

The Heart of Man, The Power of Love

From the inside out

1 John 4:8; He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. And 1 John 4:16; And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

Most of us are aware of the four types of love in Greek, Eros- romantic love,, Storge -family love, , Philia- brotherly love, family love and Agape- God's divine love. However, there are several others we often find in the Scripture, aw-hab – aw-hav – is frequently used in the general sense. **Deuteronomy 10:12; “And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul,**

Love (H157 Awhab – phrase) KJV Translation Count — Total: 208x, The KJV translates Strong's H157 in the following manner: love (169x), lover(s) (19x), friend(s) (12x), beloved (5x), liketh (1x), lovely (1x), loving (1x).

John 21:15; So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love-(agapaō - love dearly, be fond of, well pleased) Me more than these?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Feed My lambs.” But Peter replies with phileō, it is close to awhav but still different in intent. Jesus ask again, do you love me (Jesus again with agapao, Peter responds again with phileo) the third time, this time Jesus uses phileo same as Peter and again Peter responds with phileo.

It is not so much the use of love I want you to focus on but the condition of Peter's heart. The words here are important and should not be easily overlooked, **“Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time,”** How would you picture Peter's condition of heart in this? How many times in your life have you tried to express your deep admiration for another whether it be in love, honor, respect, and loyalty but not received the return you would like? God is love and therefore the heart of God is love. How were the disciples told to act in order that others would know they belonged to Jesus? **John 13:35; “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”**

Divine love is what all believers should be looking for and trying to achieve while watching Jesus in the world. So as we get started we will be looking at the condition of man and his heart.

They tried Him in a mock trial, accused Him of blasphemy, but He did not revile them. They put Him before Pilate and asked him to release a murderer instead of Jesus as the

crowd jeered and insulted Him, but He looked up to heaven and asked the Father to forgive them. They scourged Him and nailed Him to the cross, and He sought not revenge, what kind of a heart could endure so much and remain silent as a sheep to the slaughter. He took our stripes upon Himself in our stead and removed our tarnished record wiping away our sin that we may Choose Him over the world.

What of those who carried out all this evil, what was said about their hearts as they persecuted the King? Jesus looked to please His Father in everything He did, even to the point of death. Where do I suspect His heart was? On Himself? No, it was on you and me and we wouldn't even be born for more than another two thousand years.

The outer actions of a man expose his inner self, how do you talk to your children? Are you understanding of their needs, Jesus knew our needs and it would cost Him dearly.

Mark 7:20-23; **“What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. 21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, 22 thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. 23 All these evil things come from within and defile a man.”**

When we look around us today we find many people who blame who they are as adults, is merely the ill effects of the adults who raised them. However, this would stand in contradiction with Jesus' own words, it is not what goes in because what goes in goes to the stomach and comes out, but what comes out depicts a man's heart.

Pay attention as to how a man is defiled, it is not blamed on the society around him, his upbringing although we know that can play a part in temperament, it is what man decides to do with what he accumulates as he walks the paths of life. We are given decisions and far too often we lean on our own understanding of right and wrong. We feel injured by the words of another; we want retaliation. **1 Peter 3:9, NIV; Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.** And here a lesson in pride, one of those traits Jesus just spoke of.

If we look at this issue by itself we may find many ways to justify the man's reaction, what was said to him, was what was said to build up or to disparage? As we consider this question and our answer we must consider Jesus' words and build our hearts around His teaching. Jesus is not looking for excuses He is looking at the heart. Both parties may be at fault, but the point is, where is our heart? Are we condemning a person for their attitude all the while we are failing to put to practice what God expects from us?

When we begin to practice what Jesus is teaching here we find ourselves a lot less judgmental and much more aware of many of our own faults. As we respond to the actions of others around us we begin to ask, where is my heart? I like what Paul says in **Romans 7:24-25; O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of**

death? I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

Why is the main issue about our hearts and not our attitudes? Because it is what comes out of a man that reveals the heart within. We do not tend to think of man in this way, we think an evil man is just evil and has a bad attitude toward all things. The problem with this focus is that we miss the deeper problem, it is not just in the person we are commenting on but also of ourselves. How do you love your family when you walk in the door at the end of the day, are you bringing home the burdens and problems of the job? Do you snap at them? Do you exhibit interest in the families day? Are you loving and caring? These traits are what God wants to establish in us, that our hearts become pure and each incident in our days is faced and finalized in our hearts and minds and not carried around as a weight making us moody. A heart that constantly loves and cares is a patient heart, it is a condition and presence of the Holy Spirit indwelling us. It is not the Spirit that prompts us to defend ourselves over small incidents, or even large ones. A hot temper comes out of a person of a matching heart. If we could at any moment in time turn an argument around and see ourselves in another's shoes perhaps our perspectives would be much different. It is the heart of pride that gets in our way and not the heart of God that exhibits itself.

When we look for the greatest example and condition of "A" heart in the bible I believe it can be observed best in Psalm 51:10-17. Nathan has just come to David and addressed his sin with Bathsheba. He walked David through a scenario of the man who had many sheep but came and took away the sheep of a man who had only one. In telling the story David becomes angry and wants the man put to death until ... Nathan said to him, "you are the man." We can so easily be judgmental of others failing to see our own attitudes as we grieve the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts.

A godly heart is not one that approves of all things, loves all things, and does everything right, but it is one that works on the problem by allowing the Holy Spirit to do His work in us. David after seeing the table turned and having become ashamed of his own actions now becomes broken.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And uphold me by Your generous Spirit. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners shall be converted to You. Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, The God of my salvation, And my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, And my mouth shall show forth Your praise. For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart— These, O God, You will not despise.

David's heart had to reach a place of total brokenness, he became contrite, (crushed in spirit) before he saw himself for who he truly was, a broken subject in need of humbling. We are born with a wicked heart, Easton's **Bible Dictionary - The heart is also the seat of the conscience (Rom 2:15). It is naturally wicked (Gen 8:21), and hence it contaminates the whole life and character (Mat 12:34; 15:18; Ecc 8:11; Psa 73:7). Hence the heart must be changed, regenerated (Eze 36:26; 11:19; Psa 51:10-14), before a man can willingly obey God.** David had to admit this of himself just as all of us must do. If I believe today I do not possess a wicked heart then why would I ever seek to change it separate from God. The sanctification process is an ongoing work, it does not complete itself as long as we are in the flesh. It is a constant battle, **Galatians 5:17; For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.** Paul struggled with this also in **Romans 7:19, NIV; For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing.**

Last week in bible study the word of indulgence came up and the discussion look at peoples outward actions, at the lavish lifestyles certain people live, vacations, are they indulgences? What of the money women spend on hair and nails are they indulgences? As we look at anything that appears to be beyond our understanding or reasonableness, the manner in which people choose to live, we may envision as indulgences but are they? We see the family that just got back from a foreign country that cost a lot of money, but perhaps we did not see them give more money to the church or an orphanage or a family in the neighborhood. We do not see all the actions behind the visible, but God sees the heart, He knows where we are when we go into the room and close the door and pray in private. All and I mean all when it comes to -us pleasing God is a condition of the heart. The heart is the foundation of which we are to build. It was the heart of Jesus to be obedient to the Father that brought about the offer of salvation, it is the attributes of God's heart we are to grow into, those are His desires for us, to love one another as He loves us. The word here for love is *agapaō* - *ag-ap-ah'-o*; - of persons, to welcome, to entertain, to be fond of, to love dearly, of things, to be well pleased, to be contented at or with a thing. This contentment is one of things man seeks in so many places and ways, always finding an end to that first desire or attraction, much to those who have lost their first loves. When our hearts are right with God, meaning your life revolves around God you find yourself more content with issues you never thought possible. **Matthew 6:19; "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal;**

Let's look at spending for a second,

Women in Colorado spend the least amount of money on facial beauty products, averaging \$5 per day (\$1,825.00 per year). Meanwhile women in New York,

Connecticut, and West Virginia spend the most, with an average of \$11 per day (\$4,015 per year, according to data from a SkinStore survey.

According to the same survey data, the average American woman will spend roughly \$300,000 on face products alone in her lifetime

American women apply an average of 16 products to their face per day, from eye creams to serums to mascara, according to the same survey

This is not counting manicures and pedicures or hair. Salamon said, “vanity, vanity, all is vanity. While this is a bit of light hardiness in our conversation it also leads to the idea that we all have been programmed to feel good about ourselves. Many people say if I don’t take care of myself how can I take care of others? It is the “me first” attitude that comes to us in a number of ways, if I’m sick how can I take care of others, If I look horrible nobody will want to be around me, If I have no money how can I go out or be with my friends.

Misguided teachings, my rebuttal to the below article

We have been taught at least since the 1960’s, but it may have begun much farther back, perhaps since man was created, to put ourselves first. Philippians 2:3, Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Today we find churches where pastors push a message of self-help, “if you pray hard enough you can get that mansion on the hill.” This is not the purpose of prayer, our prayer life is to align us with God, to bring glory to God, not to drive our own achievement records. God is not a genie in a bottle nor is this a proper teaching regarding our prayer life.

“The intellectual threats to freedom that Lewis considered worthy of his attention were not confined to the regimes of the Axis powers led by Hitler and Mussolini; they were present also within democratic societies, including that of the United Kingdom. One such threat, a relatively new school of thought known as logical positivism, was increasingly gaining traction. Lewis regarded it as a “menace” and as the philosophical ante-room to “the complete void.”¹

It is important that we pay attention to the last two words “complete void.” It is God who is man’s provider. Example, when I was younger I lived much like our government of today. I ran up my debt and when I got short on money I would borrow more. The borrowed money was never quite enough to consolidate everything but it seemed to relieve the problem for a while but it would always make things much worse. Again when things got tight I would find another way to borrow more until there was no money left from my paychecks to cover the loans or address any

¹ Ward, Michael. After Humanity: A Guide to C.S. Lewis’s The Abolition of Man (p. 20). Word on Fire Academic. Kindle Edition.

emergencies that may arise. It would not be until I aged and matured much more that I learned to wait on God's help. I would do side jobs to pick up money to make ends meet, but I learned a lot about surrender and God's timing.

Paul writes in Philippians chapter 4:10-20, of how the church met his needs in hard times with the bare essentials to survive. There was no promise of a mansion, luxury chariot or fast horses, mules to carry the load, no, just enough to meet his minimal needs.

So the article below is all about us taking care of ourselves first and then others. It sounds reasonable when one asks, "how can I take care of others first if I don't take care of myself before them?" Again as we read Philippians we find that God takes care of those who help others, not, God helps those who help themselves.

Jesus put you and I first even to the point of death, there could be no greater sacrifice. Think of those who have given kidney's to others, did they put themselves first? These are real people who do these things and find the joy in saving others. A life given is one more who will believe and live the same way in Christ. We are told to trust in our God and that trust is a part of the fruit demonstrated before others in our walk with our Lord.

Matthew 6:26; "Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?"

LIFESTYLE



You Should Always Take Care Of Yourself First — A Lesson I Learned The Hard Way

In March 2012, when I was 21, I collapsed at home. I had a lingering cold for a few weeks but thought nothing of it, continued working, going out and traveling. The cold turned out to be a virus that was attacking my immune system and left me hospitalized. It took one month of treatment in the hospital and another three months of visits to a rehab hospital to relearn how to walk, hold a fork, tie my shoelaces and do all the other everyday activities that we take for granted.

I made a full recovery, but during what was a pretty scary time, I realized the importance of taking care of the number one person in your life: yourself. It's time we all stop feeling guilty for being a little selfish and here's why:

It's okay to say no.

Before I was hospitalized, I was running myself into the ground, working long hours at my first full-time job. I had just graduated from university and wanted to progress my career quickly. I was also taking on freelance work, unpaid internships, going to the gym and maintaining a social life. Sound familiar? We all do it. We push ourselves to the breaking point, too afraid to say no in case we let someone down or miss out on a great opportunity.

But learning to say no won't just give you some breathing space — it will also allow you to focus on doing what you really like and do it well. Running yourself into the ground because you don't want to let anyone down will help no one.

“Jesus maintained a perfect attitude in every situation. He prayed about everything and worried about nothing. We, too, should seek God's guidance about every aspect of our lives and allow Him to work out His perfect will. Jesus' attitude was never to become defensive or discouraged. His goal was to please the Father rather than to achieve His own agenda (John 6:38). In the midst of trials, He was patient. In the midst of suffering, He was hopeful. In the midst of blessing, He was humble. Even in the midst of ridicule, abuse, and hostility, He “made no threats . . . and did not retaliate. Instead He entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly” (1 Peter 2:23). <https://www.gotquestions.org/Bible-attitude.html>