nee (1903-1972) and the American theologian, Dr. Clarence Larkin (1850-1924). Nee's *The Spiritual Man* (1968) expounded upon the subject. Dr. Larkin's *Dispensational Truth* (1918) did likewise but 50 years earlier.

However, the Tripartite Doctrine was thoroughly established and widely held in the early modern period of European history. Early chymist (as it was spelled then) Theophrastus von Hohenheim, also called Paracelsus (1493-1541), "taught that all substances were composed of three primary ingredients—Mercury, Sulfur, and Salt—a terrestrial trinity called the *tria prima* that mirrored the Divine Trinity and the triune nature of man—body, soul, and spirit." (From Lawrence Principe's *The Scientific Revolution: A Very Short Introduction*, 83). It would seem what's old is new again.

MAN IS A SPIRIT

You are a spirit being. (**Proverbs 20:27**) Your spirit man is the real you. God has breathed into all people the "breath of life." (**Genesis 2:7; John 1:9**) This "breath of life" is our spirit man.



We are made in God's image and after His likeness (**Genesis 1:26**). Part of God's image and likeness is *spirit*. God is a Spirit (**John 4:24**), and He has made man to be a spirit as well. The New Testament refers to our spirit man as our inner man (**Ephesians 3:16**).

The spirit of man is what will live forever. All people, whether Christian or heathen non-believers, will live forever because spirits are eternal. Born-again spirits get to go to Heaven. Dead spirits must go to Hell.

The spirit of man is the part of man that must "be born again." Being born again produces the following effect in our spirit man:

- The spirit of man becomes a new creation in Christ Jesus. (**2 Corinthians 5:17**)
- Old things passed away, and all things became new, and all things are now of God. (**2 Corinthians 5:17**)
- It is called the "new man." (**Ephesians 4:24**)
- It is created "in righteousness and true holiness." (**Ephesians 4:24**)
- It is born again of "incorruptible seed," the Word of God. (**1 Peter 1:23**)

Scriptures: **Job 32:8; Proverbs 20:27; 1 Corinthians 6:20**

MAN POSSESSES A SOUL

You have been given a soul (**James 1:21**). Your soul can be further broken down into three parts:

- Your **mind**—thoughts, intellect, understanding, comprehension, etc.
- Your **will**—volition, desires, intentions, purpose, etc.
- Your **emotions**—almost every emotion we have was first found in God. (i.e., joy, sorrow, anger, delight, jealousy, wrath, etc.) One exception is fear.

All three of these must be trained to operate according to the Bible. Your soul is your stewardship and responsibility. Just because you are a Christian doesn't mean your **mind** will think properly or godly. Just because you are saved doesn't mean your **will** is submitted to God's will. And just because you are a new creature in Christ Jesus doesn't mean you know how to properly use your **emotions**. The process of training your mind, will, and emotions to conform to God's Word is what the Bible calls "the saving of your soul" (**James 1:21**).

MAN INHABITS A BODY

Christians too often put this part first. Frequently our bodies are more real to us than our spirit man. One day we will all put off our bodies and pass into eternity. (You only get one body, so take good care of it.) Dr. Lester Sumrall once said, "Your spirit man should be king, your soul should be your servant, and your body should be your slave." We many times reverse those.

As Christians, our bodies now belong to God because they are the temple of His Holy Spirit. Therefore, it is not ours to use as we please (**1 Corinthians 3:16-17**), but should be presented to Him for His use as He sees fit (**Romans 12:1**). We must work to keep our body and its desires under (**1 Corinthians 9:27**). Our bodies contain the sin nature with all of its evil appetites. If we feed the evil appetites, we will develop a monster. If we starve the evil appetites, we will succeed in suppressing the same monster. The human body has often been called our “earth suit.”

Scriptures: **Romans 7:14-25; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4; 2 Timothy 2:19-22**

THE HEART PROBLEM

- **For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul (*psuche*) and spirit (*pneuma*), and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (*kardia*).** Hebrews 4:12

Upon closer evaluation, our theme verse points out a fourth aspect about man's makeup that cannot be overlooked. Man is not just a spirit. Man does not just possess a soul. Man does not just dwell in a body. Man also possesses a heart, and this heart contains hidden thoughts and intentions that only the Word of God can discern and know. Thoughts refer to the mind, and intentions refer to the will. This alludes to the fact that the heart acts like the mind and the will.

The problematic question then is: what exactly is the heart? It has traditionally been held and taught that, just as the spirit and soul were once viewed as the same entity, the heart and the spirit are likewise the same entity. A brief review of Scripture will reveal that this is impossible. The heart and the spirit CANNOT be the same thing.

If the heart and the born again spirit are the same thing (even though they are two different words in both Hebrew and Greek), we must consider the possible implications.

13 REASONS WHY THE SPIRIT AND THE HEART ARE DIFFERENT ENTITIES

1. **The heart is desperately wicked, incurably sick.** See **Jeremiah 17:9**. This verse is still applicable to those who have been recreated in the likeness of Christ. The treatment for a sick heart involves the Lord examining it.
2. **The Lord still searches the hearts and minds, even those in His Church.** See **Revelation 2:23**. The born-again spirit does not require examination. It is seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.
3. **Faith is of the heart, not the spirit.** Faith is a spirit, but it is not of the spirit. All men have faith, but all men have not *the* faith. Abraham was the father of faith, and he was dead spiritually. His faith to believe God rose out of his heart, not his

dead spirit man. It is the same for every believer before the Resurrection. See **Mark 16:14; Acts 8:37; Romans 10:10; and 2 Corinthians 4:13.**

4. **New Testament Christians can have an evil heart of unbelief.** Our spirit man cannot be evil. It's sealed with the Holy Spirit. But if we allow our heart to grow evil, it will cause us to depart from God. See **Hebrews 3:12.**
5. **Jesus said the heart produces all manner of evil.** See **Matthew 15:19.** Our spirit man cannot sin if it is a new creature in Christ. It has been created in righteousness and true holiness (**Ephesians 4:24**).
6. **Jesus said what comes out of a man's heart will defile him.** See **Matthew 5:18.** The new creature is born again of incorruptible seed. It is not defiled.
7. **The Word of God must be sown in the hearts of men, but the spirit of man is born again of the Word of God.** Just because you're born again of the Word of God doesn't mean you have God's Word working in your heart or life. See **Mark 4:3-20** compared to **1 Peter 1:23.**
8. **Christians must constantly purify their hearts.** See **James 4:8b.** Doublemindedness leads to the impure heart. See also **2 Timothy 2:22** and **1 Peter 3:4.**
9. **The Christian's heart must be established.** The heart cannot be the born-again spirit if it still lacks establishing. See **Hebrews 13:9** and **James 5:8.**
10. **New Testament Christians can harden their hearts through sin.** We are warned to watch out for this hardening effect. See **Romans 2:5** and **Hebrews 3:15.**
11. **We can be born-again and have a heart that is not right with God.** See **Acts 8:21-22.** This was the case with the Simon, the former sorcerer. The Apostle Peter was very rough with the new believer.
12. **Born-again believers can deceive their own heart.** See **James 1:26.** This would be impossible if the heart and spirit were the same.
13. **The heart can be exercised (*gymnazo*) with wicked practices like covetousness.** See **2 Peter 2:14.** The spirit man is baptized into the Body of Christ by the Holy Spirit (**1 Corinthians 12:13**). How can it be exercised with anything less than holiness?

Bonus:

14. **The believer's heart is often a source of condemnation.** See **1 John 3:20.** Condemnation is not of God; therefore, it cannot emanate from our recreated spirit man.

Born-Again Spirit	Heart
New Creation	Trained by the Old Man
Created in Righteousness	Condemns Us Regardless
Created in True Holiness	Desperately Wicked
Incarnate	Incurably Sick
Alive unto God	Can be Filled by Satan
Born-again of God's Word	Source of Evil Thoughts, Adultery

As End Time Christians, we must understand the nature and mechanics of our heart. Gaining a comprehension of these will help us to harness the power of discipleship, avoid the corruption of propaganda, rapidly adjust our attitudes, and build a faith that pleases God.

An accurate definition must account for both lost and saved people having a heart, while distinguishing between dead spirits and born-again spirits. It must also account for how a born-again believer can still have an evil heart from which they can produce evil treasures, yet still be capable of producing faith. The rest of these lessons will seek to prove that ***the heart is the manifestation of the operation of the soul.***

****OUR DEFINITION OF THE HEART****

The Heart: *the manifestation of the operation of the soul of man, that is, the manifestation of the operation of the mind, the will, and the emotions of man, whether born again or lost. The heart is whatever a man thinks and keeps on thinking; wants and keeps on wanting; and emotes and keeps on emoting.*

WHAT IS THE HEART?

Lesson 2

The Stewardship Of The Heart

To fully understand the Bible's doctrine on the heart, we must use a theological hermeneutic. This means we must look at as many heart scriptures as possible. The word "heart" is used over 750 times in the Bible. The Hebrew word is **leb** (593x); the Greek is **kardia** (160x). These references will more than help us build a working understanding of our heart. One of the outstanding characteristics of our heart is its ability to be controlled. This means our heart is our stewardship, and we are therefore responsible for both its content and output.

- And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart . . .
Deuteronomy 6:5a
- And he said unto them, Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law.
Deuteronomy 32:46
- Now therefore put away, said he, the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD God of Israel.
Joshua 24:23
- And after them out of all the tribes of Israel such as set their hearts to seek the LORD God of Israel came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice unto the LORD God of their fathers.
2 Chronicles 11:16
- For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.
Ezra 7:10
- Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.
Psalm 86:11
- So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.
Psalm 90:12
- Keep (guard) thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.
Proverbs 4:23
- Hear thou, my son, and be wise, and guide thine heart in the way.
Proverbs 23:19
- And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven . . .
Ecclesiastes 1:13a

- **I applied my heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness.** Ecclesiastes 7:25
- **And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.** Jeremiah 29:13
- **Then the king [Darius], when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him.** Daniel 6:14
- **They eat up the sin of my people, and they set their heart on their iniquity.** Hosea 4:8
- **But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.** Romans 6:17
- **Now for a recompence in the same, (I speak as unto my children,) be ye also enlarged.** 2 Corinthians 6:13
- **Open your hearts to us!** 2 Cor. 6:13b NLT
- **Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness.** Hebrews 3:8
- **Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.** James 4:8
- **Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children.** 2 Peter 2:14

As is clear, the heart is dynamic and under our control. That means our hearts are our stewardship. It is in our power to make sure our heart is:

- Fully loving God (**Deuteronomy 4:29; 10:12; 11:15; 13:3; Joshua 22:5; 1 Samuel 12:20, 24; Joel 2:12; Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:30, 33; Luke 10:27**)
- Set on God's word (**Exodus 7:23; 1 Chronicles 22:19; Job 7:17; 34:14; Psalms 62:10; 78:8; Ecclesiastes 8:11; Song of Solomon 8:6; Jeremiah 31:21; Ezekiel 14:3; 28:2, 6; 40:4; Daniel 6:14; 10:12; Hosea 4:8**)
- Inclined toward God (**Judges 9:3; 1 Kings 8:58; Psalm 119:112**)

- Prepared to seek God (**1 Samuel 7:3; 2 Chronicles 12:14; 19:3; 20:33**)
- United in reverence
- Applied to wisdom (**Proverbs 2:2; 22:17; 23:12; Ecclesiastes 7:25; 8:9, 16**)
- Kept and guarded
- Guided in the way
- Applied to seek, search, and know God (**Proverbs 2:2; 22:17; 23:12**)
- Fully committed in that search
- Set on the proper thing
- Filled with obedience to God's doctrine
- Opened to the right thing
- Kept soft (**1 Samuel 6:6; Hebrews 3:15; 4:7**)
- Purified (**Psalms 73:13**)
- Properly exercised in righteousness

If we do not obey the preceding list, God will not do it for us. He will search our hearts and judge us based on its content and either rebuke or reward us accordingly.

JESUS THE HEART SEARCHER

If our heart is just one of our many stewardships, we can expect God to judge our superintendence from time to time. As it turns out, one of the ministries of the Lord Jesus Christ is that of heart searcher. Of the Trinity, it is the Son that searches our hearts.

- **And I [Jesus] gave her [Jezebel, the pastor's wife] space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. ²²Behold, I will cast her into a bed [of sickness], and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. ²³And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he [Jesus Christ] which searcheth the reins (emotions) and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.**
Revelation 2:21-23

Jesus Christ directly revealed that it was He that is the heart searcher. This is not always a good thing. For the Jezebel of Thyatira, it meant horrific judgment for her and her disciples. (Be careful who you follow, even in the church.) This verse quotes **Jeremiah**:

- **The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? ¹⁰I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.**
Jeremiah 17:9-10

This is also one of the first characteristics ascribed to God in the entire Bible. Even in Genesis, God searched the hearts of mankind and gave unto them according to the fruit of their doings. God revealed the following characteristics about Himself throughout the book of Genesis:

1. Creator (**Genesis 1:1-2:3**)
2. Gardener (**Genesis 2:8-9**)
3. Employer (**Genesis 2:15**)
4. Lawgiver (**Genesis 2:16-17**)
5. Co-laborer (**Genesis 2:19**)
6. Spouse-provider (**Genesis 2:18**)
7. Judge (Man's Fall—**Genesis 3:14-19**; Cain's offering—**Genesis 4:10-12**)
8. Heart-searcher (**Genesis 4:6-7**)

God continued to judge the hearts of mankind in the days of Noah.

- **And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.**
Genesis 6:5

The resultant judgment was the Great Flood. Obviously, the Lord still searches and tries the hearts; the result is either rewards or judgment. Thankfully, He has promised to never flood the world again. Part of stewarding the heart involves us asking for God's help in judging our heart. The psalmist did so regularly.

- **Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try (smelt, refine) my reins and my heart.**
Psalm 26:2
- **Put me on trial, LORD, and cross-examine me. Test my motives and my heart.**
Psalm 26:2 NLT
- **Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: ²⁴And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.**
Psalm 139:23-24

David even taught these principles to his son Solomon.

- **And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.**
1 Chronicles 28:9

Paul taught that the Lord's act of searching the believer's heart is critical in assisting the Holy Spirit to intercede for us.

- **Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities (*weaknesses*): for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh**

intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. ²⁷And he [Jesus] that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind [intention] of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.
Romans 8:26-27

These two verses reveal the work of the Trinity in the act of intercession on behalf of the believer:

1. Jesus searches the hearts. He knows the Holy Spirit's intention when He makes groanings that cannot be uttered.
2. The Spirit makes intercessions for us through "inarticulate speech" (Amplified).
3. All intercession is according to the will of God (the Father).

The Lord Jesus searches our hearts and examines whether its motives and intentions are in line with the will of the Father. He then reveals the proper prayer to the Holy Spirit, who receives of Jesus (**John 16:14**) and then prays for the necessary changes. This further confirms that even after the new birth, the Christian's heart continues to be "**desperately wicked and incurably sick.**" So sick in fact, the entire Trinity works through self-intercession to heal it and make adjustments. This further proves that our heart can be changed, meaning that it is dynamic in its condition. This is further confirmed by Isaiah's prophecy concerning the Lord and His Gospel.

- **The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted (*shivered heart*), to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;** **Isaiah 61:1**

This mandate and assignment are unchanging. The Lord still binds up the brokenhearted. (See also **Luke 4:18**.) Remember our definition:

****OUR DEFINITION OF THE HEART****

The Heart: *the manifestation of the operation of the soul of man, that is, the manifestation of the operation of the mind, the will, and the emotions of man, whether born again or lost. The heart is whatever a man thinks and keeps on thinking; wants and keeps on wanting; and emotes and keeps on emoting.*

We will spend the next three lessons proving this definition and explaining how we are able to steward our heart.

WHAT IS THE HEART?

Lesson 3

The Heart Acting Like The Mind

We have given the definition of the heart as: *the manifestation of the operation of the soul of man, that is, the manifestation of the operation of the mind, the will, and the emotions of man, whether born again or lost. The heart is whatever a man thinks and keeps on thinking; wants and keeps on wanting; and emotes and keeps on emoting.*

This lesson will begin to prove the validity of this definition by demonstrating how often the Bible records the heart acting and behaving like the mind. This is important because if the heart is the manifestation of what we think and keep thinking, then changing our heart will be greatly aided by simply changing what we think. Conversely, if we allow our mind to wander off of God's Word and dwell on evil things, we will in effect darken our hearts.

THE HEART ACTING LIKE THE MIND

- **And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.**
Genesis 6:5
- **Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the LORD he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else.**
Deuteronomy 4:39
- **... For the divisions of Reuben there were great thoughts of heart.**
Judges 5:15b
- **Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?**
1 Kings 3:9
 - **But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both and good and evil.**
Hebrews 5:14
- **O LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee:**
1 Chronicles 29:18
- **... Now Haman thought in his heart, To whom would the king delight to do honour more than to myself?**
Esther 6:6b

- Then the king Ahasuerus answered and said unto Esther the queen, Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so?
Esther 7:5
- For thou hast hid their heart from understanding: therefore shalt thou not exalt them.
Job 17:4
- My days are past, my purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart.
Job 17:11
- Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.
Psalm 19:14
- The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.
Psalm 33:11
- My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding.
Psalm 49:3
- They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search: both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart, is deep.
Psalm 64:6
- If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:
Psalm 66:18
- . . . Preserve me from the violent man; ²Which imagine mischiefs in their heart; continually are they gathered together for war.
Psalm 140:1b-2

Proverbs speaks of the heart over 75 times. The Book of Wisdom also demonstrates that the heart acts like the mind.

- So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding;
Proverbs 2:2
- When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul;
Proverbs 2:10
- An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,
Proverbs 6:18

- **Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil:** but to the counsellors of peace is joy. Proverbs 12:20
- **Wisdom resteth in the heart of him that hath understanding:** but that which is in the midst of fools is made known. Proverbs 14:33
- **The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge:** but the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness. Proverbs 15:14
- **A man's heart deviseth his way:** but the LORD directeth his steps. Proverbs 16:9
- For **as he thinketh in his heart, so is he:** Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee. Proverbs 23:7
- Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing; and **a wise man's heart discerneth** both time and judgment. Ecclesiastes 8:5
- For all this **I considered in my heart** even to declare all this . . . Ecclesiastes 9:1a
- But have walked after **the imagination of their own heart**, and after Baalim, which their fathers taught them: Jeremiah 9:14
- This evil people, which refuse to hear my words, **which walk in the imagination of their heart**, and walk after other gods, to serve them, and to worship them, shall even be as this girdle, which is good for nothing. Jeremiah 13:10
- And ye have done worse than your fathers; for, behold, **ye walk every one after the imagination of his evil heart**, that they may not hearken unto me: Jeremiah 16:12
- And they said, There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one **do the imagination of his evil heart**. Jeremiah 18:12
- They say still unto them that despise me, The LORD hath said, Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that **walketh after the imagination of his own heart**, No evil shall come upon you. Jeremiah 23:17

- The anger of the LORD shall not return, until he have executed, and till he have performed the thoughts of his heart: in the latter days ye shall consider it perfectly. Jeremiah 23:20
- But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation of the king, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart. Daniel 2:30
- For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts . . . Matthew 15:19a
- But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts . . . ⁸Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Mark 2:6, 8b
- For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts . . . Mark 7:21a
- He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. Luke 1:51
- But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. Luke 2:19
- (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. Luke 2:35
- And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not; Luke 3:15
- And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him, Luke 9:47
- And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? And why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Luke 24:38
- . . . why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. Acts 5:4b
- Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. Acts 8:22

- **For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.**
Hebrews 4:12

These verses are critical to demonstrating that the heart operates like the mind, that is, the heart:

- | | | |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| • Thinks | • Considers | • Devises |
| • Reasons | • Discerns | • Perceives |
| • Understands | • Meditates | • Conceives |
| • Imagines | • Regards | |

Remember, part of our definition reveals that the heart is whatever we think and keep on thinking. This is important because it means that by changing the mind, we can change the heart. Therefore, the Bible is very strict on mental discipline.

- **And be not conformed to the world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.**
Romans 12:2
- **Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ:**
2 Corinthians 10:5
- **And be renewed in the spirit of your mind:**
Ephesians 4:23
- **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.**
Philippians 4:8

Philippians 4:8 builds a filter of holiness by which we can judge and purge our thought life and maintain a pure heart. It has been said that “we each have 10,000 thoughts a day, and some of them are ours.”

- **Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.**
Ephesians 6:16

Our mind is attacked every day by the enemy. We use the shield of faith to quench those mental assaults so that we don't soil our heart.



MIND CONTROL

The greater implication to our heart definition is that whoever controls our mind can/will steer or even steal our heart. It only took Absalom four years to steal Israel's heart away from King David. Whoever has our eyes and ears has access to our thought life and thereby access to our heart. This is how advertisements, propaganda, indoctrination, and even discipleship work to change who we are. Whatever we think, dwell, and meditate upon will eventually marinate our heart and change its flavor. Once the heart's flavor has been changed, it will produce those thoughts on its own. Now, **"out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh" (Matthew 12:34)** and **"a good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things" (Matthew 12:35).**

May we be ever mindful of the thoughts we think and bring into captive every imagination to the obedience of Christ. Amen!

Other Scriptures: **Isaiah 32:4; 33:18; 44:19; 59:13; Jeremiah 3:17; 7:24; 11:8; John 12:40**

WHAT IS THE HEART?

Lesson 4

The Heart Acting Like The Will

The Bible is a book containing hundreds of commandments—over 1,400 commandments. When God delivers a command, two choices are instantly created: obey or disobey. Both involve mankind's will. Even the Gospel requires obedience, as Paul observed in **Romans 6:17**: “**But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.**” Serving God requires willing hearts. Unfortunately, this is becoming harder and harder to find.

A willing heart is classified as a soft and tender heart, while a disobedient heart is commonly referred to as a stubborn heart, a hard heart, and an impenitent heart, or as being stiff-necked. **The concept we need to understand is that we can control our will.** This is never more evident than in the Lord's prayer of consecration:

- **Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.** Luke 22:42
- **... nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.** Mark 14:36b

We have given the heart's definition as: *the manifestation of the operation of the soul of man, that is, the manifestation of the operation of the mind, the will, and the emotions of man, whether born again or lost. The heart is whatever a man thinks and keeps on thinking; wants and keeps on wanting; and emotes and keeps on emoting.*

If we can control our desires, then we can align our hearts with God's desires. This lesson will evaluate the scriptures that demonstrate the heart-will connection. In the following verses, observe how the heart has purposes, desires, stubbornness, intentions, a will, and even lusts.

THE HEART ACTING LIKE THE WILL

- **And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake ...** Genesis 8:21a

God has a heart, and He purposes things in His heart, even as we do in ours.

- **And Abner said unto David, I will arise and go, and will gather all Israel unto my lord the king, that they may make a league with thee, and that thou mayest reign over all that thine heart desireth. And David sent Abner away; and he went in peace.** 2 Samuel 3:21

- **If I have strayed from his pathway, or if my heart has lusted for what my eyes have seen, of if I am guilty of any other sin, . . . Job 31:7 NLT**

We are all familiar with our heart's giving birth to lust after our eyes have seen something, be it a possession, food, a person, or an action. The Bible warns us of the "**lust of the eyes**" because it will affect our heart's desires.

- **Thou hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited me in the night; thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing; I am purposed that my mouth shalt not transgress.** Psalm 17:3

The psalmist's heart purposed to keep a holy mouth.

- **When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.** Psalm 27:8
- **Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.** Psalm 37:4

There are desires that are fleeting and then there are desires that burn within us. Our desires must also be subjected to God's Word.

- **For thou [satan] hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: ¹⁴I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.** Isaiah 14:13-14

Like God and man, satan also has a heart and a will. His heart determines his agenda. His is an irredeemable heart.

- **But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone.** Jeremiah 5:23

Israel didn't always have a revolting and rebellious heart. It had slowly grown that way.

- **The fierce anger of the LORD shall not return, until he have done it, and until he have performed the intents of his heart: in the latter days ye shall consider it.** Jeremiah 30:24

God's heart contains His intentions. At times, those intentions include wrath and fierce anger.

- But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he

requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

Daniel 1:8

Deep-rooted desires emanate from the heart. Those desires are sown by our continual wanting. Remember, the heart is whatever we want and keep on wanting. The stronger we want something, the more our life will be steered to accomplish that desire. We all know what we ought to want, but that doesn't mean we truly and genuinely want it. But with discipline we can.

- Who, when he [Barnabas] came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.

Acts 11:23

This verse demonstrates that an individual's will/purpose can be exhorted and aligned with the will of God.

- For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries [lusts], fornications [lusts], murders, ²²thefts [lusts], covetousness [lusts], wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness.

Mark 7:21-22

- Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

Romans 1:24

Like thoughts, desires can be dwelt upon until they define our heart. If the desires are wicked, they will bring judgment upon the practitioner. If they are holy desires, they will bring promotion and life.

- Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

Romans 10:1

In contrast to the deviant desires of **Romans 1**, the desire of Paul's heart was to see Israel saved. Genuine heart desires (as opposed to whimsical ones) steer our lives.

- Nevertheless he that standeth steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power (authority) over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin [to marry or not marry], doeth well.

1 Corinthians 7:37

We have authority over our will. We can control our wants, desires, and lusts. We can control ourselves. **WE CAN CONTROL WHO AND WHAT WE LOVE.**

- **Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.**
2 Corinthians 9:7

Concerning offerings, we are to determine (or purpose) in our hearts what we give. If we have made the predetermination in our hearts, we will feel good about what we are giving, and this will help make giving the gift a joyful act. If we have been compelled or shamed into the offering, our hearts will be reluctant. In essence, we will give with our hand, but withhold with our heart. This rule applies to any kind of sacrifice, e.g., time, affection, help, etc.

- **For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intentions of the heart.**
Hebrews 4:12

THE STUBBORN, HARDENED HEART

Stubbornness is an exertion of the will. A stubborn person is someone who has their heart set and refuses to be turned. Stubbornness can be either good or evil, depending on the scenario. An individual might be stubbornly obedient to God in the face of persecution, or they might be stubbornly disobedient in the pursuit of their own dreams. The Bible always refers to the stubborn heart in a negative sense. Stubbornness is synonymous with rebellion, impenitence, stiff-neckedness, and hardness.

- **For I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the LORD; and how much more after my death?**
Deuteronomy 31:27
- **And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God.**
Psalms 78:8

A right heart submits to God's will. A right heart stays right by habitually praying as Christ did, "**not my will, but your will be done.**" The end result of stubborn, self-willed hearts is judgment and wrath.

- **I was angry, so I punished these greedy people. I withdrew from them, but they kept going on their own stubborn way [in the way of his heart—KJV].**
Isaiah 57:17 NLT

- But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;
Romans 2:5
- Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: ¹⁰. . . So I was angry with them, and I said, 'Their hearts always turn away from me. They refuse to do what I tell them.'
Hebrews 3:8 KJV, 10 NLT

Stubbornness and refusal to do what God commands will provoke the anger of God. He is longsuffering, but He is not forever-suffering.

- Remember what it says: "Today when you hear his voice, don't harden your hearts as Israel did when they rebelled."
Hebrews 3:15 NLT

The problem the Church is facing today is the purposed teaching of rebellion. If our faith is built by what we hear (and it is—see **Romans 10:17**), what happens when the Church's leaders are teaching God's people rebellion? The people will align their wills contrary to God's will and consequently invoke the judgment of God upon themselves. This is nothing new.

- Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet, Hear now, Hananiah; The LORD hath not sent thee; but thou makest this people to trust [have faith] in a lie. ¹⁶Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will cast thee from off the face of the earth: this year thou shalt die, because thou hast taught rebellion against the LORD. ¹⁷So Hananiah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month.
Jeremiah 28:15-17

Only follow after those that will teach your heart to submit to the Bible and the God of the Bible. Whoever has your ears or your eyes will have access to your heart. And whoever has access to your heart has the opportunity to steer your life. And once your heart has been programmed:

- Why doth thine heart carry thee away? . . .
Job 15:12a

We must control our hearts by controlling our desires. Amen!

WHAT IS THE HEART?

Lesson 5

The Heart Acting Like The Emotions

We have given the heart's definition as: *the manifestation of the operation of the soul of man, that is, the manifestation of the operation of the mind, the will, and the emotions of man, whether born again or lost. The heart is whatever a man thinks and keeps on thinking; wants and keeps on wanting; and emotes and keeps on emoting.*

This lesson will evaluate many of the verses that indicate our heart acts like our emotions. Emotions are like fireworks; they explode upon ignition. But only those emotions tied to certain things will burst forth from our hearts when ignited. It is worth noting that many of the following verses imply our personal responsibility to either prohibit certain emotions or produce others. If God commands something, then it is possible.

In the following verses, observe how the heart is capable of hate, heaviness, brokenness, joy, awe, desolation, bitterness, sorrow, frustration, trouble, jealousy, strife, and love.

THE HEART ACTING LIKE EMOTIONS

Broken Hearts

- **Because that he remembered not to shew mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even slay the broken in heart.**
Psalm 109:16
- **For I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.**
Psalm 109:22
- **He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.**
Psalm 147:3
- **The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted . . .**
Isaiah 61:1
Luke 4:18

It is widely understood that any pain of heart is expressed in terms of emotional hurt. The fact that the heart can be broken is one of the proofs that the heart and spirit cannot be the same thing. Furthermore, a heart can be healed today only to be broken again next week. Just ask any lovestruck teenager.

Bitter, Hateful, and Strife-Filled Hearts

- He turned their heart to hate his people, to deal subtilly with his servants.
Psalm 105:25
- The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.
Proverbs 14:10
- But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.
James 3:14

Of these three verses, the third verse should concern us the most. The fact that New Testament, born-again believers must be warned against developing bitter envying and strife in their hearts further informs our doctrine that the heart and spirit are two separate entities. It is no wonder Paul had to pray, “**And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God . . .**” (2 Thessalonians 3:5).

Heavy, Burdened, Grieved, and Sorrowful Hearts

By deep, personal experience, we are all very familiar with heavy hearts, burdened hearts, and sorrowful hearts. Sorrow and grief are powerful emotions.

- And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.
Genesis 6:6

Once again, we see God has a heart and He can be grieved there.

- Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? And why eatest thou not? And why is thy heart grieved? Am not I better to thee than ten sons?
1 Samuel 1:8

Deep, emotional sorrow becomes grief of heart. Heart grief begins with what we might call emotions of sorrow, but the longer they are dwelt upon, the deeper those roots of sorrow extend.

- My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me.
Psalm 55:4
- Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins (*emotions*).
Psalm 73:21

David expresses the work of sorrow in two different places: his emotions and his heart.

- **Therefore he brought down their heart with labour; they fell down, and there was none to help.** Psalm 107:12
- **Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is desolate.** Psalm 143:4
- **Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad.** Proverbs 12:25
- **Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth is heaviness.** Proverbs 14:13
- **As he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, and as vinegar upon nitre, so is he that singeth songs to an heavy heart.** Proverbs 25:20
- **Why should ye be stricken any more? Ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.** Isaiah 1:5
- **My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at my very heart; my heart maketh a noise in me; I cannot hold my peace, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war.** Jeremiah 4:19

Jeremiah's experience was intense for several reasons: he loved Israel deeply, he had prophesied for years to prevent this moment, he knew what judgment was coming, and he knew what a war trumpet sounded like. All these variables caused the intense emotional response to the sound of the Babylonian war trumpet. The sound of the same trumpet would cause a modern believer to wonder in ignorance, asking, "What's that noise?"

- **And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged (burdened) with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.** Luke 21:34
- **Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.** John 14:27

Jesus revealed there are two kinds of peace available in the earth: the world's peace and His peace. God's peace will drive fear out of our hearts, no matter the source of fear.

- **But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.** John 16:6

The hearing of evil tidings can fill our hearts with sorrow, but only when we consider those tidings evil. What we might find evil or sorrowful (the death of a respected person, in this case Christ), others, like the Pharisees, might find praiseworthy and cause for celebration.

- **That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart [for Israel's salvation].** **Romans 9:2**

No other epistle author made this claim. It might be safe to assume that among the apostolic authors, Paul had the deepest affection and love for the Jews. The thought of them going to hell pained his heart.

- **For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you.** **2 Corinthians 2:4**

Paul loved the Corinthians. Their sinfulness and spiritual immaturity afflicted his heart. Yet, sorrow didn't define Paul's life. He was also full of joy.

Scriptures: **Deuteronomy 15:9; John 14:1**

Joy-Filled Hearts

Some people choose to live sorrowful, downcast lives, but the Bible also speaks of joy-filled hearts.

- **Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart.** **Psalms 119:111**

We must teach our hearts to rejoice in the testimonies of God.

- **A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.** **Proverbs 15:13**

This proverb contrasts the merry heart with the sorrowful heart. Both are necessary in their appropriate time. Sorrow in times of repentance and loss; joy in times of celebration and victory. Never mix those up.

- **All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast.** **Proverbs 15:15**
- **The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart: and a good report maketh the bones fat.** **Proverbs 15:30**

Just as what you hear can activate your heartfelt emotions, what you look at can activate the same emotions. This can be a useful tool for judging the contents of your heart.

- **A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit saps a person's strength.**
Proverbs 17:22 NLT
- **Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth:**
Proverbs 24:17

One critical aspect of heart stewardship is being ever mindful to use our emotions biblically and restraining them from sinful applications.

- **Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel.**
Proverbs 27:9

Our heart can rejoice over natural things like perfume and cologne, especially when we're in love.

- **My son, be wise, and make my heart glad, that I may answer him that reproacheth me.**
Proverbs 27:11
- **And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour.**
Ecclesiastes 2:10
- **For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth him in the joy of his heart.**
Ecclesiastes 5:20
 - **God keeps such people so busy enjoying life that they take no time to brood over the past.**
Ecclesiastes 5:20 NLT
- **And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,**
Acts 2:46

Scriptures: Song of Solomon 3:11; Ecclesiastes 11:9-10; John 16:22; Acts 2:26; 14:17

Peaceful, Comforted Hearts

The fact that a heart can be comforted reveals to us that the heart can be changed in very short order. An encouraging word can quickly extinguish stress, fear, sorrow, or hopelessness.

- **A peaceful heart leads to a healthy body; jealousy is like cancer in the bones.**
Proverbs 14:30 NLT



- **Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts.** Ephesians 6:22
- **That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;**
Colossians 2:2
- **And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.** Colossians 3:15
- **[Now may our Lord Jesus] Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.** 2 Thessalonians 2:17
 - **... Prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.** 3 John 2b

Scriptures: **Colossians 4:8**

OTHER EMOTIONS

- **Awe (Psalm 119:161)**
- **Heart sick (Proverbs 13:12)**
- **Fret (Proverbs 19:3)**
- **Ravishment (Song of Solomon 4:9)**
- **Vexation/restlessness (Ecclesiastes 2:22-23)**
- **Charity (love) out of a pure heart (1 Timothy 1:5; 1 Peter 1:22)**

We load our heart with emotions by emoting and continuing to emote. Only the emotions that we have loaded into our heart can burst forth and only with the right igniter. Let us always take note of which emotions we are loading and to what we are assigning them. Amen!

WHAT IS THE HEART?

Lesson 6

Controlling Your Soul

The previous three lessons served to prove part of our heart definition. We thoroughly observed the heart acting like the mind, the will, and the emotions. Our next task is to see if the Bible presents the soul as controllable. Can we control our thoughts, desires, and emotions? Because if we can, then we can control our heart. And if we can control our heart, then such popular, secular notions like “trust your heart” and “you can’t control who you fall in love with” fall apart under the burden of biblical responsibility.

Remember, the heart is whatever we think and keep on thinking, want and keep on wanting, and emote and keep on emoting. If we can control and even change what we think, want, and emote, then we can change our heart. And if we can change our heart, shouldn’t we change it to line up with God’s Word? And if we should, then what are we waiting for? These lessons will strip from us any excuse for remaining the same.

MIND CONTROL

Not every thought we have every day is our own. There are thoughts that are necessary to succeed in day-to-day life. There are thoughts that arise because of our job’s demand. There are the daydreams that arise when we want to escape. Then there are those thoughts that are random and come from out of nowhere.

- **Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.** **Isaiah 26:3**

Peace is the will of God for every believer, but it is only available to those who keep their mind stayed upon the Lord.

- **Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, . . .** **Isaiah 55:7a**

A necessary ingredient to repentance is forsaking wicked thoughts.

- **And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing (*renovation*) of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.** **Romans 12:2**

A major portion of Christian discipleship is renewing or renovating the way we think. We can accomplish this by studying the Bible, listening to sermons, fellowshiping with the saints, and prayer. One of the most important parts of any renovation is the demolition. To renovate, some things must be torn down and replaced with God’s design.

- **Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;**
2 Corinthians 10:5

Part of biblical mind control is casting down wicked and unlawful thoughts. However, we don't just cast them down; we bring our thought life into captivity. Every thought *must* be brought into obedience to God's will.

- **Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.**
Ephesians 6:16

It has often been said, "We have 10,000 thoughts a day, and some of them are actually ours." Some thoughts are actually demonic darts. We must recognize them and quench them with the shield of faith. We do not entertain them. We extinguish them on the spot. Don't play with fire.

- **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. ⁹Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.**
Philippians 4:8-9

Paul tells us specifically what to think on.

Other Scriptures: **Psalm 10:4; Jeremiah 4:14; Philippians 2:5; Colossians 3:10**

WILL CONTROL

We clearly see that we can control our thoughts. But what about our wills, desires, wants, intentions, etc.? Does the Bible teach us to control our volition? If it does, then we can and we must. If the Bible teaches us to control our will, then many aspects of Calvinism crumble. This point is the easiest to prove. We need only to look at the very biblical doctrine of submission. Submission requires a change of will.

- **And the angel of the LORD said unto her [Hagar], Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands.**
Genesis 16:9
- **Be thou not envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them.**
Proverbs 24:1
- **Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.**
Hebrews 13:17

- But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way. 1 Corinthians 12:31
- Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy. 1 Corinthians 14:1

Paul taught strictly what we are to want—the best spiritual gifts.

- As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: 1 Peter 2:2
- And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, ⁴²Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. Luke 22:41-42
Matthew 26:39
Mark 14:36

The Lord's prayer of consecration is the only proof we need that we can control our will and submit it to the plan of God Almighty. This is a prayer we would do well to pray every day.

Other Scriptures: Amos 5:18; Mark 9:35; 1 Corinthians 16:16; Ephesians 5:22; Colossians 3:18; James 4:7; 1 Peter 2:13; 5:5

EMOTE CONTROL

Emotions are the untouchable, sacred cow. We have been led to believe that we cannot control our emotions, nor should we even try. This is a lie that directly contradicts the Bible. If you can't control your emotions, it is because you are out of control. The Bible gives us direction for when and how to use every emotion. Below we will evaluate several emotions: love, hate, sorrow, anger, joy, envy, and shame. There are certainly others, but space will not permit us to examine them here.

Love

Contrary to modern humanistic heresy, we can (and must) control who and what we love. God's Word teaches us who and what we can (and must) love.

- And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart . . . Deuteronomy 6:5a
- Hate the evil, love the good, and establish judgment in the gate . . . Amos 5:15a
- Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty . . . Proverbs 20:13a

- But I say unto you, Love your enemies . . . Matthew 5:44a
- Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world . . .
1 John 2:15a
- Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it. Ephesians 5:25

Other Scriptures: Deuteronomy 11:1, 13, 22; 13:3; 19:9; 30:6, 16, 20; Joshua 22:5; 23:11; 2 Chronicles 19:2; Titus 2:4

Hate

God is a God of hate. We are to hate what He hates. We must learn to hate what He hates as He hates it.

- Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart . . . Leviticus 19:17a
- Ye that love the LORD, hate evil . . . Psalm 97:10a
- . . . I hate every false way. Psalm 119:104b
- I hate vain thoughts: but thy law do I love. Psalm 119:113
- I hate them with perfect hatred . . . Psalm 139:22a
- The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate. Proverbs 8:13

Other Scriptures: Psalm 101:3; 119:128, 163; 139:21; Proverbs 1:22; 8:36; Ecclesiastes 3:8; Isaiah 61:8; Amos 5:10, 15, 21; Micah 3:2; Zechariah 8:17

Sorrow

Sorrow can be controlled, and some things are not to be mourned.

- And there went our fire from the LORD, and devoured [Nadab and Abihu], and they died before the LORD. ³Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace ⁶. . . And Moses said unto Aaron, and . . . his sons, Uncover not your heads, neither rend your clothes [in mourning]; lest ye die, and lest wrath come upon all the people: but let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the LORD hath kindled. Leviticus 10:2-3, 6

- **And the LORD said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? 1 Samuel 16:1a**
- **... This day is holy unto the LORD your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. Nehemiah 8:9b**
- **Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him: but weep sore for him that goeth away: for he shall return no more, nor see his native country. Jeremiah 22:10**
- **And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not; ... 1 Corinthians 7:30a**
- **For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, yea, ... what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! 2 Corinthians 7:11**

Other Scriptures: Ecclesiastes 3:4; Psalm 30:5b; Micah 1:10; Luke 7:13; 8:52; 23:28

Anger

Like all emotions, anger is neutral, but how we use it determines whether or not it is sin.

- **Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. Psalm 37:8**

If God commands us to cease from anger, then anger can be turned off when necessary.

- **... Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn? 2 Corinthians 11:29b NIV**

Are we angry when Christians are led into backsliding? Paul was. We must learn to hate what God hates and to be angered by what angers God.

- **Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Ephesians 4:26**

Being sinlessly angry demonstrates a control over this passionate emotion.

- **For a bishop must be ... not soon angry ... Titus 1:7**

“Not soon angry” demonstrates the mature ability to control that emotion.

Joy

The Bible gives us instructions on how to use joy. In many places, rejoicing is a commandment.

- . . . and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the LORD thy God hath blessed thee.
Deuteronomy 12:7b
- Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright.
Psalm 33:1
- Let mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgments.
Psalm 48:11
- Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth.
Proverbs 5:18
- Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth:
Proverbs 24:17
- Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: . . .
2 Corinthians 7:9a
- [Love] rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;
1 Corinthians 13:6

Other Scriptures: Deuteronomy 12:12, 18; 14:26; 16:11, 14-15; Psalms 5:11; 35:27; 43:4; 68:3-4; 70:4; 97:1, 12; 98:4; 105:3; Proverbs 15:21, 23; 21:15; Ecclesiastes 11:9a; Isaiah 12:3; Romans 12:15; 15:10; 1 Corinthians 7:30; Galatians 4:27a; Philippians 3:1; 4:4; 1 Thessalonians 5:16; 1 Peter 4:13a

Jealousy/Envy

The Bible instructs us how to handle envy and jealousy.

- Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long.
Proverbs 23:17

Apparently, we can control envy. We do not envy sinners.

- And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.
John 2:17

We are to be zealous for God's house.



- **For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.**
2 Corinthians 11:2

Other Scriptures: **2 Kings 10:16; Psalm 69:9; Proverbs 3:31; 14:30; 2 Corinthians 7:11; Philippians 3:6a; Colossians 4:13**

Shame

Even the proper use of shame must be taught. There are things to be ashamed of and others we are never ashamed of.

- **For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: . . .** **Romans 1:16a**
- **I speak to your shame.** **1 Corinthians 6:5a**

As we can see, we can control our mind, will, and emotions. Not only can we control them, but we can also harness them for God-ordained purposes. Ultimately, when we control our soul, we steer our heart. Let us steer our hearts into the glory of God!

WHAT IS THE HEART?

Lesson 7

Your Heart Has A Voice

We have seen that the heart acts like the mind, the will, and the emotions. We have also proven that we possess the ability to control our thoughts, our wants, and our emotions. Furthermore, God's Word commands us what to think and keep thinking, want and keep wanting, and how to use our emotions biblically. These disciplines shape the nature of our heart so that when it is pressed, it thinks, wants, and emotes the right thing. This brings us to the next subject concerning the heart—its voice.

Whereas our mind can have thoughts that did not originate from within (fiery darts), our volition can have desires that did not originate from within (strange lusts), and our emotions can flare up with emotions that did not originate from within (sudden fear), the voice of the heart does come from within us. The voice of our heart reveals its content. The heart expresses with its voice thoughts, reasons, wants, and emotions. We must learn to hear the voice of our heart so we can judge it and change it when necessary. Our heart has something to say about almost anything and everything.

The following verses are examples of God, satan, believers, and unbelievers saying things in their heart. These scriptures give insight to the mechanics of this concept.

- **And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.**
Genesis 8:21

God has a heart, and He says things in His heart. His heart's voice revealed His will: **"I will not again curse the ground."**

- **Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?**
Genesis 17:17

Abraham, the Father of our Faith, had genuine questions in his heart. He resolved those doubts by bringing them to God and not hiding them.

- **Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?**
Genesis 18:12

Sarah's response to God's promise was identical to Abraham's, but she did not handle it the same way. Rather than bringing her doubt and reluctance to God as Abraham had, she denied them and outwardly acted composed (just as many Southern Christian women do).

THE HEART'S VOICE OF PRIDE

One of the easiest heart voices to detect is pride. We all battle it. It can affect everything we do.

- **He [the wicked] hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved: for I shall never be in adversity. ⁷His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity.**
Psalm 10:6-7

The wicked heart has a voice of pride. What he says in his heart emboldens what he says with his mouth. Pride is a voice of the heart.

- **For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.**
Romans 12:3

Pride begins by thinking thoughts of superiority about ourselves. These thoughts will produce a spiritual aroma called pride. If not cast down, they will begin to season our heart. When these thoughts arise from our heart, we have become prideful of heart.

- **For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: ¹⁴I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.**
Isaiah 14:13-14

Satan has a heart, and it says prideful, boastful things. Its voice demands what it wants to do. Satan's heart is void of humility and servitude. He produces the same attitudes in his children.

- **Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God:**
Ezekiel 28:2

If we continue to think prideful thoughts, saying within ourselves declarations of grandeur, God will quickly resist us.

- **. . . Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee [caused thee to turn away]; and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me.**
Isaiah 47:10b

Babylon was guilty of this classic statement of pride: I am, and there is no one like me. Her judgement was soon coming.

- **This is the rejoicing city that dwelt carelessly, that said in her heart, I am, and there is none beside me: how is she become a desolation, a place of beasts to lie down in! every one that passeth by her shall hiss, and wag his hand.**
Zephaniah 2:15

Nineveh made the same confession in her heart: I am, and there is no one like me. So have many Christians, churches, preachers, singers, athletes, academics, and entertainers. Her judgment was soon coming.

- **The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground?**
Obadiah 1:3

The people of Edom fell into the same trap of pride. They thought themselves secure. Their judgment was coming.

- **How much she [Babylon, the Whore-city] hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.**
Revelation 18:7

Here we see a whole city personified as a whore. This future city/system will have a heart of pride. The future Babylon will be just like Babylon and Nineveh of old—prideful. Her judgment will soon come.

OTHER EXAMPLES OF THE VOICE OF THE HEART

Ideally, we want to train our hearts so that they respond to God and His Word in the affirmative. This will make us a servant and keep us humble.

- **Because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest his words against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and humbledst thyself before me, and didst rend thy clothes, and weep before me; I have even heard thee also, saith the LORD.**
2 Chronicles 34:27

We control our heart's reactions to what we hear. Here the listener humbled their heart when they heard the judgment of God. The voice of their heart would have been a humbled heart.

- **When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.**
Psalms 27:8

Our heart's initial response to biblical commands will reveal a lot of what's going on within us. We must learn to hear our internal reactions to God's commandments.

- **Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me; and why was I then more wise? Then I said in my heart, that this is also vanity.**
Ecclesiastes 2:15

Any prolonged frustration will eventually begin to affect the heart. After a season of distress, Solomon's heart began to foolishly question the purpose of possessing wisdom.

- **I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work. ¹⁸I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts.**
Ecclesiastes 3:17-18

Amazingly, Solomon could recognize what he was saying in his heart. He had observed and experienced many injustices and perversions as king. His heart was growing a little cynical at life and even his own mistakes.

- **But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;**
Luke 12:45

The voice of the heart usually precedes action. The heart thinks, plots, plans, and schemes until it finally springs into action. Sow a thought; reap a deed. Sow a deed; reap a habit. Sow a habit; reap a lifestyle. Sow a lifestyle; reap a destiny. Our destinies begin with what we think in our heart.

THE HEART'S VOICE OF FAITH

This is the most important aspect of the heart's voice. The voice of our heart IS the voice of faith. Unfortunately, not everything our hearts say pleases Him. That is why we must purify our hearts.

- **The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: there is none that doeth good.**
Psalm 53:1

"There is no God!" is the atheist's faith confession, but it began in his heart. This is an example of faith being demonstrated by the heart's voice. Our heart internally declares what we truly believe. Faith is readily heard in the voice of our heart, not the knowledge of our intellect.

- **And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment: ²¹For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole.**

Matthew 9:20-21

Here we see the heart's voice is a manifestation of faith. Faith doesn't just manifest as the confession of our mouths; it begins as the confession of our heart. Her faith said within herself.

- **But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) ⁷Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)**

Romans 10:6-7

The first thing the righteousness of faith says is “**say not in your heart.**” What our heart says is just as critical as what our mouth says.

- **For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.**

Romans 10:10

Faith is the voice of the heart. Faith is of the heart and:

- Our heart is what we think and keep thinking.
- Our heart is what we want and keep wanting.
- Our heart is what we emote and keep emoting.
- Our heart has a voice, and that voice declares our thoughts, our wants, and our emotions.
- That voice is also the manifestation of our faith.
- It is the voice of faith in the spirit realm.
- All propaganda or biblical theology endeavors to convince a person's heart to agree with the doctrine in question. “**How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?**” (**Romans 10:14b**)
- The heart's voice will either agree and confess that belief or else reject it.
- The heart's voice is also called the conscience.
- Faith, and by default our conscience, is adjusted and developed and grown by hearing, and hearing, and hearing.

What does your heart say about Jesus? Forgiveness? Holiness? Healing? Tongues? The Rapture? Church attendance? Tithing? May God help us to hear and adjust the voice of our heart. Amen!

Other Scriptures: **Genesis 24:45; 27:41; 1 Samuel 27:1; 1 Kings 12:26; Psalm 10:11, 13; 14:1; Ecclesiastes 2:1, 15; 3:17-18; Ezekiel 28:5-6, 17**



WHAT IS THE HEART?

Lesson 8

The Conscience

Let us briefly review everything we have covered thus far:

- Our hearts are desperately wicked and incurably sick, always in need of maintenance and discipleship.
- We cannot trust our heart (**Proverbs 28:26**).
- Our heart is what we think and keep thinking. Therefore, we can change our hearts by changing what we think.
- Our heart is what we want and keep wanting. Therefore, we can change our hearts by changing what we want.
- Our heart is what we emote and keep emoting. Therefore, we can change our hearts by changing how we emote.
- Our heart has a voice, and that voice is the expression of our thoughts, our wants, and our emotions.
- The heart's voice has something to say about everything. "No opinion" is still an opinion. Even confusion, "What am I looking at?" or "I don't understand" reveals something about the heart's contents.
- The heart's voice is also called the conscience.
- Faith, and by default our conscience, is adjusted, developed, and grown by hearing, and hearing, and hearing.

WHAT IS THE CONSCIENCE?

We can begin to ascertain what the conscience is by discovering what it is not. It is not the voice of the born-again human spirit.

- **And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt.**
1 Samuel 24:5

David, though not born-again in his spirit, had a heart that smote him for shaming the wicked King Saul. Though he initially found the idea pleasing, some degree of time and meditation on the events caused his heart to smite him. He had dishonored his king and surrogate father. This was a work of his conscience.

- **And they [the accusers of the adulterous woman] which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.**
John 8:9

The Lord's famous quote, "**He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her,**" convicted the unregenerate scribes and Pharisees. Their own conscience

convicted them, not the Holy Spirit. Not their human spirit. This is proof that lost people have a conscience, and if the lost have a conscience, then the conscience is not the voice of the born-again human spirit.

- **And Paul, earnestly beholding the council [Sanhedrin], said, Men, and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.**
Acts 23:1

Paul's appeal to his fellow Pharisees and Jews was an invocation of his entire life, from his Bar Mitzvah to his time as a Pharisee, to his persecution of the saints. He was endeavoring to prove his pedigree to them. This included his pre-conversion life. He testified that his conscience had been clear his entire life, including before he was born-again. This adds to the evidence that the conscience is not the voice of our spirit man or the Holy Spirit.

Thankfully, the Bible provides great insight into the conscience. Paul provides the most succinct explanation of the mechanics of the conscience.

- **[The Gentiles] shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;**
Romans 2:15
- **They demonstrate that God's law is written in their hearts, for their own conscience and thoughts either accuse them or tell them they are doing right.**
Romans 2:15 NLT

There are several things revealed in this verse:

1. Something (in this case the Law) is always being written on our hearts.
2. Whatever is written on our hearts will produce a work in our life. That is why:
 - a. **Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.**
Proverbs 4:23 NLT
3. The conscience has a voice that convicts or acquits every action based on these internal writings.
4. Our conscience is based on what is written internally.
5. Because we all have different things written on our heart, we won't ever all have the same convictions. Therefore, we must "**[commend] ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.**" (2 Corinthians 4:2b)
6. Conviction and condemnation can be a work of the conscience.
 - a. Conviction can either be from our conscience or the Holy Spirit (John 16:8 NLT).
 - b. Condemnation can either be from our conscience (1 John 3:20) or the devil (1 Timothy 3:6).

7. Conversely, courage and boldness can be a work of the conscience (2 Corinthians 1:12 NASB).

STIMULI ACTIVATE THE CONSCIENCE

As the voice of the heart, the conscience doesn't speak unless it has something to answer. Even a lack of stimuli is known as boredom, and our hearts will say something about that—I'm *soooo bored!* Information or knowledge may be the greatest conscience activators, but our conscience will only respond based on how it's been programmed.

- **Wherefore ye must needs be subject [to the higher powers], not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.** Romans 13:5

We submit to parents, police, teachers, and rulers, not just to avoid getting into trouble but also because our conscience has been taught to respect them and comply. We turn on submission when we recognize the office, e.g., blue lights flashing or the professor entering the classroom.

- **And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth. ³Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law? ⁴And they that stood by said, Revilest thou God's high priest? ⁵Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.** Acts 23:2-5

Paul had no problem rebuking a mere Pharisee, Sadducee, or scribe (all were members of the Sanhedrin he was standing before), but the second he learned that it was the high priest he was rebuking, his conscience, trained by the Law, was quickly convicted and restrained him. His new knowledge activated his conscience.

- **Whatsoever is sold in the shambles [meat market], that eat, asking no question for conscience sake: ²⁶For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof. ²⁷If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake. ²⁸But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice to idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof: ²⁹Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?** 1 Corinthians 10:25-29

This passage presents the mechanics between two opposed consciences at play: the Christian's conscience and the pagan's conscience. The Christian knows the idol is nothing and the meat is nothing; therefore, he is free to eat it. But the pagan sees the meat as a pagan sacrifice and therefore sacred. For the believer to abstain from eating the meat

would be a witness to the pagan's conscience. Had the pagan never spoken up, the Christian could have eaten it.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF CONSCIENCES

The New Testament reveals several different types of consciences, or conditions our conscience can fall into. We must study them to diagnosis our own condition.

- **Good conscience** (**Acts 23:1; 1 Timothy 1:5, 19; Hebrews 13:18; 1 Peter 3:16, 21**)—This is where we should all strive to live. The good conscience is acquired and maintained by sound doctrine and practice.
- **Weak conscience** (**1 Corinthians 8:7, 10, 12**)—This is the result of a lack of training and knowledge. **Romans 14:1-2** equates the weak conscience with one who is “**weak in the faith**” and therefore only eats herbs. Paul said he knew and was persuaded by the Lord Jesus that there was nothing unclean of itself (**Romans 14:14**). The weak conscience can be remedied with sound doctrine.
- **Pure conscience** (**1 Timothy 3:9; 2 Timothy 1:3**)—Also called a clear conscience. We keep our conscience clear by listening to it and rectifying any situation wherein we violate it. The world wants us to soil our conscience. Maintaining a pure conscience will result in a confident conscience.
- **Confident conscience** (**2 Corinthians 1:12 NASB**)—Confidence is hard to come by. It is the testimony of a pure conscience, when we know that “**we have conducted ourselves in the world**” with holiness and godly sincerity—no natural confidence can compare.
- **Defiled conscience** (**Titus 1:15**)—Here defiled means “dyeed another color.” What we focus on or who we fellowship with can dye our conscience different colors. If you want to be pure, run with pure people. We must work to keep our conscience pure. A defiled conscience will eventually result in a seared conscience.
- **Seared conscience** (**1 Timothy 4:2**)—A seared conscience is nearly irredeemable. Without a miracle, the seared conscience will stay numb and without feeling.
- **Evil conscience** (**Hebrews 10:22**)—A conscience can be evil for many reasons. It can be evil because of shame and condemnation, or it can be evil because it delights in wicked things.

Paul acknowledged the dynamic nature of his own conscience.

- **And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward men.**
Acts 24:16

Even for a born-again, spirit-filled apostle, maintaining a pure conscience was an endeavor that required exercise. Peter observed the conscience can be aimed toward God.

- **For this is thankworthy [finds favor], if a man for the sake of conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. 1 Peter 2:19**

We must strive to keep our conscience pleasing to God. Amen!

Other Scriptures: **Romans 9:1; Hebrews 9:9, 14**

WHAT IS THE HEART?

Lesson 9

Faith And The Heart

This lesson will aim to prove several points about faith in relation to the heart:

- The concept and rules of faith traverse biblical dispensations.
- The heart of man and the spirit of man are two different entities.
- Faith is of the heart, not the human spirit.
- Because they have a heart, pagans can operate in faith.
- Because the heart is adjusted by what we hear and think, we can easily adjust our faith by watching what we hear and think.
- This is all summarized by **Romans 10:17**—“**So then faith comes by hearing . . .**”

The mechanics of faith have not changed since the Garden of Eden. In its exhortation to live by faith, **Hebrews 11**, the famous Hall of Faith, provides a list of 22 faith heroes (beginning with “**the elders**” and concluding with “**others**”) and what they accomplished by faith. From the elders and Abel to David, Samuel, the prophets, and many unnamed believers, they all pleased God by faith. Thirty different actions are listed in chapter 11, all done by faith, all pleasing to God, all performed by men and women who were not even born-again. These all operated in faith without being a new creature in Christ. Why is this important? Because it further reveals that faith is not of the born-again human spirit. Faith is a spirit (**2 Corinthians 4:13**) but is not of the spirit. Faith is of the heart for the Bible says, “**believe in thine heart**” and “**with the heart man believeth unto righteousness**” (**Romans 10:9-10**).

- **Believe** (Gr. *pisteuo*)—to believe, have faith in, trust, be convinced of, have confidence in; with this word is “the Jewish idea that faith is intellectual acknowledgement of the truth,” resulting in obedience to the truth. “Faith is understood to be man’s “Amen!” to the Word of God and its demands.” (*The Complete Biblical Library: The New Testament*, Vol 15, 191)

These definitions comport nicely with our established understanding of the heart, specifically that there is an intellectual component to the heart, that is, our heart is adjusted by whatever we think and keep on thinking. And if our heart is adjusted by what we think and keep thinking, then our faith will be adjusted by what we think on.

"The heart cannot rejoice in what the mind cannot accept." -Galileo Galilei

OTHER HEART-FAITH SCRIPTURES

Numerous scriptures confirm that faith is of the heart and not the human spirit. This is a good thing because it means we can build our faith by adjusting what we think, want, and emot.

- **Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.**
Proverbs 3:5

Trust (Heb. *bātah*), or full reliance, is a work of the heart (Heb. *lēb*). Here it is contrasted with a work of the mind—our understanding. This verse is a commandment, which means it is not automatic and is therefore our responsibility. It also means trusting God is not a positional truth such as being seated in heavenly places in Christ or being a child of God. This is a commandment we can achieve and maintain by praying, studying the Bible, and obeying God.

- **The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.**
Proverbs 31:11

The Proverbs 31 woman had earned her husband's trust. His heart had learned to trust her. These Hebrew words are identical to those in the previous proverb, *bātah* (trust) and *lēb* (heart). This demonstrates that faith is of the heart, not the human spirit. A spouse earns their partner's trust through communication, fellowship, and keeping their word. In time, the heart comes to safely rest in their reciprocated commitment to the union.

- **... and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe ...**
Mark 11:23b

Before the Resurrection, the Lord's foundational teaching on faith pointed to the heart as the source of faith as well as the source of doubt. If the heart and the spirit man were the same thing, and if faith was of the born-again spirit, it would be biblically impossible to doubt (the born-again spirit man being incorruptible and seated in heavenly places). We can build faith in our heart by praying, studying the Bible, and obeying God.

- **Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided [rebuked, reprimanded] them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.**
Mark 16:14

The first post-Resurrection dinner with Jesus Christ was more of a rebuke-fest than it was a festival of joy. They were rebuked for their unbelief and hardness of heart. They had rejected the testimonies of first Mary Magdalene and then Cleopas. Here, the Bible

reveals that a hardened heart fails to produce faith in God—because faith is of the heart, not the human spirit. They would overcome this by praying, studying the Law, and obeying God.

- **Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:**
Luke 24:25

The Lord rebuked Cleopas and his companion for the same reason He rebuked the 11—faith issues. These two disciples were growing in their faith, just not fast enough for Jesus. They could quote the facts about their Rabbi, the Messianic promises, and even the recent political events that led to His crucifixion, but they were slow putting the big picture together. Jesus remedied this by expounding “**unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself.**” The additional intellectual knowledge caused their eyes to be opened, that is to say, they could finally “see it” and their hearts instantly believed!

- **And the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?**
³⁷And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.
Acts 8:36b-37

The Ethiopian Eunuch’s conversion experience provides us with the greatest insight into this doctrine. The man feared God and studied the Prophets (and presumably also the Law), yet he was not born-again. He had yet to “get saved.” That means he was still dead to God spiritually, but, according to Philip’s statement, “**If thou believest with all thine heart,**” he could still have a heart of faith capable of receiving eternal salvation. This also proves the heart and the spirit are not the same and that faith is of the heart, not the human spirit. The eunuch’s faith was expanded by the expository teaching of the evangelist. It was awakened to the salvation found in Christ alone.

PATTERNS THAT ARISE

In three of the passages above (**Mark 16:14; Luke 24:25; and Acts 8:36-37**), teaching and instruction (i.e., words being spoken) adjusted the heart of the listeners. Each of the listeners had some foundation that had been built by the Word of God, but it was still incomplete. They needed the understanding that only additional teaching and instruction could bring. In this sense, faith came by hearing. Faith had an intellectual element because faith is of the heart, and our heart is adjusted by what we think. Rebukes bring intellectual and emotional adjustments.

People	Problem	Solution (Words)	Result
11 Disciples	Unbelief	Rebuke	Faith/Conversion
Cleopas & Friend	Slow to believe	Rebuke/Exposition	Faith/Conversion
Ethiopian Eunuch	Ignorance	Teaching	Faith/Conversion

The Lord rebuked both sets of gospel disciples after His resurrection for being either slow to believe or unbelieving and hard hearted. If the disciples were not able to control their “**slow**” faith or their unbelief, then Jesus would have been unjust for rebuking them. His rebuke could have been classified as being grumpy or overly demanding. However, neither was the case. Jesus was demonstrating a holy and divine frustration and anger at His disciples. This means they were capable of more than they were accomplishing. Likewise, we can control the speed at which our heart believes. We may need to ask for mercy as the father of the lunatic boy did, saying, “**Lord, I believe; help my unbelief**” (**Mark 9:24 NKJV**).

FAITH IS AN ATTITUDE

The Bible says faith is a spirit (**2 Corinthians 4:13**), but what does that mean? One of the many definitions for spirit (Gr. *pneuma*, Heb. *ruhwach*) is “mental disposition” or “constitution.” (Both words also mean wind, breath, spirit, Holy Spirit, demon spirit, and human spirit.) Today, we would call mental disposition “attitude.” Many verses refer to God stirring up the spirits of people. Faith is such an attitude. At its simplest form, faith is what our heart has to say about things. Faith can be considered man’s “AMEN!” to what God’s Word declares.

- **We having the same spirit [attitude] of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak.**
2 Corinthians 4:13

This verse reveals the nature of faith: it is a spirit or attitude (a voice of our heart), which is called “believing,” that results in speaking. This agrees with **Romans 10:9-10**:

- **That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.**
¹⁰For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.
Romans 10:9-10

The attitude of faith is how belief manifests, just as the attitude of resentment is how bitterness manifests. Faith in God manifests as confidence, boldness, joy, and confession. Bitterness manifests as grumpy, anger, and rudeness. Consider Caleb’s testimony as an example of attitude affecting confession and behavior.

- **But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit (Heb. *ruwach*—attitude) with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went: and his seed shall possess it.**
Numbers 14:24

What was this different spirit, this different attitude, that Moses spoke so highly of? That is revealed in the previous chapter.

- **And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it. Numbers 13:30**

His attitude was a “can-do” attitude, a “**Let us go up at once**” attitude. This was an attitude of faith. It manifested in how he acted and in what he said. Remember, the first thing faith says is: “**Say not in thine heart**” (Romans 10:6). If we can hear what we are saying in our hearts (I don’t want to, I hate this, I don’t believe that, I’m afraid, She embarrasses me, etc.) and adjust what we are saying in our heart to align with the Bible, then we can adjust our faith to please our God. Caleb’s faith had been built by hearing the promises of God as proclaimed by Moses. Of the 12 spies, only he and Joshua believed the report of the Lord. Their faith was built by hearing, but they weren’t born-again in their spirit.

- **And they came [to the offering], every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit [attitude] made willing, and they brought the LORD’s offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation, and for all his service, and for the holy garments. Exodus 35:21**

This verse demonstrates the concept of stirred hearts and willing attitudes. A willing attitude can be connected to a stirred heart. Good preaching (or propaganda) can stir your heart into willing obedience. The Israelites’ stirred heart and willing attitudes were in response to Moses’ offertory. Their faith was built by hearing, but they weren’t born-again in their spirit.

“**Faith comes by hearing**,” that is, faith can be built and developed by whatever we hear and keep hearing, but faith is a choice. We choose to believe what we hear and keep hearing. Propaganda works, but not on those who reject it. Indoctrination works, but not on those who reject the message. Faith in God’s Word can be developed by hearing, but not by those who choose to reject it. Faith is a choice.

- **However, they did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, “LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT?” Romans 10:16 NASB20**
- **For we also have had the good news proclaimed to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them [the word they heard did not benefit them], because they did not share the faith of those who obeyed. Hebrews 4:2 NIV**

May our heart’s cry and attitude be, “**Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!**” Let us choose to believe God’s report.

WHAT IS THE HEART?

Lesson 10

The Nature Of Attitudes

Part 1

We have previously seen that our heart has a voice, the manifestation of which can either be categorized as our conscience or as faith. This lesson will evaluate the voice of our heart manifesting as a third force—attitude. Perhaps surprisingly, the Bible has much to say about attitude, though the word attitude will not be found in traditional translations. Understand that attitude is a modern English word to describe what previous generations called *mental disposition* or *constitution*.

Attitude: *a settled way of thinking or feeling about someone or something, typically reflected in a person's behavior. A manner, disposition, feeling, position, etc., with regard to a person or thing; tendency or orientation, especially of the mind.*

- Curious, the secular definition recognizes that attitude is an ethereal reflection of how we think and keep thinking or feel and keep feeling.

Disposition: *temper (temperament, disposition of mind with regards to passions and affections) or natural constitution of the mind (frame of mind), as directed to particular objects. Inclination, propensity, the temper or frame of mind.*

Constitution: *character or condition of mind; disposition; temperament; the way in which a person is made up; physical or mental make-up.*

We will define **attitude** as the *spiritual aroma (both good or bad) our heart produces by what it insists on thinking, wanting, and feeling.*

Traditional Bible translations do not use the words *attitude* or *disposition*, because these are modern terms. However, the concept, as we know it, can be found in the original Hebrew and Greek. The Hebrew word we find used in Scripture is **ruwach**, while the Greek word is **pneuma**.

Ruwach: *wind, breath, mind, spirit. Ruwach* is known for being translated as *Holy Spirit*, *evil spirit*, and *wind*, but other Hebrew uses include *vivacity*, *vigor*, *courage*, *temper*, *anger*, *patience*, *impatience*, and dispositions of various kinds.

Pneuma: *wind, breath, spirit. Pneuma* is also famously known for being translated as *Holy Ghost*, *Holy Spirit*, *demon spirit*, *human spirit*, and *ministering spirit*, but other Greek definitions include the disposition or influence which fills and governs the soul of any one, *the efficient source of any power, affection, emotion, desire, etc.* Aristotle regarded the **pneuma** of man to be the force that shaped the personality.

It is important to note that when studying the scriptures along the theme of *attitude/mental disposition*, we must depend upon contextual clues to discern when the term *spirit* is referring to *demon spirit*, *human spirit*, *the Spirit of God*, or *man's mental disposition and attitude*. For example:

- **And it came to pass in the morning that his [Pharoah] spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof: and Pharoah told them his dream; but there was none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh.** **Genesis 41:8**

Pharaoh's dream about seven thin ears devouring seven rank and full ears troubled his spirit. This couldn't be his human spirit because it was dead to God (the born-again experience not being available for 1,500 more years). This must then refer to his attitude or mental disposition. The dream troubled his heart, and he awoke downcast and discouraged—both of which are mental attitudes.

MENTAL DISPOSITIONS (ATTITUDES) FOUND IN THE BIBLE

If the word spirit is synonymous with attitude, we should expect to find a myriad of attitudes addressed in Scripture. As it turns out, the Bible discusses a great many different types of attitudes.

- **His [Pharaoh's] spirit (*disposition*) was troubled.** (Genesis 41:8)
- **The spirit (*disposition, attitude*) of Jacob their father revived:** (Genesis 45:27)
- **They hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage.** (Exodus 6:9b)
- **Every one whom his spirit (*attitude*) made willing . . .** (Exodus 35:21)
- **. . . if the spirit (*attitude*) of jealousy come . . .** (Numbers 5:14, 30)
- **God had made his [King Sihon] spirit (*attitude*) stubborn and his heart obstinate.** (Deuteronomy 2:30 CSB)
- **Our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage (*attitude*) in any man.** (Joshua 2:11)
- **[The Amorite kings] lost heart and their courage (*attitude*) failed.** (Joshua 5:1 CSB)
- **Then their anger (*attitude*) was abated toward him.** (Judges 8:3)
- **I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit:** (1 Samuel 1:15)
- **And when he had eaten, his spirit came again to him [exhausted disposition].** (1 Samuel 30:12)
- **There was no more spirit in her [awestruck].** (1 Kings 10:5)
- **Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread?** (1 Kings 21:5)
- **If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee,. . .** (Ecclesiastes 10:4)

- Create for me a pure heart, O God! Renew a resolute spirit within me. (Psalm 51:10 NET)
- The patient in spirit (*attitude*) is better than the proud in spirit (*attitude*). (Ecclesiastes 7:8b)

The book of Proverbs uses ***ruwach*** 21 times. Four uses are translated as “wind;” two refer to a spiritual ***ruwach*** (Proverbs 1:23 and 20:27). The other fifteen (15) of those uses refer to the attitude or disposition of a man.

- A faithful spirit (*attitude*) concealeth the matter. (Proverbs 11:13b)
- He that is hasty of spirit (*attitude*) exalteth folly. (Proverbs 14:29b; cf. Psalm 32; Ecclesiastes 7:9)
- But a devious tongue breaks the spirit (*attitude*). (Proverbs 15:4b CSB)
- By sorrow of the heart the spirit (*attitude*) is broken. (Proverbs 15:13b)
- People may be pure in their own eyes, but the LORD examines their motives [attitudes, dispositions]. (Proverbs 16:2 NLT)
- An haughty spirit (*attitude*) [goes] before a fall. (Proverbs 16:18b)
- Better it is to be of an humble spirit (*attitude*) with the lowly. (Proverbs 16:19a)
- A broken spirit (*attitude*) drieth the bones. (Proverbs 17:22b)
- A man of understanding is of an excellent spirit (*attitude*). (Proverbs 17:27)
- The spirit (*attitude*) of a man will sustain him infirmity; but a wounded spirit (*disposition*) who can bear? (Proverbs 18:14)
- Fools vent their anger [attitude, disposition]. (Proverbs 29:11a NLT)
- Honour shall uphold the humble in spirit (*attitude*). (Proverbs 29:23b)

The two additional Proverbs related to the attitude reveal that we have the absolute ability to control our attitudes. Since we can change our hearts, this is to be expected, especially since our attitude is another manifestation of our heart.

- He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit (*attitude, disposition*) than he that taketh a city. Proverbs 16:32
 - Controlling one’s emotions (CSB)
 - One with self-control (NIV)
 - One who controls his temper (NET)
- He that hath no rule over his own spirit (*attitude, disposition*) is like a city that is broken down, and without walls. Proverbs 25:28
 - A person who cannot control his temper (NET)
 - A person who has no self-control over his spirit (NASB)
 - A person who does not control his temper (CSB)

ATTITUDES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- Blessed are the poor in spirit [humble attitude]. (Matthew 5:3a)
- . . . the spirit (attitude) is indeed willing, but the flesh is weak. (Matthew 26:41b)
- The spirit (attitude) truly is ready, but the flesh is weak. (Mark 14:38)
- Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit (attitude); serving the Lord; (Romans 12:11)
- . . . shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit (attitude) of meekness? (1 Corinthians 4:21)
- For they have refreshed my spirit (attitude) and yours: (1 Corinthians 16:18a; cf. 2 Corinthians 7:13)
- I had no rest in my spirit (attitude), because I found not Titus my brother: (2 Corinthians 2:13a)
- . . . let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit (attitude), perfecting holiness in the fear of God. (2 Corinthians 7:1)
- . . . Walked we not in the same spirit (disposition)? Walked we not in the same steps? (2 Corinthians 12:18)
- . . . restore such an one in the spirit (attitude) of meekness; (Galatians 6:1)
- . . . that ye stand fast in one spirit (attitude, disposition), with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; (Philippians 1:27)
- . . . be thou an example of the believers . . . in spirit (attitude) . . . (1 Timothy 4:12)
- . . . [Adorn yourself with] the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit (attitude), which is in the sight of God of great price. (1 Peter 3:4)
- And be renewed [make new] in the spirit (disposition) of your mind;
Ephesians 4:23

Obviously, our minds don't have spirits, but they do have attitudes and dispositions. This command further supports our doctrine. We can change our attitudes and dispositions by changing how we think, want, and emote. As it turns out, our dads were right: We can change our attitude, and we can change them pretty quick!

We have now seen that our hearts have a voice, and they are always talking. What they have to say can be classified as either our conscience, faith, or attitude. As we might expect, the overlap between these three is frequent and can be extreme. All the more reason for us to guard our heart above all that is to be guarded. Amen!

WHAT IS THE HEART?

Lesson 11

The Nature Of Attitudes

Part 2

We established in the last lesson that the Bible often uses the word “spirit” to describe what we understand to be an attitude. In the Old Testament, out of 378 uses of *ruwach*, 83 are references to attitudes.

We will define **attitude** as the *spiritual aroma (both good or bad) our heart produces by what it insists on thinking, wanting, and feeling.*

We also discovered that the heart has a voice and that the manifestation or expression of that voice can biblically be classified as either the *conscience*, *faith*, or an *attitude*. All three are controllable. Why? Because among many reasons, they are all programmed.

- We program our conscience through discipleship.
- We program our faith through discipleship.
- We program our attitude through discipleship.

We can boldly declare all three are controllable because we are able to steer our hearts by what we think, want, and emote. Job contains one of the most revealing passages concerning the heart and attitude:

- **Why doth thine heart carry thee away? and what do thy eyes wink at, ¹³That thou turnest thy spirit [attitude] against God, and lettest such words go out of thy mouth?**
Job 15:12-13
- **Why has your heart misled you, and why do your eyes flash ¹³as you turn your anger against God and allow such words to leave your mouth?**
Job 15:12-13 CSB

This passage confirms that our hearts are misleading, untrustworthy, and also the source of our attitude. The attitude in turn affects what comes of our mouths. Our mouths can reveal the deepest recesses of our heart as well as the current attitude. But we can control both our attitudes as well as our mouths, and the sooner the better. Granted, we may not always be able to turn our hearts on a dime, but we can certainly begin to make a change.

Eliphaz observed that Job had willfully turned his anger against God. We do the same with our emotions and attitudes, good or bad. We control with whom and to where we turn our attitudes. Here are several more verses concerning attitudes:

- **... I will speak in the anguish of my spirit (*disposition*); I will complain in the bitterness of my soul...**
Job 7:11

Anguish and bitterness go hand-in-hand and manifest as complaining. All attitudes eventually manifest in our words.

- ... **thy visitation hath preserved my spirit [attitude]. Job 10:12b**

Visiting with people can revive their spirits and put them in a good mood. This is one reason why jail ministry, nursing home ministry, and visiting shut-ins is so important. Isolation can cast anyone into depression.

- ... **in whose spirit [attitude, disposition] there is no guile...**
Psalm 32:2

Guile is the revealing of the details that promote oneself while withholding the details that make the individual look bad. It is an attitude to be repented of.

- **The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit [attitude].**
Psalm 34:18

The broken heart is tied to a penitent attitude. These are conditions God is quick to help.

- ... **grant me a willing spirit [attitude] ...**
Psalm 51:12 NIV

David sought God for help with his attitude. We can do the same.

- ... **my spirit [disposition] was overwhelmed.**
Psalm 77:3
- ... **whose spirit [attitude] was not steadfast ...**
Psalm 78:8
- ... **they [Israel] provoked his [Moses'] spirit [attitude] ...**
Psalm 106:33
- ... **my spirit [attitude] faileth. *(discouragement, hopelessness)***
Psalm 143:7
- ... **vanity and vexation of spirit [attitude, disposition].**
Ecclesiastes 1:14
 - This phrase is quoted nine times in Ecclesiastes.

Our attitudes can be overwhelmed and broken down. Without God's constant refreshing, wanting to quit is all but inevitable. Even the best of leaders, like Moses, can be broken down by belligerent and stubborn followers. We can be broken down in our attitude as well. The fallen world constantly works to beat us down and vex our fight. We must resist this and encourage ourselves in the Lord.

- ... **[better is] the patient in spirit [attitude] than the proud in spirit [attitude].**
⁹Be not hasty in thy spirit [attitude] to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.
Ecclesiastes 7:8b-9

These verses command us what to do with our attitude—don't be hasty.

- **With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit [attitude] within me will I seek thee early: . . .** **Isaiah 26:9a**

This verse demonstrates the attitude of determination.

- **They also that erred in their spirit [attitude] . . .** **Isaiah 29:24a**

This verse confirms that we can sin or err with our attitudes.

- **. . . a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit [attitude].** **Isaiah 54:6**
- **. . . I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit [attitude], to revive the spirit [attitude] of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.** **Isaiah 57:15**

A contrite attitude will bring restoration and revival.

- **. . . and I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit [attitude] . . .** *(hot anger)* **Ezekiel 3:14**

Though Ezekiel was translated by the Spirit of God into a heavenly vision, he still retained his anger and bitterness against Israel's rebellion.

- **. . . and every heart shall melt, and all hands shall be feeble, and every spirit [attitude] shall faint, and all knees shall be weak as water: . . .** *(timidity and fear)* **Ezekiel 21:7**

Timidity and fear can proceed from a melted heart.

- **Then his mind [attitude] changes, and he transgresses; . . .** **Habakkuk 1:11 NKJV**

We can change our attitudes . . . if we want to.

- **And the LORD stirred up the spirit [attitude] of Zerubbabel . . . and Joshua . . . and the spirit [attitude] of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of the LORD of hosts, their God . . .** **Haggai 1:14**

- **Stir up the gift of God, which is in thee . . . 2 Timothy 1:6a**

Our attitudes determine our drive. God moved by His Holy Spirit to stir up the attitudes of Zerubbabel, Joshua, and the people of Israel to accomplish His will. This happens in every God-breathed revival. If we are not in a revival, we must stir ourselves up.

- **Therefore take heed to your spirit [attitude], and let none deal treacherously against the [spouse] of [their] youth.**
Malachi 2:15b

Other scriptures: **Job 6:4; 20:3; 21:4; Psalms 51:17; 77:6; 142:3; 143:4; Isaiah 66:2; Jeremiah 51:11; Daniel 2:1**

NEW TESTAMENT ATTITUDES

Of the 385 New Testament uses of *pneuma*, 17 are references to attitudes. Some examples are:

- **And my spirit [attitude, disposition] hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.**
Luke 1:47
- **[Apollos] . . . being fervent in spirit [attitude].** **Acts 18:25**
- **. . . glorify God in your body, and in your spirit [attitude] which are God's . . .**
1 Corinthians 6:20
- **. . . the unmarried . . . cares for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy in body and in spirit [attitude] . . .**
1 Corinthians 7:34
- **We having the same spirit [attitude] of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;**
2 Corinthians 4:13

We are not only able to control our attitudes, but we are also commanded to do so. We do this by controlling what we think, want, and emote. We must also guard our attitudes to make sure quit and hopelessness never creep in and root out all our increase. Amen.

WHAT IS THE HEART?

Lesson 12

Desperately Wicked, Incurably Sick

We have previously established that the heart of man and the spirit of man are two different things. The spirit of the born-again man can be trusted for several reasons:

- We are born-again in our spirit, of incorruptible seed, the Word of God that lives and abides forever. (**1 Peter 1:23**)
- We have been baptized into one body, and through the new birth we have been made to drink into the Holy Spirit. (**1 Corinthians 12:13**)
- Through the new birth, we are new creatures in Christ, and all things have become new. (**2 Corinthians 5:17**)
- Our born-again spirit is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly. (**Proverbs 20:27**)

In short, we can trust the voice of our born-again spirit. Because the heart is the manifestation of man's fickle soul, it is a different matter altogether.

- **The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked (*incurably sick*): who can know it? ¹⁰I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins (*emotions*), even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.** **Jeremiah 17:9-10**

We have previously proven the heart of man operates the same on both sides of Calvary. If this was the only verse we had on the heart, it would say all we need to know. Our heart is deceitful and incurably sick. How is it possible for the heart to be capable of pleasing God, yet still be described as deceitful? Just think about how fickle our heart is and how quickly it can turn 180 degrees.

- Bad news can quickly cast our heart into sorrow. (**Ezekiel 21:7**)
- An insult can quickly redirect our heart into anger. (**Proverbs 18:19**)
- Insults and reproaches can also quickly break our heart. (**Psalms 69:20**)
- An injustice can cause us to quickly boil up with rage. (**2 Corinthians 11:29**)
- Good news can pull our hearts into rejoicing. (**Proverbs 15:30**)
- The loss of a loved one can cast into deep depression. (**Genesis 37:34**)
- Gossip can turn a heart against a hero. (**Proverbs 18:8 NLT**)
- Discouragement can be turned to faith very quickly. (**Psalms 42:5**)
- Betrayal can wound your heart. (**Psalms 109:22**)
- Any traumatic event can break the heart. (**Isaiah 61:1**)



Why is our heart described as incurably sick? Because it will need constant attention, maintenance, and care as long as we are in the earth. We can never lower our guard on our heart.

THE BROKEN HEART

The broken heart is a phenomenon all humans are acquainted with in both Old and New Covenants.

- **For I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.**
Psalm 109:22

Being born-again does not prevent broken hearts. If that were the case, there would be no reason for God to reveal Himself as the Comforter. The psalmist testified to God's comforting nature:

- **. . . [The Lord] gathereth together the outcasts of Israel. ³He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds [griefs].**
Psalm 147:2b-3

Isaiah prophesied that the first effect of the gospel and one of the primary assignments of Christ was to heal the brokenhearted.

- **The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;**
Isaiah 61:1

Jesus was in the habit of preaching this verse everywhere He went. It appears to have been His primary text Scripture when He preached in synagogues for the first time (**Luke 4:16-19**).

- **Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; ⁴Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.**
2 Corinthians 1:3-4

Even New Testament believers need their hearts (not their spirit man) comforted from time to time.

- **. . . and that he [Tychicus] might comfort your hearts.**
Ephesians 6:22
- **. . . that he [Tychicus] might know your estate, and comfort your hearts;**
Colossians 4:8

- ... Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, ... **17Comfort your hearts and stablish you in every good word and work.**
2 Thess. 2:16a, 17

Whether due to hardships, loss, betrayal, stress, or calamity, the heart requires frequent comforting. It is impossible to live life without needing comfort or consolation. We can obtain comfort from several sources: one another, the Word, prayer, or self-edification. All of this is further evidence that our heart is incurably sick and will require constant maintenance and attention, but such is life!

Other Scriptures: **Psalms 34:18; 51:17; 109:16; Jeremiah 23:9**

OTHER HEART PROBLEMS

Our hearts are dynamic, and they are constantly being adjusted by our environs. We have seen that they are easily programmed and influenced. They produce whatever is written upon them.

- ... write them [mercy and truth] upon the table of thine heart.
Proverbs 3:3b
- ... write them [commandments and law] upon the table of thine heart.
Proverbs 7:3b
- The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond: it is graven upon the table of their heart ...
Jeremiah 17:1

Manipulators, politicians, and propagandists have learned how to write things upon the hearts of the general populous, thereby stealing their hearts for selfish gain and the peoples' misfortune.

- And on this manner [smooth-talking and flattery] did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment; **so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.**
2 Samuel 15:6

For this reason, Solomon offers a very strong warning:

- Above all else, **guard your heart**, for everything you do flows from it.
Proverbs 4:23 NIV
- **Guard your heart above all else**, for it determines the course of your life.
Proverbs 4:23 NLT

You don't have to guard something that is secured and established. The heart is generally neither secure nor established. We must post a constant guard over it and regularly check

its internal gauges and meters for system health; adjusting, praying, rebuking, and correcting unbiblical thoughts, emotions, and desires as they arise.

- **Hear thou, my son, and be wise, and guide thine heart in the way.**
Proverbs 23:19

This verse is very clear: we are commanded to guide our heart, not allow it to guide us. How many Christians—contrary to the Bible—follow their heart? We must guide our heart in the way of God's Word.

- **He that trusts in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.**
Proverbs 28:26
- **Rejoice, young people, during your childhood, and let your heart be pleasant during the days of young manhood. And follow the impulses of your heart and the desires of your eyes. Yet know that God will bring you into judgment for all these things.**
Ecclesiastes 11:9 NASB

These three verses inform us that we don't let our heart guide us; we guide it. Contrary to many modern love ballads, the heart cannot be trusted. If we follow the whims of our heart, God will bring us into judgment. Trust God's Word, not your heart. Those that follow their heart will have pain-filled, unstable lives.

- **Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.**
Hebrews 3:12

Even Paul, in the New Testament warns believers that we have the ability to develop an evil heart of unbelief. Before an apostate departs from God, they must first develop an evil heart. This is a process, and it can only begin when there is no guard set over the heart. Little by little their thoughts drift away from God, their affections attach to something else, and their will desires some other god. Why do people leave God? To chase the thing their hearts desire.

THE IMPURE HEART

The heart can produce great uncleanness.

- **Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from sin?**
Proverbs 20:9
- **O Jerusalem, cleanse your heart that you may be saved. How long will you harbor your evil thoughts?**
Jeremiah 4:14



- **What a sick heart you have, says the Sovereign LORD, to do such things as these, acting like a shameless prostitute.** Ezekiel 16:30 NLT
- **For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witnesses, blasphemies:** Matthew 15:19
- **But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?** Acts 5:3
- **Purify your hearts, ye double minded.** James 4:8b

This New Testament verse reveals to us that Christians can have impure and unstable hearts. This verse commands us to purify our hearts. What makes our hearts impure? Here, **James 4** describes indecisiveness and inconsistency as impurities. Would you follow someone who is impure and inconsistent?

CONCLUSION

In short, the heart is deceitful above all things, desperately wicked, and incurably sick because it is dynamic and alive. It can be broken, wounded, defiled, cleansed, healed, stolen, or given away. All before lunch on any given day. May we guard it and glorify God with the faith it produces!

WHAT IS THE HEART?

Lesson 13 A Summary

This lesson will summarize what we have covered in the last 12 lessons.

THE HEART AND THE SPIRIT ARE DIFFERENT ENTITIES

Recognizing the difference between the human spirit and the human heart is the most critical point to this doctrine. Conflating the two entities can produce harmful effects such as the misinterpretation and misapplication of certain scriptures. We must see and thoroughly understand how these two components of the human being are different.

- **And I [Jesus] gave her [Jezebel, the pastor's wife] space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. ²²Behold, I will cast her into a bed [of sickness], and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. ²³And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he [Jesus Christ] which searcheth the reins (*emotions*) and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.**
Revelation 2:21-23

1. **The Lord still searches the hearts and minds, even those in His Church.** See **Revelation 2:23**. The born-again spirit does *not* require examination. It is seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. The Word *discerns* the thoughts and intentions of the heart, whereas the new man is born again *of* the Word of God.
2. **New Testament Christians can have an evil heart of unbelief.** Our spirit man cannot be evil. It's sealed with the Holy Spirit. But if we allow our heart to grow evil, it will cause us to depart from God. See **Hebrews 3:12**.
3. **The Word of God must be sown in the hearts of men, but the spirit of man is born again of the Word of God.** Just because you're born again of the Word of God doesn't mean you have God's Word working in your heart or life. See **Mark 4:3-20** compared to **1 Peter 1:23**.
4. **Christians must constantly purify their hearts.** See **James 4:8b**. Doublemindedness leads to impure hearts. See also **2 Timothy 2:22** and **1 Peter 3:4**.
5. **The Christian's heart must be established.** The heart cannot be the born-again spirit if it still lacks establishing. See **Hebrews 13:9** and **James 5:8**.
6. **New Testament Christians can harden their hearts through sin.** We are warned to watch out for this hardening effect. See **Romans 2:5** and **Hebrews 3:15**.
7. **We can be born again and have a heart that is not right with God.** See **Acts 8:21-22**. This was the case with the Simon, the former sorcerer. The Apostle Peter was very rough with the new believer.

8. **Born-again believers can deceive their own heart.** See **James 1:26**. This would be impossible if the heart and spirit were the same.
9. **The heart can be exercised (*gymnazo*) with wicked practices like covetousness.** See **2 Peter 2:14**. The spirit man is baptized into the Body of Christ by the Holy Spirit (**1 Corinthians 12:13**). How can it be exercised with anything less than holiness?

See the full list (**13 REASONS WHY THE SPIRIT AND THE HEART ARE DIFFERENT ENTITIES**) in **Lesson 1—The Threefold Nature Of Man And The Heart Problem**.

THE DEFINITION OF THE HEART

Since the heart and the spirit are not the same, and we still have a soul to account for, our definition of the heart must account for all variables. Thankfully, I believe the Lord gave me the definition of the heart in 2008 while I was helping mine surveyors at the bottom of the 221 stope, 1200 feet underground.

The Heart: *the manifestation of the operation of the soul of man, that is, the manifestation of the operation of the mind, the will, and the emotions of man, whether born again or lost. The heart is whatever a man thinks and keeps on thinking; wants and keeps on wanting; and emotes and keeps on emoting.*

THE HEART ACTS LIKE THE MIND

Numerous scriptures confirm that the heart acts like the mind. Our heart is what we think and keep thinking. If we want to change our hearts, we must change what we think and keep thinking. We bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

- **(Yea, a sword shall pierce though thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.** Luke 2:35
- **And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not;** Luke 3:15
- **And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him,** Luke 9:47
- **And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? And why do thoughts arise in your hearts?** Luke 24:38
- **... why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.** Acts 5:4b
- **Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.** Acts 8:22

THE HEART ACTS LIKE THE WILL

Numerous scriptures confirm that the heart acts like the will. Our heart is what we want and keep wanting. If we want to change our hearts, we must change what we want and keep wanting. We submit our wills, our dreams, our wants, our desires, and our lusts to the plan, destiny, and will of God.

- **Who, when he [Barnabas] came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.**
Acts 11:23
- **Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:**
Romans 1:24
- **Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.**
Romans 10:1
- **Nevertheless he that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power (authority) over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin [to marry or not marry], doeth well.**
1 Corinthians 7:37

THE HEART ACTS LIKE THE EMOTIONS

Numerous scriptures confirm that the heart acts like the emotions. Our heart is whatever we emote and keep emoting. If we want to change our hearts, we must control our emotions.

- **That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart [for Israel's salvation].**
Romans 9:2
- **For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you.**
2 Corinthians 2:4
- **But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.**
James 3:14

WE CAN CONTROL OUR SOUL

If we can control our mind, our will, and our emotions (and we can), then we can change our hearts. Every Bible commandment demonstrates we have the ability to submit our

will to the will of God. The 9 Fruit of the Spirit demonstrate we have the ability to control our emotions. **Romans 12:2 (be transformed by the renewing of your mind)**, **Philippians 2:5 (let this mind be in you)**, and **Philippians 4:8 (think on these things)** prove we can change the way we think.

THE VOICE OF OUR HEART

Romans warns us to **“say not in your heart.”** Our heart has a voice which can be heard as three different manifestations:

1. **Our conscience**—Our spirit man has a voice, but it is not the voice of our conscience. The Bible succinctly defines the conscience in **Romans 2:15: “... the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another.”**
2. **Our faith**—Faith is of the heart, **“For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness.” (Romans 10:10a)** The woman with the issue of blood **“said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole.” (Matthew 9:21)** Jesus declared that this was faith, and it made her whole.
3. **Our attitude**—Our attitudes, or mental dispositions, are also the voice of our heart. Whether our heart adores or despises a situation, it will be evident through our attitude. All 9 Fruit of the Spirit are best described as attitudes the Holy Spirit wants to create in our hearts.

THE GIFT THAT IS OUR HEART

Though we have emphasized the biblical point that the heart is desperately wicked and incurably sick, we mustn't forget the wonderful things of which the heart is capable. It is true that God has called us to do the impossible (move mountains) with that which is corrupted (our hearts of faith), but as with all doctrines, there are ditches and balances. Our hearts are capable of:

- **Faith**, without which we cannot please God. (**Hebrews 11:6**)
- **Love**, without which our faith cannot work. (**Galatians 5:6**)
- **Forgiveness**, without which we cannot have fellowship with God or man. (**Matthew 18:35**)
- **Obedience**, without which we cannot finish our race. (**Romans 6:17**)
- **Joy**, without which life is miserable. (**Acts 14:17**)
- **Earnest care**, without which we become calloused and cold. (**2 Corinthians 8:16**)
- **Purity**, without which we cannot truly love one another. (**1 Peter 1:22**)
- **Unity**, without which God has difficulty moving. (**Acts 4:32**)

Also, our hearts are where:

- The love of God has been shed abroad. (**Romans 5:5**)



- The Word of God is to be written. (**2 Corinthians 3:2-3**)
- The light of God shines. (**2 Corinthians 4:6**)
- We sing and make melody to the Lord. (**Ephesians 5:19**)

Let us be ever mindful of the nature and condition of our hearts, that we might “**guard it above all else**” (**Proverbs 4:23 NLT**) and submit it to the will of God for His glory and our protection. Amen!