

FOURTH QUARTER STRATEGIES - Saturday, December 19, 2015

Let's get to the "heart" of the matter. As Christians we are to be men and women after God's own heart. I've always been fascinated by the life of King David. In Samuel 13:14 we hear Samuel inform King Saul, "But now your kingdom will not endure; the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people, because you have not kept the LORD's command." It appears that having the right heart attitude was important to God then and I believe it's every bit as important to Him today for all who claim Him as Lord and Savior. Even though King David's life was far from perfect, he remained a man after God's own heart!

In 1 Chronicles 28:9 King David publicly charges his heir Solomon with these words regarding the building of the temple, "And you, my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for the Lord searches every human heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts." To me it's obvious that our Lord truly cares about the heart of the matter. He knows our motives and loves a pure heart. Selfish motives do not please our Father in Heaven!

As followers of Christ we've all received new hearts as proclaimed in Ezekiel 11:19 and 36:26. Over the past twenty-plus years, one of my favorite praise songs to perform was A NEW HEART made popular by TRUTH. What the lyrics convey is there is no greater gift that God can give us than "a new heart" - one that is just like His since the Holy Spirit resides in us once we accept His gift of eternal life. Those verses in Ezekiel prophesy God's covenant promise to us. Do you have a new heart?

Please reflect upon this question and answer it honestly. You don't need to answer it out loud, but God wants each of us to let Him know where our heart truly lies. He wants to have a close relationship with all His creation and that becomes evident in our heart condition. If our hearts are right, we'll become pleasing to Him in ways that are obvious to others and to ourselves. Paul proclaims in 2 Corinthians 4:5-6, "For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ."

Let me ask you some tough questions - Does the light of Christ shine from your heart in your family relationships? What about your business relationships? And how about your daily personal relationships with those God places in your path? We're on a journey filled with ample opportunity to show the world just who resides in our heart. Christ resides in mine and I trust He resides in yours as well. We simply need to make room for Him and let Him take up permanent residence.

Here to serve,

Jim Langley, CLU

Passages to Ponder Psalm 44:20-21, 139:23-24; Proverbs 21:1-2; Ezekiel 11:19, 36:26; 2 Peter 1:19

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Passages to Ponder: Psalm 44:20-21, 139:23-24; Proverbs 21:1-2; Ezekiel 11:19, 36:26; 2 Peter 1:19

Psalm 44:20-21 New King James Version (NKJV)

²⁰ If we had forgotten the name of our God,
Or stretched out our hands to a foreign god,
²¹ Would not God search this out?
For He knows the secrets of the heart.

Psalm 139:23-24 New King James Version (NKJV)

²³ Search me, O God, and know my heart;
Try me, and know my anxieties;
²⁴ And see if *there is any* wicked way in me,
And lead me in the way everlasting.

Proverbs 21:1-2 New King James Version (NKJV)

²¹ The king's heart *is* in the hand of the LORD,
Like the rivers of water;
He turns it wherever He wishes.
² Every way of a man *is* right in his own eyes,
But the LORD weighs the hearts.

Ezekiel 11:19 New King James Version (NKJV)

¹⁹ Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh,

Ezekiel 36:26 New King James Version (NKJV)

²⁶ I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

2 Peter 1:19 New King James Version (NKJV)

¹⁹ And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts;