

Develop the Heart of a Leader

Sermon
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Israel demanded a king from God. Saul was appointed. He was not a man after God's heart. God eventually removed Saul and appointed David, a man after God's own heart. Today, God is still looking for individuals after His own heart to lead people. It's important to develop a godly heart for the future in God's Kingdom and for the responsibilities of a Christian now. 'Heart' can mean the physical organ. It's also linked to what goes on in the brain—how we respond to emotional states, and condition in your mind. How we respond to emotional and mental stimuli—thought, emotion and will are all linked together. It's makes you what you are as a person. Do we have the kind of heart God is looking for?

Deuteronomy 5: 29: "Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever."

Jeremiah 17: 9: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"

The normal and natural human heart without the Holy Spirit is deceitful. The natural mind and heart is deceitful and wicked and must be changed by God's word and God's Holy Spirit.

1) The first characteristic of a zealous and godly heart: It is focused on God's Kingdom and the fulfillment of God's plan for mankind.

Matthew 6: 33: "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."

Our physical needs and desires should not be the first concern. God will see to it that our needs are taken care of if we put Him first.

Acts 24: 15: "I have hope in God which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust."

Paul was defending himself before the accusations of the Jewish leaders. He was looking forward to the resurrection.

Matthew 6: 19 – 20: "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal."

"Treasures in heaven"—It's not just giving our tithes and offerings. It has to do with values in life. How you spend your time and effort, and what you do with your life. Are we drawing close to God in prayer, Bible study, fasting, serving other people?

2) The second characteristics of a zealous and godly heart: It is focused on doing the work of God.

John 4: 34: "Jesus said to them, 'My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.'"

Christ's motivation was doing the will of God.

Matthew 28: 19 - 20: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Part of judgment at Christ’s return will be based on whether we do what God says.

Matthew 24: 46: “Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.”

To grow spiritually, focus on doing God’s will.

Hebrews 10: 22: “let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.”

Develop sincerity, single mindedness and an honest heart. Go to God in the spirit of wanting to change; wanting to be able to see what it is about ourselves that needs to be changed.

David had a deep love and affection for God. He wanted to build a permanent temple.

I Kings 8: 17: “Now it was in the heart of my father David to build a house for the name of the LORD God of Israel.”

God, much of the time, was at the center of David’s thoughts. It is reflected in David’s life. When sin was pointed out, he repented deeply and went on to strive to not continue to repeat the same mistake again. God forgave him because of his sincerity of heart.

I Kings 11: 4: “For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the LORD his God, as was the heart of his father David.”

God didn’t look at David’s sins. God looked at the fact that David repented and diligently worked to not repeat those sins. If we go to God in repentance and seek His forgiveness and strive to change, He will not remember our sins.

Matthew 22: 37: “Jesus said to him, ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind.’”

This is the most essential of all commandments. It’s at the heart of the system of God’s law. This kind of love for God does not come naturally. It comes from God. We must ask for it, seek it, and strive to develop it.

Proverbs 15: 28: “The heart of the righteous studies how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil.”

People have all kinds of ideas and try to get others to conform to the ideas. We are to study scripture to find out what God expects of us—how to live our life, what actions to take in certain circumstances and the right answers to give.

3) The third characteristics of a godly heart: It is intensely focused on obedience to God. Ephesians 6: 5 – 6: “Servants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart,”

This applies to us in that most of us are accountable to someone else as employees and other ways. Don’t just be keeping the commandments when we come to church. Practice obedience to God at all times. Learn to do His will from the heart. Come to the point where we do His will because we believe in it, know it’s right and are committed to doing it.

II Timothy 2: 22: “Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”

Focus on obedience and serving God—the essential element of the heart of one who is righteous:

Psalm 37: 30 – 31: “The mouth of the righteous speaks wisdom, and his tongue talks of justice. The law of God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide.”

The law of God is in the heart of the righteous. It is there because we study God’s word and learn how to apply God’s word. Their hearts are fixed and focused on obedience to God.

Psalm 40: 8: “I delight to do Your will, O my God, and Your law is within my heart.”

There were times he failed to please God and sinned grievously.

Psalm 51: 10: “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”

Psalm 51—The prayer of repentance of David.

Ask God to help you overcome your weaknesses. Spiritual growth does not come spontaneously. It comes over time, and sometimes slowly.

Romans 6: 17: “But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.”

Written about our responsibilities as Christians. The issue had been raised that more sin meant more grace.

It said to obey God rather than own lusts.

4) The fourth characteristic of a godly heart: Humility.

Psalm 34: 18: “The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit.”

God hates arrogance, vanity and spiritual pride. We are to strive for godly humility. A broken heart means when you go to God, you are genuinely willing to face your own faults. It means you are grievously sorrowful, and willing to change, as opposed to going to God and reminding Him of everything you have done right. It is having the attitude of being willing to be shaped, as God wants to shape us. It does not resist God’s will, His judgment or His correction. People don’t like to admit wrong. They try to justify what they do and make it seem right. We try to make wrong seem right. Humility is forsaking that approach.

Psalm 51: 15: “O LORD, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise.”

Sacrifice pride, self-will, arrogance, and self righteousness.

Sometimes it’s tempting to envy those perceived as successful in the world. They are not successful because they did things in an upright way. Sometimes the crooks do get ahead. They have the power of the wealth!

Proverbs 16: 19: “Better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.”

Everyone will be held accountable to God in the end. All spoil will be worthless at that point. Only humility, godliness and character will be valued by God.

Isaiah 66: 2: “For all those things My hand has made, and all those things exist, says the LORD. But on this one will I look: On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word.”

We are to reflect this spirit and attitude in our thoughts, hearts and life if we want to be considered by God.

Zechariah 4: 6: “So he answered and said to me: ‘This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the LORD of hosts.”

I Peter 5: 5: “Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for ‘God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.’”

We must learn to consider others needs, preferences and desires in how we manage our lives. Don't run roughshod over other people and exert our will over theirs all the time. Exercise authority, or influence, to help others reach their potentials. We are to adjust our behavior to accommodate others needs and help them to reach their potential. It is not about aggrandizing oneself.

5) The fifth characteristic of a godly heart: It reflects a love for God's people.

Romans 5: 5: "Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit (which) was given to us."

If we are yielding to God's Spirit it will be manifested in our love for other people. God's spirit is a spirit of love.

I Corinthians 13: 13: "And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."

The most important gift is love.

I John 3: 14: "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death."

II Corinthians 8: 16: "But thanks be to God who puts the same earnest care for you into the heart of Titus."

It is reflected by how you serve and having genuine love for God's people.

I Peter 1: 22: "Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,"

The essential element of sincere love is obeying the truth.

I John 3: 16: "By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

It can apply to just giving up some of your time and/or material resources for others.

John 13: 35: "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

This is part of what defines a true disciple of Jesus Christ.

6) The sixth characteristic of a godly heart: A godly heart is merciful and kind.

Proverbs 3: 3: "Let not mercy and truth forsake you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart."

Be absolutely committed to the truth, but also to mercy. Don't condemn other people because we know truth and they don't, or because we think we know more truth than someone else.

Develop as leaders for God's Kingdom.