

The BIG One

Thinking, feeling, choosing, speaking and doing—all reflect the condition of our hearts. When I think about the many things that *capture our hearts*, I realize that those define who we are, Who we worship, or what our idols might be. As I use the word *capture*, I remember some things that had gone way off balance, beyond simple enjoyment into obsession. This could be simply spending too much time on things that have no eternal value, or worse, getting involved in sinful behaviors that caused our lives to be out of control. Our hearts—thinking, feeling, choosing, speaking and doing—would reflect this. **As water reflects the face, so the heart reflects the person.** (Proverbs 27:19 CSB)



In the world we have said to the one judging harshly, “Have a heart!” In Proverbs 19:8 CSB it says, **The one who acquires good sense**[c] [acquires a heart] **loves himself; one who safeguards understanding finds success.** The footnote reflects what is meant here literally: (c. 19:8 Lit *acquires a heart*) The passage indicates that a true heart is something we aren’t born with. Even as Christians, though we are given a new heart when we are reborn—born of the Spirit, it takes time and willingness to cooperate with the Holy Spirit operating on us through the Word of God to develop a pure heart. I might say it takes a *little heart* to acquire a big heart.

I have to admit that the operation of the Holy Spirit on my heart has turned up a lot of impurity, but thankfully, He also gives the space to repent, accept forgiveness and go on.

What is it that is most desirable to the Lord concerning man? I believe He desires to have our hearts completely. Not only does He desire all our heart, soul and strength to love Him, but he has referenced the heart in His word (+/-) 700 to 1000 times, depending on which translation. Again, a topic much too big to cover in its entirety, so I will put out a few scriptures that will, hopefully, be a blessing.

Concerning the Importance of the Heart:

Proverbs 24:10-12: **If you do nothing in a difficult time, your strength is limited. Rescue those being taken off to death, and save those stumbling toward slaughter. If you say, “But we didn’t know about this,” won’t he who weighs hearts consider it? Won’t he who protects your life know? Won’t he repay a person according to his work?**

It is interesting that God weighs hearts. Weighing requires a device to measure, and in those days, weights were determined by stones of known weights being placed on one side of a balance for accuracy in determining a weight or value of what was placed on the other side of the balance. God wanted these stones to be honest measures. The fact that God

weighs hearts suggests that the heart has a measurable value to God, and that God has standards, like the stones, to determine that value. Our thoughts, actions and motives determine the weight of our hearts.

I learned this one (2 Chronicles 16:9) in the King James Version: **For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.** The passage in another translation uses *wholeheartedly devoted* instead of *perfect*; another replaces *perfect* with the word *faithful*. In any case, there is definitely a benefit here for the right-hearted one!

Another benefit is found in Psalm 97:11: **Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.** (KJV) alternately, **“...and joy on the upright in heart.”** (NIV) Here is a promise of light for our path, and joy for the journey.

Unfortunately, many scriptures about the heart, including its first mention in Genesis 6:5, show its evil in thoughts, intentions and imaginations. **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.** (KJV) I remember being told by someone that he had a good imagination. This man believed that sexual sin in his mind was okay as long as he didn't actually do it physically. We know from 2 Corinthians 10:5 that we are to “cast down imaginations and thoughts” that are ungodly, bringing them to the “obedience of Christ.” It is no doubt why gender confusion is so rampant—these thoughts (satan's agenda) are continually being planted in our schools and by the media; people and children don't know how, or don't have the sense, to reject them; instead they are groomed by, entertain and nurture these mind-twisting thoughts. They become captives by the thoughts they follow rather than those ungodly thoughts being rendered harmless.

“I (Yahweh) spread out my hands all day long to a rebellious people who walk in the path that is not good, following their own thoughts. These people continually anger me to my face,...” (Isaiah 65:2 CSB)

Because of the people who hardened their hearts against the Lord—(**“When I spoke, you did not listen,”**) God pronounced judgments against them. They would be hungry, thirsty and shamed. Whereas, the Lord's servants would continue to be cared for and rejoice. The Lord said, **“My servants will sing joyfully with hearts of gladness,...”** (From Isaiah 65:14 TPT)

Many warnings were issued and judgments made because of the unfaithful or wicked hearts in the Old Testament. In the New, Jesus pointed out the Pharisees, **“Hypocrites! Isaiah prophesied correctly about you when he said: This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.”** (Matthew 15:7-8 CSB)

Who would actually like to have their heart opened before the eyes of men? Our thoughts and intentions, even hypocrisy, would be exposed! What is hidden to men's eyes is open to God's eyes—the eyes that weigh and measure without respect of persons—partiality, or any weakness on His part.

At NUMA it is often stressed that we do not compel anyone to give or to do anything, as God loves a cheerful giver of time, gifts, money, etc. Compulsion is something the enemy uses. The Lord wants something more and deeper. Yes, it is the heart.

On my own journey there is a desire for whole-heartedness of devotion and faithfulness, and the kind of love that honors God in all ways, at all times. I still see lack in these areas. He works into us the willingness, and He enables us to do. Praise you, Jesus! (See Philippians 2:13) When we are reborn we become new creations; thankfully, we now have tender hearts to replace the stony hearts we received through Adam. (See Ezekiel 36:26-27) When it comes to the heart, as it was with the gifts of the Spirit, the more excellent way is love.

When the sense of duty is lost in love, when the sacrifice is a reflection of love, then we are near to the perfection of heart that God desires for us. This love is the perfect love that casts out fear and gives us that peace that goes beyond understanding. To love God the way He deserves to be loved is my biggest desire, and should be that of His bride.