

WEEK FIVE

HEART

*Above all, guard your heart,
for it is the well spring of life.
-Proverbs 4:23*

This week all of the studies will have to do with keeping our hearts pure before God and before one another. Probably you have already heard much about the importance of a great heart, but this study will help you see how to have such a heart and what the result of such a heart will be.

Day 29 - God Looks on the Heart _____

1. Read Proverbs 4:23. How would you define the "heart" that the writer is describing? And what would it mean to "guard your heart"? Read Jeremiah 17:9-10. Why did God say this about our hearts?
2. Look at 1 Samuel 16:1-7. Particularly notice v. 7. In terms of religion, how might our "outward appearance" be different from what is really going on in the "heart"? But what is it that God is concerned about?
3. Have you been tempted so far in your new life to put on the outward appearance without having the heart? If so, how?
4. Read Psalm 139. Especially notice David's prayer for a pure heart in vv. 23-24 and then spend some special time praying about your own heart.

Day 30 – Heart Change _____

1. All the great men and women in the Scriptures had to deal with their hearts, but no one shares his heart with us and his struggle for purity of heart more than David. Psalm 32 and Psalm 51 were written by David and will be important in this week's study. Read

them both carefully at this time. Make notes on those verses that seem most significant.

2. From these Psalms we can learn valuable lessons about how to come to purity of heart and how to keep the heart pure.
 - a.) We must be willing to face our sin honestly and admit to ourselves what it is (51:3).
 - b.) We must be broken over that sin (take seriously its effects) (51:17).
 - c.) We must be willing to confess that sin (32:3-5).
 - d.) We must be willing to accept forgiveness, once broken (32:11, 51:12-16).
3. Why can no one have and keep a pure heart without dealing with sin in a biblical way?

Day 31- Knowing Your Sin _____

1. Briefly review yesterday's study. Re-read Psalm 32 and Psalm 51.
2. David struggled before he faced his sin. When are times you really don't want to face your sin? How do you usually avoid that confrontation?
3. What did David mean when he said God's hand was heavy upon him? What do you do when you feel the hand of conviction on you?
4. David said, "I know my transgressions!" Are there any things in your life that you need to face honestly and say "I know that is my sin"? What will be the good of such honesty?

Day 32-Confession _____

1. Today's study is a continuation of the previous days.

Without re-reading them, can you give a brief summary of the two Psalms (32 and 51) you have been considering?

2. When David saw sin in his life, he was broken and contrite over that sin. What does that mean?
3. David confessed his sin. Why is confession "good for the soul?" Why does it bring healing?
4. Who did David confess to? (If you said "God;" think again. He wrote this Psalm of confession to be read and heard by all Israel.)
5. What did you learn earlier about confession from 1 John 1:9? Memorize this verse.
6. Look at James 5:16. You will be tempted to not let this be happening in your life, but you must remember how right it is. Also memorize this verse.
7. None of this is to write a rule that says "you must confess every sin some other person:" But isn't it clear God's people need to have a confessing attitude? Isn't it clear that hearts cannot be pure where there is hiddenness or deception?
8. What is your attitude toward confession? Do you see it as an opportunity or a burden?

Day 33-Good Fruits _____

1. The last several days you have studied ways to keep a pure heart. Now we want to turn specifically to the results or fruits of pure heartedness. Again, let's consider what we learn from Psalms 32 and 51.
 - a.) There is a great awareness of forgiveness and salvation.
 - b.) There is a thankful, rejoicing, singing spirit.
 - c.) There is a great desire to share the joy of salvation and cleansing. Look back through these two Psalms and write down the verses that illustrate these points.
2. Which of these results do you see most clearly in your own life?
3. What's the problem when these fruits aren't seen?

4. Ask someone who is very close to you in the Kingdom how they feel about your heart.

Day 34 – Heart Maintenance _____

1. After doing the study on the heart this week, why would you say that our hearts need continual maintenance?
2. Look closely at 1 Timothy 1:5-7. What is implied in the phrase "wandered away from...a pure heart"?
3. Describe how this process of wandering away from purity of heart might happen in someone's life. Give some steps that might be involved.
4. What are three things you can regularly do to guard against this "wandering" in your own life?

Day 35 - "Where is My Heart?" _____

1. Turn to Proverbs 4:23 and Jeremiah 17:9. Write out what these passages say and why you think they say it.
2. In your Christian life you will need to learn to diagnose different "heart" conditions. Study the following:
 - a.) Hard heart-Proverbs 28:14
 - b.) Unrepentant heart-Romans 2:5
 - c.) Unbelieving heart-Hebrews 3:12
3. As you handle different situations in your life, learn to ask, "Where is my heart?" If you resist correction, ask "Where is my heart?" If you find yourself wanting to skip a meeting of the Body, ask "Where is my heart?" Why is it so dangerous to give in even a little to a bad heart?
4. Who is someone you know who strikes you as having a pur/heart? What is it about them that you want to imitate?
5. What kind of heart did God promise to give us as we surrender our bad hearts? (See Ezekiel 11:17-19.)
6. What is the end result for the pure heart? See Matthew 5:8.