

What Do You Do When You Find Your Heart Is Not Right? By Don Krow (Discipleship Lesson)

Read the entire lesson and then answer the questions that follow.

If you look in Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, you will discover that the word "heart" is used a total of 830 times in Scripture. The word "hearts" is used another total of 112 times. We can see from this that the subject of the heart is a major topic in Scripture.

The book of Proverbs tells us to keep our hearts, or guard our hearts, with all diligence—that is, consistently, always—for out of them spring the issues of life (Prov. 4:23). The heart is not like the spirit, in that it can be influenced by many different things.

We first want to look, from Scripture, at the heart of an unregenerated person (one who is not saved). Jeremiah 17:9 tells us that the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know the depths of its wickedness? Genesis 6:5 tells us that God saw the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. We can see from this that man's imagination and thoughts are by-products of his heart. Jesus said in Mark 7:21-22, "for from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, [and] foolishness."

Let me ask you a question: How many of you, since you've been a Christian, have had an evil thought, an evil eye, pride, or foolishness?

What happens to the heart in the new birth? Ezekiel 36:26-27 states, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart [a hard or calloused heart] out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh [a heart that is soft and can respond to God] and I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes." As stated earlier, we can see that the heart is not like the spirit, in that it can be influenced by many different things. Vine's Expository Dictionary states that the heart "embraces the whole inner man...while it is the source of all action and the center of all thought and feeling, **the heart is also described as receptive to influences both from the outer world and God Himself.**" In reality, the heart will determine all that you do (Prov. 4:23).

So what do you do when you find that your heart is not right? In Acts 8:12-24, we see the story of a man who became a believer and shortly after, found that his heart was not right in the sight of God. This man's name was Simon. The Bible tells us that he believed and was baptized, but shortly after his conversion, there was a situation in his heart that was not right. Peter told him how to remedy this situation. Peter stated that Simon's heart was not right in the sight of God, that he should repent of this particular wickedness, and pray to God that the thought of his heart may be forgiven him (Acts 8:21-22). Simon responded by saying, "You pray to the Lord for me." (Acts 8:24). How many times have we seen individuals asking others to pray to God for them instead of dealing with their own heart's issues before God? It is possible to be strengthened with might by God's Spirit in the inner man, that Christ Himself can dwell in all of the heart (our mind, our emotions, our feelings, etc.). What will you allow to influence your heart? Will it be the world, or will it be

God? Why do you think that Jesus got up early before the break of day to be with His Father? By so doing, He was establishing His heart, because He knew that all Christian services proceed and spring out of relationship with God.

Do you know what your ministry is? It should be the same ministry that Anna the Prophetess had. She **served** God (worshipped God and ministered unto God) with fastings and **prayers night and day**. In the early church, the prophets and teachers at Antioch **ministered to the Lord**, and fasted, and then the Holy Ghost said...(Acts 13:1-2). The point is this—that the greatest commandment of scripture is still the greatest commandment: to love the Lord our God with all our hearts, with all our souls, with all our minds. Only by being before the Lord in worship, exposing our innermost being to Him, and inviting Christ into every area of our being can we establish our hearts, as our hearts are influenced by the very Person of the Most High God.

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..... Answer the following by reading the corresponding discipleship lesson
and using your Bible.

1. Read Proverbs 4:23. "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." The book of Proverbs tells us to keep our hearts, or guard our hearts with all diligence—that is, consistently, always—for out of them spring the _____.
2. Read Jeremiah 17:9. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? The heart (without Christ) is deceitful _____.
3. Read Genesis 6:5. "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." God saw the wickedness of man, every **i**_____ of the **t**_____ of his **h**_____ was only evil continually. We can see from this that man's imagination and thoughts are by-products of his heart.
4. Read Mark 7:21-22. "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, [22] Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness." Have you, since you've been a Christian, had an evil thought, an evil eye, pride or foolishness? _____.

5. Read Ezekiel 36:26-27. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. [27] And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." This is what happens to the heart in the New Birth (Jn. 3:3). "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the **s**_____ **h**_____ (a hard or calloused heart) out of your flesh. And I will give you an **h**_____ **o**_____ **f**_____ (a heart that is soft and can respond to God) and I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes" (Ezek. 36:26-27).
6. Vine's Expository Dictionary states that the heart "embraces the whole inner man...while it is the source of all action and the center of all thought and feeling, the heart is also described as **r**_____ to the influences both from the **o**_____ **w**_____ and **G**_____ **H**_____. In reality, your heart will determine all that you do" (Proverbs 4:23: "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life").
7. Read Acts 8:12-13. "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. [13] Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done." Did Simon become a believer (or Christian)? _____.
8. Read Acts 8:18-21. "And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, [19] Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. [20] But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. [21] Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God." (Verse 19) Simon was: (underline one)
 - a. Willing to work for God
 - b. Ready to pray for the sick
 - c. Hungry for power, thinking God's gifts can be bought with money.
9. Read Acts 8:21. "Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God." Even though Simon had become a believer, this scripture records that at this time Simon's heart was: (underline one)
 - a. Seeking after God
 - b. Not right in the sight of God
 - c. Full of love
10. Read Acts 8:22. "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee." What two things did the Apostle Peter tell Simon to do? _____ and _____.

11. Read Acts 8:24. "Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me." Simon did not want to take responsibility for his actions. So he asked Simon Peter to pray to God for him. What he needed to do was to **p**_____ to God for himself and turn from his wickedness.

Definition: Repentance is a change of mind, a change of heart that results in turning to God, Christ and His ways, and away from sin, Satan and his ways. This decision that changes the total direction of one's life is accompanied by faith, trust, and reliance upon God's mercy shown us through Jesus Christ. The result is conversion (a turning to God) and the forgiveness of our sins.

Statement: In Greek the aorist tense conveys "point action;" that is, the action is viewed as a complete whole or one-time action. **Example:** "Repent ye therefore (aorist tense: If you completely, actually and really do repent) and be converted (aorist tense: If you completely, actually and really do turn away from your sins and to God), that your sins may be blotted out (aorist tense: Your sins will completely, actually, and as a whole will be blotted out" (Acts 3:19).

That repentance is a completed one time action, but continues in the Christian life, and is brought out by the Greek present tense. Commands given in the present tense have continuous or repeated application. **Example:** "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth (present tense: and continues to command) all men everywhere to repent (present tense: and to continue in repentance)" (Acts 17:30)

Conclusion: The repentance and faith called for in the scriptures is initially a one-time act that is to be continued in the Christian life.

12. Read Acts 26:18. "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." When you find your heart is not right, what should you do?_____.
13. Read Psalm 51:10. "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." When David realized his heart was not right, what did he ask God?
_____.
14. Read 1 John 1:9. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." When you are cleansed from all unrighteousness that leaves you **r**_____ (right before God).
15. Read Luke 2:36-37. "And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; [37] And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day." Anna was a prophetess, but her first ministry was to **G**_____. She served (or worshipped) God with fasting and **p**_____ night and day.

16. Read Acts 13:1-2. "Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. [2] As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." The prophets and teachers at Antioch ministered first of all to **t**_____ **L**_____. Our ministry should also be first of all to God.
17. Read Matthew 22:36-37. "Master, which is the great commandment in the law? [37] Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." The first commandment is still the first commandment. Our lives should center on **L**_____ the Lord.
18. Read Colossians 3:17. "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." What are some ways that we can love the Lord? _____

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(Discipleship Answer Key)**

Do not look at the answer key until you have completed the questions.
Compare your answers with the following answers.

1. Read Proverbs 4:23. The book of Proverbs tells us to keep our hearts, or guard our hearts with all diligence—that is, consistently, always—for out of them spring the **Issues of life.**
2. Read Jeremiah 17:9. The heart (without Christ) is deceitful **Above all things and desperately wicked.**
3. Read Genesis 6:5. God saw the wickedness of man, every **imagination** of the **thoughts** of his **heart** was only evil continually. We can see from this that man's imagination and thoughts are by-products of his heart.
4. Read Mark 7:21-22. Have you, since you've been a Christian, had an evil thought, an evil eye, pride or foolishness?
Yes.
5. Read Ezekiel 36:26-27. This is what happens to the heart in the New Birth (Jn. 3:3). "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the **stony heart** (a hard or calloused heart) out of your flesh. And I will give you an **heart of flesh** (a heart that is soft and can respond to God) and I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes" (Ezek. 36:26-27).
6. Vine's Expository Dictionary states that the heart "embraces the whole inner man...while it is the source of all action and the center of all thought and feeling, the heart is also described as **receptive** to the influences both from the **outer world** and **God Himself.** In reality, your heart will determine all that you do" (Proverbs 4:23).
7. Read Acts 8:12-13. Did Simon become a believer (or Christian)?
Yes.
8. Read Acts 8:18-21 (Verse 19). Simon was: (underline one)
 - a. Willing to work for God
 - b. Ready to pray for the sick
 - c. **Hungry for power, thinking God's gifts can be bought with money.**

9. Read Acts 8:21. Even though Simon had become a believer, this scripture records that at this time Simon's heart was:
 - a. Seeking after God
 - b. Not right in the sight of God**
 - c. Full of love
10. Read Acts 8:22. What two things did the Apostle Peter tell Simon to do?
Repent of his wickedness and pray to God for forgiveness.
11. Read Acts 8:24. Simon did not want to take responsibility for his actions. So he asked Simon Peter to pray to God for him. What he needed to do was to **pray** to God for himself and turn from his wickedness.
12. Read Acts 26:18. When you find your heart is not right, what should you do?
Turn from darkness to light, from Satan's authority unto God, and receive forgiveness.
13. Read Psalm 51:10. When David realized his heart was not right, what did he ask God?
To create in him a clean heart and a right spirit (or attitude)
14. Read 1 John 1:9. When you are cleansed from all unrighteousness that leaves you **righteous** (right before God).
15. Read Luke 2:36-37. Anna was a prophetess, but her first ministry was to **God**. She served (or worshipped) God with fasting and **prayers** night and day.
16. Read Acts 13:1-2. The prophets and teachers at Antioch ministered first of all to **the Lord**. Our ministry should also be first of all to God.
17. Read Matthew 22:36-37. The first commandment is still the first commandment. Our lives should center on **Loving** the Lord.
18. Read Colossians 3:17. What are some ways that we can love the Lord?
In everything we do, do it unto the Lord. Be thankful, worship, praise Him, and invite Christ into every area of our hearts, etc.

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