

The Heart of the Matter

1Kings 8:37-40

31 March 2023

Heart: the center, the core, our deepest central motivations. It is who you are, deep down inside, the center of your being (Not affections, emotions, or feelings).

- Used 950 times in the Bible in all of its forms:
 - Wise **hearted**
 - My **heart's** desire
 - The love of God is shed abroad in our **hearts**
 - Whatsoever ye do, do it **heartily**, as to the Lord...

1 Kings 8:37-40

- Our heart has a plague (vs 38). That plague will mess us up.
- God knows the hearts of all the children of men (vs 39).
- There is a connection between the ways of man and his heart (vs 39).

I. Our Ways are Determined by our Hearts (1Kings 8:38-39; Romans 2:29; Ephesians 6:5-6)

- **Ways:** the way you live, the works you do, the words that you speak. These come from the heart.
- **Salvation comes when something happens in your heart** (Rom. 2:29), not from outward actions.
- **Singleness of heart** (Eph. 6:5) is doing something for the right reasons (no hidden motives).
- **"...doing the will of God from the heart"** (Eph. 6:6). What you do comes from the heart. God is interested in your motives for doing what you do.

II. God Searches the Heart in Order to Give to Men According to Their Ways

(Jeremiah 17:9-10; Proverbs 24:12; Revelation 2:23; 1Thessalonians 2:4; 1Corinthians 3:13)

- God doesn't reward you according to what you do. He searches your heart so He can properly reward you for what you do (Jer. 17:9-10, Prov. 24:12). Why do you do what you do?
- There is a connection (reins) between your works and your heart (Rev. 2:23).
- Don't do good just to impress men. Do it to please the God who tries your heart (1 Thes. 2:4).
- God will try our work by fire to see what sort it is (1 Cor. 3:13). Obviously, He'll be looking at the heart to determine the sort.

III. The Heart Stirs Man Up to Right Action

(Exodus 35:5; Exodus 35:21; Exodus 35:26; Exodus 35:29; Exodus 36:2; 1Kings 14:8)

- **"Whosoever is of a willing heart,"** that's the way you should always give. Otherwise, don't give.
- **"Everyone whose heart stirred him up...whose heart made them willing..."** If your heart is right, you'll be willing to do the right thing. If you're not willing, something's wrong with your heart.
- God may have given you wisdom or talents. Do you have a heart to use them for God? (Exod. 36:2).
 - Don't use your talents to exalt yourself and get the praise of men. Make sure your heart is right with God before you stand before God's people to utilize your talents.
- God spoke of David **"who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in mine eyes."**

IV. Failure to Serve God is a Failure of the Heart (Psalm 95:10; Jeremiah 18:12;)

- ***“It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways.”***
 - ***“we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart.”***
 - A heart that turns evil will eventually do evil deeds.
 - A person with a bad heart who does good things is called a hypocrite. It’s only an act.
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V. God Seeks for Those Who Have a Right Heart (Deuteronomy 5:29)

- ***“O that there were such an heart in them...”***
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VI. God Tests Man to See What is in His Heart (Deuteronomy 8:2; Deuteronomy 13:3; 2Chronicles 32:31)

- Why did God test you? ***“To know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments, or no.”*** What did God find in your heart when problems came your way?
 - ***“...the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.”*** God used false prophets to test hearts.
 - ***“God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.”*** God used flatterers to test King Hezekiah’s heart. God wants us to be on guard and watch for enemies.
 - ***“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”*** (1 Pet. 5:8).
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VII. Our Heart Must be Stirred Up and Prepared to Serve the Lord (2Chronicles 30:12, Ezra 7:10)

- God gave the people a heart to do and to serve by the word of God.
 - We need to prepare our hearts to seek God’s ways and teach them to others.
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CONCLUSION

Are you struggling to serve the Lord? You need to examine your heart.

- Recognize that there is a plague in your heart.
- Test your heart by the trials that God gives you. How do you react to them?
- Confess that you are having heart troubles and seek God’s help and forgiveness.
- ***“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.”*** (Psalm 51:10)