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Ministry Resources Hub

## A Heart for God

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Free media and discipleship resources for pastors, leaders, and growing disciples.

# A Heart for God

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## 1. ***Our* heart reflects our life.**

“As in water the face is reflected as a face, so a person’s heart reflects the person.” – Proverbs 27:19

**In the Bible “heart” describes the functions of the soul and human spirit.**

### **HEART**

#### **Soul**

- Mind • Will • Emotions

#### **Human Spirit**

- Conscience

### **BODY**

- *Senses* • *Physical Influences* • *Drives*

## 2. **God looks at *our* heart.**

“But the Lord said to Samuel, “Don’t be impressed by his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. God does not view things the way people do. People look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.” – 1 Samuel 16:7

“All a person’s ways seem right in his own opinion, but the Lord evaluates his thoughts.” – Proverbs 21:2

“And you, Solomon my son, obey the God of your father and serve him with a submissive attitude and a willing spirit, for the Lord examines all minds and understands every motive of one’s thoughts. If you seek him, he will let you find him, but if you abandon him, he will reject you permanently.” – 1 Chronicles 28:9

“Would not God discover it, for he knows a person’s secret thoughts?” – Psalm 44:21

**Our heart is our control center.**

**Our “heart” is our control center. Let’s analyze some of the different functions of the heart in these various verses.**

“Guard your heart with all vigilance, for from it are the sources of life.” – Proverbs 4:23

“A person plans his course, but the Lord directs his steps.” – Proverbs 16:9

“So teach us to consider our mortality, so that we might live wisely.” – Psalm 90:12

“In my heart I store up your words, so I might not sin against you.” – Psalm 119:11

“Offspring of vipers! How are you able to say anything good, since you are evil? For the mouth speaks from what fills the heart.” – Matthew 12:34

“For with the heart one believes and thus has righteousness and with the mouth one confesses and thus has salvation.” – Romans 10:10

**Why is our heart so important according to these verses?**

### **3. God’s best begins with a change of heart.**

**Our natural heart is sinful and sentenced to death.**

“The human mind is more deceitful than anything else. It is incurably bad. Who can understand it?” – Jeremiah 17:9

“For out of the heart come evil ideas, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.” – Matthew 15:19

*Death came into the world because of what one man (Adam) did, and it is because of what this other man (Christ) has done that now there is the resurrection from the dead.*

“For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead also came through a man. For just as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.” – 1 Corinthians 15:21-22

### **Disobeying God = Sin = Death**

Spiritual Death

Adam and Eve’s union with God was broken immediately and they were separated from Him.

## Physical Death

Adam's sin began a gradual process of aging and disease ending with physical death.

“Throw away all your sins you have committed and fashion yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why should you die, O house of Israel?” - Ezekiel 18:31

## **Spiritual birth changes our heart.**

“I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit within you. I will remove the heart of stone from your body and give you a heart of flesh.” - Ezekiel 36:26

“Jesus replied, ‘I tell you the solemn truth, unless a person is born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’ Nicodemus said to him, ‘How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter his mother’s womb and be born a second time, can he?’

“Jesus answered, ‘I tell you the solemn truth, unless a person is born of water and spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I said to you, “You must all be born from above.”’” - John 3:3-7

## **We are born spiritually when we accept Christ and His payment for our sins.**

“For I passed on to you as of first importance what I also received—that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, 4 and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day according to the scriptures.” - 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

“But to all who have received him—those who believe in his name—he has given the right to become God’s children” — John 1:12

## **We become a new creation through spiritual birth.**

“So then, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; what is old has passed away—look, what is new has come!” - 2 Corinthians 5:17

## **Old Self**

### **Pre-Christian Heart**

## **Human Spirit**

(Spiritually Dead = Separated from God)

### **Soul**

• *Mind* • *Will* • *Emotions*

### **Body**

• Senses • Physical Influences • Drives

## **New Self (in Christ)**

### **'New Creation' Christian Heart**

**Human Spirit** (Spiritually Alive in the Holy Spirit)

**Soul** • Mind • Will • Emotions

### **BODY**

• Senses • Physical Influences • Drives

## **The Process of Developing a "Heart for God"**

### **1. Adoption**

(Related to God)

This Leads To

### **2. Fellowship**

(Open lines of communication with God)

This Leads To

### **3. Relationship**

(The essentials for relational growth with God)

This Leads To

### **4. Wholeheartedness**

(The degree of our love and desire for God)

This Leads To

### **5. Passion**

(The resulting intimacy and heart for God)

### **1. Adoption.**

## **Spiritual birth**

“He did this by predestining us to adoption as his legal heirs through Jesus Christ, according to the pleasure of his will” - Ephesians 1:5

“The Spirit himself bears witness to our spirit that we are God’s children. And if children, then heirs (namely, heirs of God and also fellow heirs with Christ)—if indeed we suffer with him so we may also be glorified with him.” - Romans 8:16-17

## **Security**

“For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor heavenly rulers, nor things that are present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” - Romans 8:38-39

## **Identity in Christ**

- Redeemed and forgiven (Colossians 1:14)
- Member of Christ’s Body (1 Corinthians 12:27)
- Citizen of heaven (Philippians 3:20)
- Saint (Ephesians 1:1)
- Free from condemnation (Romans 8:1-2)
- Complete in Christ (Colossians 2:10)
- Seated with Christ (Ephesians 2:6)

## **2. Fellowship.**

### **Our open lines of communication with God:**

- May be enjoyed moment by moment.
- May be hindered by sin if we don’t quickly take the steps to correct the “break” in fellowship.

### **How do you restore a broken fellowship with God that is caused by sin?**

**Step 1: Repent** (1 John 1:9) Confession is agreeing with God about what He has said in His Word about sin. As we obey 1 John 1:9, we confess with an attitude of repentance.

This means that we turn away from the sin and its causes so that the source of temptation and continued sin are dealt with.

**Step 2: Resist** (James 4:7) We renew our mind by changing our thinking about the sin.

We then resist the enemy by putting our armor back on.  
(Ephesians 6:10-16)

**Step 3: Rest** (Psalm 32:5; Romans 8:1; Hebrews 9:14)

According to 1 John 1:9, God forgives us of all our sin and fellowship is restored.

Further condemnation and false guilt comes from Satan.

When we repent of our sin we need to rest in God's complete forgiveness.

### **3. Relationship.**

**There are five important ingredients for building our relationship with God.**

#### **A. Knowledge about God— learning about God through the Bible.**

"I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, will give you spiritual wisdom and revelation in your growing knowledge of him" - Ephesians 1:17

"If people want to boast, they should boast about this: They should boast that they understand and know me. They should boast that they know and understand that I, the Lord, act out of faithfulness, fairness, and justice in the earth and that I desire people to do these things." - Jeremiah 9:24

"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the honor both now and on that eternal day." - 2 Peter 3:18

*As you read your Bible what new things are you learning about God?*

- **His Attributes**

*What are God's characteristics?*

- **His Names**

*What are God's roles?*

- **His Purposes**

*What are God's priorities?*

- **His Ways**

*What are God's methods?*

- **His Blessings**

*How has God demonstrated His love for you?*

- **His Requirements**

*How does God want you to relate to Him?*

**B. Togetherness with God—being aware of God’s continuous presence.**

“And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” – Matthew 28:20

“Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you?” – 1 Corinthians 3:16

“And the Lord said, ‘My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.’” – Exodus 33:14

*Throughout each day, are you conscious of God’s presence? How do you acknowledge Him?*

*How do you relate to Him?*

**C. Communication with God— speaking with God about your interests, concerns and desires.**

“Do not be anxious about anything. Instead, in every situation, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, tell your requests to God. And the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.” – Philippians 4:6-7

“Call on me in prayer and I will answer you. I will show you great and mysterious things that you still do not know about.” – Jeremiah 33:3

“Before they even call out, I will respond; while they are still speaking, I will hear.” – Isaiah 65:24

“The Lord is near all who cry out to him, all who cry out to him sincerely.” – Psalm 145:18

“Constantly pray” – 1 Thessalonians 5:17

Two-way prayer involves speaking to God and quieting our hearts so we can hear Him speak to us.

*During the course of each day, are you honest and transparent with God?*

*Do you know how to quiet your heart to listen to God?*

#### **D. Observation of God— watching God display His character *around* you.**

“But as for me, God’s presence is all I need. I have made the Sovereign Lord my shelter, as I declare all the things you have done.” - Psalm 73:28

“You have been taught that the Lord alone is God—there is no other besides him.” - Deuteronomy 4:35

“Recall the miraculous deeds he performed, his mighty acts and the judgments he decreed” - Psalm 105:5

“The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and will reveal myself to him.” - John 14:21

*How has God recently demonstrated His love and goodness to you?*

- *Did you notice God controlling circumstances?*
- *Did God intervene to get you out of a negative situation?*
- *Did God provide for a need?*
- *Did God protect you from harm or evil?*
- *Did you become aware of an answer to a specific prayer?*

#### **E. Commitment to God— entrusting yourself *into* God’s care.**

“Your loyal followers trust in you, for you, Lord, do not abandon those who seek your help.” - Psalm 9:10

“You keep completely safe the people who maintain their faith, for they trust in you.” - Isaiah 26:3

“My blessing is on those people who trust in me, who put their confidence in me.” - Jeremiah 17:7

*What are you willing to commit to God because you trust His character, capabilities, and love for you?*

### **4. Whole-heartedness.**

“When you seek me in prayer and worship, you will find me available to you. If you seek me with all your heart and soul” - Jeremiah 29:13

“As a deer longs for streams of water, so I long for you, O God! I thirst for God, for the living God. I say, ‘When will I be able to go and appear in God’s presence?’” - Psalm 42:1-2

“O God, you are my God. I long for you. My soul thirsts for you, my flesh yearns for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water... Because experiencing your loyal love is better than life itself, my lips will praise you...My soul pursues you; your right hand upholds me.” - Psalm 63:1,3,8

“I look for you during the night; my spirit within me seeks you at dawn, for when your judgments come upon the earth, those who live in the world learn about justice.” - Isaiah 26:9

“Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and make your hearts pure, you double-minded.” - James 4:8

“How blessed are those who observe his rules, and seek him with all their heart” - Psalm 119:2

“With all my heart I seek you. Do not allow me to stray from your commands.” - Psalm 119:10

“My heart tells me to pray to you, and I do pray to you, O Lord.” - Psalm 27:8

## **The Process of Developing a “Heart for God”.**

### 1. ADOPTION

(Related to God)

This Leads To

### 2. FELLOWSHIP

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### 3. RELATIONSHIP

(The essentials for relational growth with God)

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### 4. WHOLE-HEARTEDNESS

> What does the term “half-hearted” usually mean?

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> What does “whole-hearted” mean?

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### **God desires a “whole-hearted” love relationship with us.**

“‘Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?’ Jesus said to him, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’” - Matthew 22:36-37

## **5. Passion**

### **A “heart” for God and a “passion” for His purposes, results from pursuing God whole-heartedly.**

“After removing him, God raised up David their king. He testified about him: ‘I have found David the son of Jesse to be a man after my heart, who will accomplish everything I want him to do.’” - Acts 13:22

“Now without faith it is impossible to please him, for the one who approaches God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.” - Hebrews 11:6

“But above all pursue his kingdom and righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” - Matthew 6:33

“Even young lions sometimes lack food and are hungry, but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.” - Psalm 34:10

“Boast about his holy name. Let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.” - Psalm 105:3

“May all those who seek you be happy and rejoice in you. May those who love to experience your deliverance say continually, ‘May God be praised!’” - Psalm 70:4

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(The degree of our love and desire for God)

***Where are you in your relationship with God?***