

The Heart/Mind Connection II Change Your Heart by Repentance

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I think it's very important for us to understand about the heart and the mind that they now have discovered that the heart actually has neuro cells just like the brain. It has axial connections just like the brain. The heart is the major organ that causes the whole body to respond as far as the endocrine and hormonal glands are concerned.

The heart also has to do with the emotional side of thinking! Since I did part one, two people have come to me who heard a radio program with someone who had a heart transplant.

One person, after she had the heart transplant, craved food that she hated before. So, her whole personality was changed because of the heart transplant. Another person said that he had flashbacks, visions of experiences that he never experienced. They were the experiences of the person whose heart he had.

Also, I think it's important that you understand that when they do heart surgery, that in many cases they say that the personality changes. Your heart does have to do with personality, and it *does have to do with your thinking and emotions!*

Another report I read was where the brain is continually producing new neuro cells. Every day you get a flush of new neuro cells, which is really good when you come to understand that God has provided a way for you to change, to overcome, for you to have your memory continuously go on. They say that your brain acts very much like a continuous tape recorder. Every day these new neurons come on and it records what you do and learn that day and it integrates it with the rest of your brain.

There are three parts of the brain where these new neuro cells are made every day: in the frontal part, and on each side where memory is contained. Also, they did an autopsy on Einstein's brain and the part that is given to mathematics was exceptionally large.

Was it exceptionally large because he was born with it? or Because through the exercise of that and the new neuro cells every day, it actually built up that part of his brain to have it function in that way?

It's almost like when you have a skilled worker, once he has these skills he can do it automatically, but what he does after that he can become more creative.

This is something we need to realize in relationship to children. But children need to learn everything by rote first; learning by heart. 'Mommy, I learned my times table by heart.'

As I covered in part one, emotions have a right place. Emotions should be used rightly. Emotions should never be used to replace true facts. Emotional feelings and true facts are entirely different. Just this morning as I was leaving the house, someone had come along and left a wonderful example of advertising. It's a little box put out by Oil of Olay. It shows a woman and daughter, and it's really ethnically correct. They do it that way for a purpose, because we're in a society that is diverse, so they get a picture of a woman and a daughter and they're ethnically correct, it would suit any race.

What they have on here, right in the front, is very interesting. This is all emotional, all appealing to the self and self-esteem.

(from the advertisement)

Looking beautiful is one thing. Feeling beautiful is everything!

When you look at that statement, that's glorifying the self, worshipping the self, *doing away with God!* They don't come out and say it, but if it is everything, it's a feeling. Whereas, ***knowing the true God and knowing Jesus Christ is everything!*** Not *feeling* beautiful. I looked inside and, lo and behold, here's what we have:

The new body language: moisturizing body wash. This is the new Olay Daily, renewal moisturizing body wash.

And they've got a couple of samples. Here's another one:

Good for your skin! Good for your spirit!

Now we're into spiritual things!

Lasting colors that care! Color moist lipstick! Lips feel soft and color lasts hour after hour. Dermatologist tested! Available in 48 shades!

There you go, and you've got a little bit you can try. Then you have the all-day moisturizer foundation, mascara; smudge proof and washes off easily with soap and water. **Are we getting wrapped up in ourselves?**

Oil of Olay is the proud sponsor of “I am beautiful.”

That’s registered trademark!

There’s a powerful documentary and outreach which is dedicated to empowering women to recognize their inner strength.

Straight from Eve!

Everything you need to look most beautiful: moisturizers, new complete UV protective moisturizer lotion. Vitamin E enriched, light, greaseless, Olay Moisture.

I imagine that this going to be a bombshell. They are going to increase sales like never before. If, with these emotional ads, they can increase the sales of Michelin Tires and American Express, think what this will do delivered to the door. This is a perfect example of emotional ads appealing to self-esteem that you are the most important person in the universe. That’s exactly what it is.

Looking beautiful is one thing; feeling beautiful is everything!

Let’s see what God says about beauty. We’re talking it here and this is all appealing to vanity.

Proverbs 31:30: “Favor *is* deceitful, and beauty *is* vain; **but a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.**” The way of the world is totally different than that.

Let’s see what God is going to do with all this vanity in the end-time, for men and women. Here it talks about the women. Some women think that every time I read a Scripture concerning women, that I’m picking on women and that I’m prejudice against women. Not so! I’m not! Here’s what God says concerning the women. It’s in the Bible, so if I read it from the Bible, it’s Scripture! If this is picking on women, then God is picking on women! But that incongruous, because He created them!

Isaiah 3:16: “And the LORD says, ‘Because the daughters of Zion are proud... [this is not against all women, but haughty women] ...and have walked with stretched out necks and ogling with *their* eyes, walking and mincing *as* they go, and making a tinkling with their feet”—*and Oil of Olay!*

You have to think of things like what was mentioned and all the things that are in cosmetics. I know a woman who used to bleach her hair this platinum blonde, and she used to get red streaks down the back of her neck. You know that can’t be good. Some of these things are going to lead to this.

Verse 17: “Therefore, the LORD will strike with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of

Zion, and the LORD will uncover their secret parts.’ In that day the LORD will take away the beauty of ankle bracelets, and the headbands, and the crescents, the pendants, and the bracelets, and the veils; the headdresses, and the leg ornaments, and the sashes, and the boxes of perfume, and the earrings; the rings and nose jewels; the festal apparel and the outer garments; and the mantles, and the purses; the mirrors and the fine linen; and the turbans and the veils. And there shall be, instead of fragrance, rottenness; and instead of a sash, a rope; and instead of well-set hair, baldness; and instead of a rich robe, a wrapping of sackcloth; *and* branding instead of beauty. Your men shall fall by the sword, and your mighty in the war” (vs 17-25).

There’s what God says about the vain, haughty beauty of this world! Whenever you watch any of those fashion shows, that’s what you see. They are the saddest looking, thinnest looking... I don’t know how they walk!

We can have a little fun with this, but the truth is that *all of these things are leading people astray!* Just stop and think for a minute: How many commercials a day are you bombarded with when you listen to the radio and television? All of these things affect us. All the things that come to us, that affect our heart and mind one way or the other, because that’s the way we’re made.

We have to learn to use it properly according to the things that God shows in His Word!

Let’s review about *the spirit in man*. The heart, the spirit and the mind all work together. So, the spirit in man is very important. It is the spirit in man that we have, or the spirit of man, which God has made and given to us so that we have intellect and we have feelings and emotions and things like this that interact with our heart that makes us distinct from all the animals. The animals run by instinct, whereas, human beings are created to operate by *choice*. We are to be thinking beings. That’s why God made us the way that He did. In order for us to be thinking beings we need to have *the spirit of man in us!*

Zechariah 12:1: “The burden of the Word of the LORD for Israel. Thus says the LORD, who stretches forth the heavens, and lays the foundation of the earth, **and forms the spirit of man within him.**”

In order to have life, you have to have the spirit, so therefore, we can conclude that most probably the spirit of man is given to the individual at the point of conception. That’s when there is life!

We also found where Elihu talked to Job and said; Job 32:8: “But ***there is a spirit in man*** and the ***inspiration of the Almighty gives them understanding.***”

This is showing how the Spirit of God works with *the spirit of man*. Let’s see how that was understood by the Apostle Paul. We’re going to learn some pretty important things concerning the *spirit in man* and *the Spirit of God*. There’s also called ‘the spirit of the world’ showing that Satan is ‘the prince of the power of the air.’

From your heart and mind there is an electromagnetic hologram outline of you! This electromagnetic hologram is what Satan uses to tune into you. He can throw thoughts at you, which are called *fiery missiles or darts!*

In any given room that you are sitting in, there are hundreds of radio waves passing through the room, television waves, digital waves. If you have a cellular phone it would go right on up to the satellite in space and it would make your phone call wherever you want to go. These things are everywhere! The problem comes when you have so many of these things that it interferes with your electromagnetic field that you have, and then it begins to interfere with your health, your mind and your heart. All of those things really become quite a particular response of your body.

1-Corinthians 1:9: “But according as it is written, ‘*The eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.*’”

Of course, the love of God starts from the heart! The heart can be changed; you can change your heart by using the Spirit of God and the Word of God in a proper way.

As we will see, God looks to the heart. So, sometimes a lot of the things that you may think or a lot of things that you may feel, in the way of negative, depressive, down, or whatever, God is not looking to that. God is looking to your heart in relationship to Him, which becomes the most important thing that we need to understand.

We could entitle this as *the heart of David and the mind of Christ*, and that’s what God wants us to have.

Verse 10: “But God has revealed *them* to us by His Spirit, for the Spirit...” This ties in with what Elihu said to Job, that the inspiration is of the Almighty. He’s given us the *spirit in man*; the inspiration is from Him!

“...for the Spirit searches all things—even the deep things of God” (v 10). God wants us to

know those things. There’s nothing wrong with asking God to help us understand the deep things that He has. ***If we:***

- yield to God
- we have the right kind of heart
- the right kind of spirit
- the right kind of attitude

Then God will reveal those things to us! God is the One Who makes it possible!

Verse 11: “For who among men... [any man] ...understands the things of man except *by* the spirit of man, which *is* in him?... [God has put it there] ...In the same way also, the things of God no one understands except ***by the Spirit of God.***”

In other words, people cannot just take the Bible—the Word of God—and open it up and read it like a book and understand it. When they come to things that say:

- ‘you shall not commit adultery,’ *they have an excuse* ‘you shall not steal,’ *they have an excuse*
- ‘you shall not have any other gods before you,’ *they have an excuse*
- ‘you shall not do as the heathen do,’ *they have an excuse*
- ***‘It’s my belief!’***

So, God has to do something with His Spirit and your spirit and heart in order to make that connection.

Verse 12: “Now, we have not received the spirit of the world...”—which comes from Satan, and he appeals to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life.

When we begin to understand the things around us, we see how all of these things that Satan is using in developing his great occult society. He’s appealing more and more to the self. When you look to the self, you’re going to find yourself in bad shape.

1-John 2:15: “Do not love the world... [Why? ***Because there’s the spirit of the world***] ...nor the things *that are* in the world...”

I tell you what, there are jillions of things. We were looking through a catalog the other day put out by Penny’s. that’s one little store in one little place, one little speck on the earth, and they’ve got so many things in it, page after page after page. If you would look at any store, put them all together—take all the categories that you would want to take—and the things of man and life that are in the world. It’s just overwhelming!

“...If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him... [loving God is everything] ...because everything that *is* in the world... [inspired by the spirit of the world: Satan the devil] ...the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pretentious pride of physical life—is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world and its lust is passing away, but the one who does the will of God abides forever” (vs 15-17).

The will of God is the paramount important thing. Not many people realize it, but the way that the model prayer is given... How does that start?

- *Our Father Who is in heaven...!* So, we’re looking to God the Father in heaven.
- *Holy is Your name!* Getting your mind off yourself and on God. You’re getting your mind off of what you want, and on to what God wants.
- *Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven!* Is there anything in heaven that is going on that is contrary to the will of God? *No!*

When we say *on earth*, it’s meaning *in our lives!* Eventually, when Christ returns, that will be the whole world, of course!

1-Corinthians 2:12: “Now, we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that *is* of God, so that we might know the things graciously given to us by God.” *That’s the most important thing! That is everything!* When you come to the point that ***you quit***:

- playing church
- playing religion
- looking to yourself

And you start looking to God for everything, then you’ll really begin to understand it!

Rom. 8—the reason I’m going back here is to show that the spirit of this world, as Paul said, is ‘the spirit of bondage and fear.’ What overcomes fear? *Perfect love casts out all fear!*

Romans 8:14: “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God. Now, you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear, but you have received *the* Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit... [of God] ...itself **bears witness conjointly with our own spirit**... [showing that the spirit of man is there] ...*testifying* that we are *the* children of God” (vs 14-16).

1-Corinthians 2:13: “Which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom...” that’s why God doesn’t want us to put the philosophies of the world and graft it into the Word

of God and come up with some half-cocked religion like Satan the devil has. He doesn’t want that!

“...but in *words* taught by *the* Holy Spirit *in order to* communicate spiritual things by spiritual means” (v 13).

That’s how you understand the Scriptures, you compare it with spiritual things. One way to overcome a lot of the emotions that you might have is to begin comparing the spiritual things. Why? *Because the heart is deceitful above all things!* We can deceive ourselves with

- our feelings
- our intellect
- a perspective of things

when we’re not comparing it with the Word of God and the spiritual things of God!

Verse 14: “But *the* natural man... [just a carnal person] ...does not receive the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand *them* because they are spiritually discerned” —*or understood!*

Now let’s talk about what God knows and understand, and another name of God that He is called. Peter is telling why he went to Cornelius:

Acts 15:8: “And **God, Who knows the heart**, bore witness to them *by* giving them the Holy Spirit, even as *He did* to us, and made no difference between us and them, **and has purified their hearts** through the faith” (vs 8-9).

If you have your heart purified, that means it can be changed! We’re going to see how that can happen and what you need to do. But what is important here is “And God, **Who knows the heart**...” In the Greek it is *the heart knowing God!* God is the One Who knows the heart, and that is the thing that we need to realize and understand.

1-Kings 8—part of this is the prayer of Solomon at the dedication of the temple. We’re going to see several things involved, especially how God wants us to *walk before Him with all our heart*. We’ll see later on, *seek Him with all our heart*, and *return to God with all our heart*. ***That is all a part of your relationship with God!***

Proverbs 4:20: “My son, attend to my words... [put this in relationship to God the Father talking to you as a very son of God] ...incline your ear to my sayings. Let them not depart from your eyes; **keep them in the midst of your heart**, for they *are* life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh. **Above all guard the door of your mind with diligence, for out of it are the issues of life**” (vs 20-23).

This is going to affect everything that you do. It's very important; not only your mind, but your heart.

Verse 24: "Put away from you a deceitful mouth, and devious lips put far from you. Let your eyes look right on, and let your eyelids look straight before you. Ponder the path of your feet, and all your ways *will be* established. Do not turn to the right hand nor to the left; remove your foot from evil" (vs 24-27).

You can probably tie in many Scriptures that would fit right in there with it. Take this section and do a particular Bible study about:

- how you are to walk
- how your are to turn from evil
- how you're not to go to the right hand or the left hand
- how you're to not to add to or take away from the Word of God

1-Kings 8:22: "And Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel and spread forth his hands toward the heavens. And he said, 'LORD God of Israel, *there is* no god like You, in heaven above or on earth beneath, who keeps covenant and mercy **with Your servants who walk before You with all their heart...** [that's what David did; he was a man after God's heart] ...Who has kept with Your servant David my father what You promised him. You also spoke with Your mouth and have fulfilled with Your hand, as *it is* today'" (vs 22-24).

I recommend that you read the whole prayer of Solomon here; it's really a very powerful prayer.

Verse 44: "If Your people go out to battle against their enemy, wherever You shall send them, and shall pray to the LORD toward the city which You have chosen, and the house that I have built for Your name, then hear in heaven their prayer and their cry, and maintain their cause. If they sin against You (for *there is* no man who does not sin), and if You are angry with them and have delivered them up before the enemy and they have been led away captive to the land of the enemy, far or near, yet, if they shall think within themselves in the land..." (vs 44-47). ***In other words, come to themselves and repent!***

"...where they are carried captives, and repent, and pray to You in the land of their captors saying, 'We have sinned and have done perversely, we have done wickedly,' and **so return to You with all their heart...**" (vs 47-48). ***Repentance must precede a change of heart!***

"...and with all their soul, in the land of

their enemies who led them away captive, and if they pray to You toward their land which You gave to their fathers, to the city which You have chosen, and the house which I have built for Your name, **then hear their prayer and their cry in heaven** Your dwelling place, and maintain their cause, **and forgive Your people who have sinned against You,** even all their sins which they have done against You, and give them compassion before their captors, so that they may have compassion on them; for they *are* Your people, and Your inheritance, which You brought out of Egypt from the middle of the furnace of iron; for Your eyes shall be open to the prayer of Your servant, and to the prayer of Your people Israel, to hearken to them whenever they call to You" (vs 48-52). ***Let's see how that was literally fulfilled!***

The Jews were in captivity in Babylon. They were rejected of God! They were to be there seven years before they were able to return, and it talks about 'Your servant' and 'Your people' that we just read in 1-Kings 8. We have that literally fulfilled right here; this is Daniel praying. Daniel was a *servant of God!* Who was he praying for? *The people of God!*

Daniel 9:1: "In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans, in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood by books the number of the years, which came according to the Word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years" (vs 1-2).

God answered this prayer very shortly, because this is quite a profound prayer, and literally following what Solomon prayed about in his original prayer as part of the covenant that God made with Solomon when the temple was built. Of course, the temple was destroyed, and the city was destroyed. So, this is a literal fulfillment of that section of 1-Kings 8.

Verse 3: "And I set my face toward the LORD God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes. And I prayed to the LORD my God and made my confession, and said..." (vs 3-4).

Notice how he made confession, and this follows right along with the outline of the model prayer. First of all, you praise God! You look to Him.

"... 'O LORD, the great and awesome God, keeping the covenant and mercy to those who love Him, and to those who keep His commandments, we have sinned...' " (vs 4-5). Daniel didn't say 'your people have sinned.' He said, "...**we** have sinned..."

including himself!

“...and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, and have turned aside from Your commandments and from Your ordinances. Neither have we hearkened unto Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our rulers, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. O LORD, righteousness *belongs* to You, but to us confusion of face, as at this day to the men of Judah and to the people of Jerusalem, and to all Israel who are near and who are afar off, through all the countries where You have driven them because they dealt treacherously with You. O Lord, confusion of face belongs to us, to our kings, to our rulers, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against You” (vs 5-8). *You can read the rest of the prayer!*

Verse 16: “O LORD, I pray You, according to all Your righteousness, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Your Holy mountain. Because of our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people have become a reproach to all those who are around us. And now, therefore, O our God, **hear the prayer of Your servant, and his supplications**, and cause Your face to shine upon Your sanctuary that is desolate for the LORD’S sake. **O my God, incline Your ear and hear.** Open Your eyes and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by Your name. For we do not present our supplications before You on account of our righteousnesses, **but because of Your great mercies.** O LORD, hear; O LORD, forgive; O LORD, hearken and do. Do not delay, for Your own sake, O my God; for Your city and Your people are called by Your name” (vs 16-19).

Verse 20: “And while I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin, and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the Holy mountain of my God; yea, while I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision...” (vs 20-21).

What was it a vision of? *When the Messiah would come!* A profound answer to the prayer; God answered that prayer immediately!

Let’s see what’s so important concerning God. Let’s understand this. **God knows** that *man at his very best is altogether vanity!* **God knows** that we are going to sin, just like Solomon said, ‘What man is there that sins not?’ Here’s what we need to do. Deut. 30 is what the people of God need to do:

- those who left God
- those who have given up on the Sabbath

- those who have turned back and gone into the world

As long as there is life there is hope! But they are going to have make the choices. They are going to have to come back to God. We just pray that God will send His Spirit or an angel to prick their heart and conscience and bring them back.

Deuteronomy 30:1: “And it shall be when all these things have come on you... [all the things of Deut. 28 & 29] ...the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and when you shall call *them* to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God has driven you, and shall **return to the LORD** your God **and shall obey His voice** according to all that I command you today, you and your children, **with all your heart and with all your soul**” (vs 1-2). *That’s what God wants!*

Verse 3: “Then the LORD your God will turn *away* your captivity. And He will have compassion on you, and will return and gather you from all the nations where the LORD your God has scattered you.”

God is going to bring them back; actually talking about the end-time, which is yet ahead of us.

Psalms 78:31—a very instructive Psalm: “The wrath of God came upon them and killed the strongest of them, and struck down the chosen men of Israel. For all this they still sinned and did not believe in His wonderful works” (vs 31-32).

How hard can the human heart get? *Right there under the pillar of fire by night and the cloud by day!* And after seeing all the plagues and miracles that He did to destroy the Egyptians!

Verse 33: “Therefore, He ended their days in vanity and their years in terror.... [40 years of it] ...When He slew them, then they sought Him...” (vs 33-34).

Why does God cause these things to happen? *Just like it is today, when people have their hearts so hard, they need something so profound to shake them!* That’s why we have all the disaster and things coming about now, to shake people to their senses; maybe their hearts will be softened a bit.

What happened when He slew them? “...and they turned back and sought after God earnestly” (v 34). Isn’t that true? *Even an atheist prays when he’s in trouble!*

Verse 35: “And they remembered that God was their Rock, and the Most High God was their Redeemer. Nevertheless, they flattered Him with their mouths, and they lied to Him with their tongues, for their heart was not steadfast with Him;

neither were they faithful in His covenant” (vs 35-37). **How is your heart with God?**

Verse 38: “But He, *being* full of compassion, forgave their iniquity and did not destroy them; yea, many times He turned His anger away and did not stir up all His wrath, for He remembered that they were but flesh, a wind that passes away and does not come again. How often did they provoke Him in the wilderness and grieve Him in the desert! And still again they tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel” (vs 38-41).

That’s exactly what’s happening today. Why is there going to be such catastrophe at the end-time? *It’s literally the only way that God is going to be able to get their attention to get them come to a point of repenting because their hearts are so hard!* They’ve hardened their hearts! It’s a shame, but they have!

Joel 2:11: “And the LORD shall utter His voice before His army; for His camp *is* exceedingly great; for powerful *is He* who executes His Word, for the Day of the LORD *is* great and very terrible; and who can endure it?... [Who can abide in it or live in it?] ... ‘Therefore, even now,’ says the LORD, **‘turn to Me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning. Yes, rend your heart and not your garments, and return to the LORD your God:** for He *is* gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and He repents of the evil. Who knows *if* He will return and repent and leave a blessing behind Him...” (vs 11-14).

Who’s to know in these times of terrible straights and troubles that God will not reach down and help a lot of people? *He will!* That’s what the 144,000 and the great innumerable multitude of Rev. 7 is all about. That’s about a fulfillment of these four verses here in Joel, vs 11-14; *a literally fulfillment of it!*

(go to the next track)

Now we’re going to see not only are we to walk in God’s ways and return to Him, but ***we are to seek Him!*** 2-Chron. 15 is really quite an instruction of the two sides of the coin:

1. your heart is right to being with
2. you harden your heart at the end

This is quite profound. We’re going to learn a lot of lessons today about how the heart is so important with our relationship with God. If our heart is right, then our mind will be right.

2-Chronicles 15:1: “And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded. And he went out to meet Asa, and said to him, ‘Hear me, Asa, and

all Judah and Benjamin. **The LORD is with you while you are with Him...**” (vs 1-2).

Profound principle; you can’t leave God and expect God to be with you, because *you are not honoring God!* You are not doing His will!

“...And **if you seek Him, He will be found by you.** But **if you forsake Him, He will forsake you**” (v 2).

Acts 17—Paul comes to Mars Hill in Athens, and this is quite a testimony to these people. They were never called, and they were left to their own devices. I don’t recall in the New Testament that there was ever a church at Athens. There are churches at Corinth, Philippi, Macedonia and Achaia, but not here.

Acts 17:22: “Then Paul stood in *the* center of Mars Hill *and* said...” He used the means of communication that they had in his day. That is he went to the town square, which was Mars Hill, where they had all of the Epicureans and Stoics and they were arguing back and forth with their philosophies and so forth.

“...‘Men, Athenians, I perceive *that* in all things you are **very reverent to deities...** [devoted to demons; that’s exactly what’s happening in the world today] ...for *as* I was passing through and observing the objects of your veneration, I also found an altar on which was inscribed, “To an unknown God.” So then, He Whom you worship in ignorance *is* the One *that* I proclaim to you. He *is* the God Who made the world and all things that *are* in it. Being *the* Lord of heaven and earth, He does not dwell in temples made by hands; nor is He served by the hands of men, as *though* He needs anything, *for* He gives to all life and breath and all things” (vs 22-25).

Meaning that *you as a human being cannot work out your own salvation without God and Christ, the grace of God and the love of God!*

As Elihu said, ‘If a man has control over his spirit’—which he doesn’t... Why? *Because if you had control over your spirit you could live forever!* ***God has that control!***

Verse 26: “And He made of one blood all the nations of men to dwell upon all the face of the earth, having determined beforehand *their* appointed times and the boundaries of their dwelling; **in order that they might seek the Lord...**” (vs 26-27). *God has made it possible for all people!*

“...if perhaps they might **feel** after Him and might find Him... [that comes from the heart; from the emotions] ...though truly, He is not far from each one of us, for **in Him we live and move and**

have our being..." (vs 27-28). *That's why God wants all of our heart! Seek Him with all your heart!*

"...as some of the poets among you also have said, 'For we are His offspring.' Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we should not think that the Godhead *is* like that which *is made of* gold, or silver, or stone—a graven thing of art *devised by the* imagination of man; for *although* God has indeed overlooked the times of this ignorance, He now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has set a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by a Man Whom He has appointed, having given proof to all *by raising Him from the dead*" (vs 28-31).

That was quite a powerful sermon! They were going in there where they had migration of souls and reincarnation and all this sort of thing and telling them about the resurrection of the dead. The reason that we can look at it is so that God is the same in the New Testament as in the Old Testament. He told Asa:

2-Chronicles 15:2: "...The LORD *is* with you while you are with Him. And if you seek Him, He will be found by you. But if you forsake Him, He will forsake you. And for a long time Israel *had been* without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law. And when they turned in their trouble to the LORD God of Israel, and sought Him, He was found by them. And in those times *there was* no peace to him who went out, nor to him who came in, but great tumult *was* upon all the inhabitants of the lands" (vs 2-5).

He gives them the admonitions here, v 6: "And nation was destroyed by nation, and city-by-city, for God troubled them with every adversity. But you be strong and do not let your hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded" (vs 6-7).

Notice what they did, **here is action to repentance**, v 8: "And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage and put away the abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities, which he had taken from Mount Ephraim. And he renewed the altar of the LORD before the porch of the LORD. And *he* gathered..." (vs 8-9)—*all together!*

Verse 12: "And they entered into a covenant to seek the LORD God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul." *That's all the people!*

It would be great if there were some kind of revival like this with the people of God! That would be something!

Verse 13: "And that whoever would not seek the LORD God of Israel should be put to

death... [they put 'teeth' into this covenant; this was a special covenant] ...whether small or great, whether man or woman. And they swore to the LORD with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with silver trumpets, and with rams' horns. And all Judah rejoiced at the oath, **for they had sworn with all their heart and sought Him with their whole desire....** [see how God responded to them] ...And He was found by them, and the LORD gave them rest all around. And also *as to* Maachah the mother of Asa the king, he removed her from *being* queen mother..." (vs 13-16).

That's real action! Jesus said, 'He that comes to Me and hates not his father, mother, brother, sister, children, lands and his own life also, **cannot be My disciple.**' *That's exactly what Asa did here!* He didn't count his mother as anything before God. He removed her

"...because she had made an idol in a grove. And Asa cut down her idol and stamped it and burned *it* at the brook Kidron" (v 16). And she probably said, 'Oh, why are you doing this, Sonny, don't you love your mommy.'

Verse 17: "But the high places were not taken away out of Israel. Nevertheless, the heart of Asa was perfect all his days"—*except when he went wrong at the end.*

Verse 18: "And he brought into the house of God the things which his father had dedicated, and that which he himself had dedicated, silver and gold and vessels. And there was no war to the thirty-fifth year of the reign of Asa" (vs 18-19).

The story continues, and here's a good example of what happens. You can come along at one point in your life:

- you can be right with God
- your heart can be right with God
- you can be seeking God
- God is with you, you are with Him
- God's Spirit is with you and leading you

Then there comes a day and you forget God, and you start leaning on your on devices. Since we're living in the Laodicean age today, isn't that easy for a lot of people to do? **No question about it! It's all about the heart!**

2-Chronicles 16:1: "In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah and built Ramah so that he might let no one go out or come in to Asa king of Judah."

What was happening was a lot of the children of Israel up in the northern ten tribes were coming down to be with Asa, the king of Judah, and

coming to the Feast and so forth. The king wanted to stop that!

We might just add that *instead of seeking God, then Asa*, v 2: “Asa brought out silver and gold from the treasures of the house of the LORD... [which belonged to God] ...and of the king’s house and sent them to Ben-Hadad king of Syria, who lived at Damascus, saying, ‘Let there be a treaty between you and me as *there was* between my father and your father....’” (vs 2-3)—going back to the way his father was going.

“...Behold, I have sent you silver and gold. Go, break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel so that he may depart from me.’ And Ben-Hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel. And they struck Ijon and Dan, and Abel Maim, and all the store cities of Naphtali. And it came to pass when Baasha heard it, he left off building Ramah and let his work stop. And Asa the king took all Judah, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and timber with which Baasha was building. And he built with it Geba and Mizpah. And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him, ‘Because you have relied on the king of Syria and have not relied on the LORD your God, therefore, the army of the king of Syria has escaped out of your hand’” (vs 3-7). *He’s talking about a past battle that he had won!*

This is what’s so important; this guarantees that we will never be forsaken of God, v 9: “For **the eyes of the LORD run to and fro in all the whole earth to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is perfect toward Him....**”

You can have all kinds of faults, difficulties, problems, **but your heart can be perfect.** That’s something! That’s amazing! The way that it’s perfect is because you’re in a constant attitude of :

- repentance
- thanking God
- knowing that God is there
- not looking to yourself
- not relying upon yourself

But looking to Him and His will! That’s what makes your heart perfect toward God. That’s why the model prayer is, ‘*Not my will be done,*’ as Christ said, ‘*but Your will be done!*’ How is it that the eyes of the Lord run to and fro in the earth? *God’s eyeballs are not out of his sockets*, like one man said. There’s a hard heart! That’s not what it’s talking about here.

Revelation 5:6—this is happening all the time: “Then I saw, and behold, before the throne and the four living creatures, and before the elders, **was standing a Lamb as having been slain, having**

seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God that are sent into all the earth.”

So, those seven spirits of God, wherever they are, are going into all the earth. You can kind of liken that to God’s super spiritual satellite tracker, that’s going all over the earth.

2-Chronicles 16:9: “For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro in all the whole earth to show Himself strong on behalf of those **whose heart is perfect toward Him....**”

You can understand that God also said that ***He would not ever forsake you! Or leave you!*** As long as our heart is right with God—and they can be—and we can be loaded with all kinds of problems and difficulties but still have our heart right with God. That’s what’s important!

Now he’s talking about where Hanani the seer said to Asa said did wrong, “...In this you have done foolishly; therefore, from now on you shall have wars” (v 9).

Instead of repenting, notice Asa hardened his heart, right at the end he hardened his heart. What happens when you sin and don’t repent? *You’re not willing to admit that you’re wrong!*

Verse 10: “And Asa was angry with the seer and put him in a prison house. for *he was* in a rage against him because of this. And Asa oppressed some of the people at that time.”

That’s quite a story what Asa did! That’s how a person can turn back and go against God. You don’t want to let your heart be hardened.

Psa. 119 is absolutely a marvelous Psalm. As far as the Psalms are concerned, this is one of my favorites. I believe that these are the prophetic words of Christ and His attitude toward God’s way.

Psalm 40:6—here is a prophecy of Christ: “Sacrifice and offering You did not desire; My ears You have opened; burnt offering and sin offering You have not required. Then I said, ‘Lo, I come; in the Scroll of the Book it is written of Me; I delight to do Your will, O My God; and **Your Law is within My heart**’” (vs 6-8).

That’s what God wants in our heart and in our mind! ***We need to have the heart of David and the mind of Christ!*** We can all do that.

Then it talks about what Christ did in preaching, v 9: I have preached righteousness in the great congregation; lo, I have not kept back my lips, O LORD, You know. I have not hidden Your righteousness within my heart; I have declared Your faithfulness and Your salvation; I have not hidden Your loving kindness and Your Truth from the great

congregation” (vs 9-10). *The whole Gospel is what is a fulfilling of that!*

Therefore, in Christ saying that these are the prophetic words of Christ and His attitude toward the laws of God, this is really absolutely true.

Psalms 119:1: “Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the Law of the LORD. Blessed are they who keep His testimonies and who seek Him **with the whole heart**. They also do no iniquity; they walk in His ways” (vs 1-3).

Listen! If you’re keeping the laws of God and His commandments, are you doing iniquity? *No!* You’re being obedient!

Verse 9: With what shall a young man cleanse his way?... [young man/old man, young woman/old woman] ...By taking heed according to Your Word.” *Paying full attention to God’s way!*

Verse 10: “**With all my heart** I have sought You...” That’s the wholeheartedness that God wants you to have.

Verse 32: “I will run the way of Your commandments for You shall enlarge my heart.” Not physically enlarging the heart. Someone asked what this meant thinking God gives you an enlarged heart and now your diseased. He actually said that to me. You run across some strange people once in a while. That means that *when you have filled the heart with God’s Word!*

Verse 36: “Incline my heart to Your testimonies, and not to covetousness. Turn away my eyes from seeing vanity; give me life in Your way” (vs 36-37). Did not Christ have to do all of that? *Every bit of it!*

Verse 80: “**Let my heart be blameless in Your statutes**, so that I may not be ashamed.” In other words, be able to make right judgments, right decisions. *The right use of the emotions! Why? That will govern the way in which you think!* You won’t let your heart be carried away with emotion after the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life.

Verse 111: “I have taken Your testimonies as an inheritance forever, for **they are the rejoicing of my heart.**”

That’s why God’s Word is so powerful; when you read it, it should rejoice your heart. So, if you’re depressed and down, get out God’s Word, read it and study it! If that doesn’t work, get on your knees and start reading and studying the Psalms, praying to God, asking Him to help you. Read all those Psalms where David cried out and said, ‘O God, the miry clay is taking me down, I’m overwhelmed and you’ve lifted me out of the pit.’

Verse 112: “I have inclined my heart to perform Your statutes always... [constantly going God’s way] ...even to the end.”

Now let’s look at the other end of it. That is a tender heart, *the heart of David, the heart of Christ!* Let’s look at the other end of it, because there are some people who have done this. Just like Asa, who started out right but in the end *he hardened his heart* and paid the price.

Proverbs 21:29: “A wicked man hardens his face... [and his heart, too, as we understand] ...but *as for* the upright, he establishes his way.”

Let’s see how this works. What happens when you harden your heart? What does God do? How does God respond? *Here is the example of Pharaoh!* We can also see this, without a doubt! Sometimes you can have a hard heart, but you can still be pleasant about it. How is that?

If you come across some people who used to keep the Sabbath and find out that they’re doing other things and you try and talk to them about it. They sort of are very condescending and sort of like ‘you poor little puppy dog’ and I’ll pat you on the head. ‘Sorry about that, but we don’t need to keep any of those things anymore.’ They’ve hardened their heart! What happens over a period of time?

Exodus 8:19: “And the priests said to Pharaoh, ‘This is the finger of God.’ And **Pharaoh’s heart was hardened**, and he did not hearken to them, as the LORD had said.”

Verse 32: “And **Pharaoh hardened his heart** at this time also, neither would he let the people go.”

When you harden your heart, what does God do? Exodus 9:12: “And **the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh...**” *If you harden your heart, then God is going to harden it even more!*

The Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, but it also says in Exo. 8:32 that “...Pharaoh hardened his heart...” So, it was together. Pharaoh hardened his heart, then God hardened it.

Exodus 9:7: “And Pharaoh sent, and, behold, there was not one of the livestock of the Israelites dead. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go.” *Rather than saying, my what a miracle this is!* All the cattle are alive, I’d better honor God. *No! Pharaoh’s heart was hardened!*

What happens when the hardhearted has just a little bit of remorse, but not repentance?

Verse 27: “And Pharaoh sent and called for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, ‘**I have sinned**

this time... [*This one time I sinned, but not before!*] ...The LORD is righteous, and I and my people are wicked. Pray to the LORD, *for it is* enough. Let there be no *more* mighty thunderings and hail..." (vs 27-28).

Now, living in Egypt and never having seen that kind of thing going on, that must have absolutely scared them to the very bottom of their toenails!

Verse 34: "And when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders had ceased, **he sinned still more and hardened his heart**, he and his servants. And **the heart of Pharaoh was hardened**, neither would he let the children of Israel go, even as the LORD had spoken by Moses" (vs 34-35).

After God sent some more plagues; He sent the plague of locust:

Exodus 10:3: "And Moses and Aaron came in to Pharaoh and said to him, 'Thus says the LORD God of the Hebrews, "How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me? Let My people go so that they may serve Me.'" Of course, he didn't do that, he hardened his heart again! The great locust came that stripped everything else. Let's see the result of that:

Verse 16: "Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste. And he said, '**I have sinned against the LORD your God, and against you.** Now, therefore, I beg you, forgive my sin only this once..." (vs 16-17).

This is remorse and repentance of the world, not to God; he didn't repent from the heart. He just looked at the circumstances and was overwhelmed.

"...and pray to the LORD your God that He may take away from me this death only.' And he went out from Pharaoh, and prayed to the LORD. And the LORD turned a mighty strong west wind, which took away the locusts and threw them into the Red Sea. There did not remain one locust in all the boundaries of Egypt. But **the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart**, and he did not let the children of Israel go" (vs 17-20).

So, then God sent the plague of darkness so much that they could feel it for three days.

Verse 24: "And Pharaoh called for Moses, and said, 'You go serve the LORD. Only let your flocks and your herds be left....'" In other words, now you're going to leave all the animals, because we need them! Let your little ones also go with you.' And Moses said, 'You must give us also sacrifices and burnt offerings so that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God. Our livestock also shall go with us.

There shall not be a hoof left behind, for we must take from them to serve the LORD our God. And we do not know *with* what we must serve the LORD until we come there.' But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go.... [notice Pharaoh's attitude] ...And Pharaoh said to him, '**Get away from me! Take heed to yourself! See my face no more, for in the day you see my face you shall die.**' And Moses said, 'You have spoken well. I will never see your face again'" (vs 24-29).

IF you harden your heart, **God hardens it!** If you come to repentance a little bit and don't change your heart, **then God hardens it even more!** So, it becomes a progressive thing. That's why the heart is so important.

Let's see how this worked in the New Testament. 2-Pet. 2 talks about all the false teachers and things that would come in. We've had plenty of those today, haven't we?

2-Peter 2:10: "But particularly those who walk after *the* flesh in corrupting lust, and hold in utter contempt *the* lordship of God. They are audacious and self-willed. They are not afraid to blaspheme *the* Divine powers whereas angels, who are greater in strength and power, do not bring a railing condemnation against them before *the* Lord. But these—as irrational brute beasts, born to be caught and destroyed—**blaspheme those things of which they are ignorant**, and shall be utterly destroyed in their own corruption. They are bringing upon themselves *the* reward of unrighteousness, while finding pleasure in satisfying *their* lustful desires day-by-day. They are stains and blemishes, reveling in their own deceptions, while feasting together with you" (vs 10-13).

That's why sometimes our church experience becomes very hard to endure. It's not God, it's not you; it's those who have come in deceiving themselves deliberately to undermine faith and change.

Verse 14: "Having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, *they are engaged in* seducing unstable souls, having a heart trained in *lustful* cravings—cursed children."

This is the ultimate of it. The same thing that happened with Pharaoh, happened with these teachers. As far as a teacher is concerned, you need to be very, very careful.

- When Christ came, did He speak a word of Himself? *No!*
- When Christ taught, did He speak His own opinion as the Word of God? *No!*
- Did He do anything contrary to the Word

of God? *No!*

He said, ***'I do as the Father has given Me commandment, so speak I.'***

Deuteronomy 18:18: "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, *One* like you, and will put My words in His mouth. And He shall speak to them all that I shall command Him." That's what Jesus did. {note sermon: *That Prophet*} ***Whom God sends speaks the words of God!***

Verse 19: "And it shall come to pass, whatever man will not hearken to My words, which He shall speak in My name, I will require *it* of him. **But the prophet who shall presume to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak... [include writing in that] ...or who shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die**" (vs 19-20),

So, when we have circumstances as Peter describes with these men who have snuck in, they have hardened their hearts.

2-Peter 2:14: "...*they are engaged in seducing unstable souls, having a heart trained in lustful cravings—cursed children.*"

How does this happen? *A bit at a time! A little leaven leavens the whole lump!* You will see that time and time again when you have those who come along and harden their hearts and begin teaching and writing false things. What happens?

Verse 15: "Who have abandoned the straight way. They have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, *the son of Beor*, who loved *the* reward of wickedness. But he received a rebuke for his own transgression; *the dumb donkey*, speaking in a man's voice, restrained the madness of the prophet. These *false prophets* are fountains without water, clouds driven by a storm, for whom is reserved the blackest of darkness forever.... [eternal death] ...For they speak bombastic *words* of vanity... [instead of the words of God] ...enticing *others* through the lusts of *the flesh* by granting indulgences to sin, and *ensnaring* those who had indeed escaped from those who live in deception. While promising them freedom..." (vs 15-19)—new ways, whatever!

"...they themselves are actually slaves of corruption because by whatever anyone is overcome, he is also held in bondage" (v 19). Why? ***It all starts with the hardening of the heart! Then you start speaking evil of God's way!***

Verse 20: "For if, after escaping the moral defilements of the world through *the* knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they again become entangled in them, and are overcome, the final end is worse than the beginning." *That's a terrible*

situation to get into!

When you let your heart continue to be hard and your harden and harden it, then God hardens it, and circumstances come along that create great troubles for that individual or for you. They don't repent! They don't change! They don't turn!

Then something happens with their heart and mind and the will not hear! They will not listen!

Verse 21: "For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than, after knowing *it*, to turn back from the Holy commandment *that was* delivered to them. But the *pronouncement found* in the true proverb has happened to them: *The dog has returned to eat his own vomit; and the sow that was washed has returned to her wallowing place in the filthy mire*" (vs 21-22).

What happens is that sin comes in! When you want to retain sin, *you harden your heart!* When you want to retain the things that are not right with God, you *harden your heart!* We're dealing with some very important and profound things.

Hebrews 3:7: "For this reason, even as the Holy Spirit says, ***'Today, if you will hear His voice...'***"—*every day!*

- you've got to hear the voice of God every day
- you've got to have a heart that is tender
- you've got to have a heart that is right
- you've got to have a heart that is seeking God's way

Every day! Why? *Because if you don't:*

Verse 8: "**Harden not your heart**, as in the rebellion, in the day of temptation in the wilderness, where your fathers tempted Me *and* tried Me, and saw My works forty years. Because of this, I was indignant with that generation, and said, "They are always going astray in their hearts, and they have not known My ways." So, I swore in My wrath, "If they shall enter into My rest—" Beware, brethren, lest perhaps there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in apostatizing from *the living God*" (vs 8-12)—*because that's what happens!*

Verse 13: "Rather, be encouraging one another each day, while it is called 'today,' so that none of you become hardened by *the* deceitfulness of sin." *That's what happens!*

- you're given over to your own way
- you're given over to your own deceit
- you're given over to things that harden the heart

Verse 14: “For we are companions of Christ, if we truly hold the confidence *that we had* at the beginning steadfast until the end. As it is being said, ‘Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion.’” (vs 14-15).

All Scriptures from The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version

Scriptural References:

- 1) Proverbs 31:30
- 2) Isaiah 3:16-25
- 3) Zechariah 12:1
- 4) Job 32:8
- 5) 1 Corinthians 1:9-12
- 6) 1 John 2:15-17
- 7) 1 Corinthians 2:12
- 8) Romans 8:14-16
- 9) 1 Corinthians 2:13-14
- 10) Acts 15:8-9
- 11) Proverbs 4:20-27
- 12) 1 Kings 8:22-24, 44-52
- 13) Daniel 9:1-8, 16-21
- 14) Deuteronomy 30:1-3
- 15) Psalm 78:31-41
- 16) Joel 2:11-14
- 17) 2 Chronicles 15:1-2
- 18) Acts 17:22-31
- 19) 2 Chronicles 15:2-9, 12-19
- 20) 2 Chronicles 16:1-7, 9
- 21) Revelation 5:6
- 22) 2 Chronicles 16:9-10
- 23) Psalm 40:6-10
- 24) Psalm 119:1-3, 9-10, 32, 36-37, 80, 111-112
- 25) Proverbs 21:29
- 26) Exodus 8:19, 32
- 27) Exodus 9:12, 7, 27-28, 34-35
- 28) Exodus 10:3, 16-20, 24-29
- 29) 2 Peter 2:10-14
- 30) Deuteronomy 18:18-20
- 31) 2 Peter 2:14-22
- 32) Hebrews 3:7-15

Scriptures quoted, not referenced:

- Deuteronomy 28; 29
- Revelation 7

Also referenced: Sermon: *That Prophet*

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