

Light and Life

Desire and Behavior

“What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man” (Mk. 7:20-23).

Some say it’s not what you do, but who you are. Yet what you do says a lot about who you are! Behavior indicates the kind of heart we have! Thus Jesus said, “by their fruits you will know them” (Mt. 7:20). People with good hearts don’t produce rotten fruit, but fruit of the Spirit (Mt. 7:15-20; Gal. 5:19-23)! Wolves do a great job of looking like sheep, but none can pass the fruit test!

So yes, our outward actions are very indicative of what kind of heart we have! But outward actions aren’t the only consideration. We can follow the letter of the law and walk the line, but still not have the right kind of heart about it.

The Pharisees understood they shouldn’t go around killing people they didn’t like, but they were ok wishing they could (Mt. 5:21-22)! They understood they shouldn’t cheat on their wives, but they were ok fantasizing about it (Mt. 5:27-28)! If we are to be disciples, we must go deeper than they did (Mt. 5:20)!

Being a disciple isn’t just about doing what God wants all the time. It is about changing our desires to be closer to God’s desires. This is not an easy process and doesn’t happen all at once! It’s part of the growth of every Christian. Sin is a result of having the wrong desires and acting upon them (Jas. 1:14-15). Discipleship is about denying our desires and replacing them with Christ’s desires (Mt. 16:24).

Let’s grow past a hesitant outward obedience, and into obedience from the heart!

- Sam Bunyard

Another Perspective

Psalm 7 Judge Me, O Lord

In Psalm 7, we see the humility and the confidence of David. David was willing to accept defeat from his enemies if he had indeed acted wickedly. David was confident though that God would find him innocent, upright, and righteous. Integrity was in David’s heart; therefore, he could go before God, the righteous Judge, and ask to be judged by Him! David’s confidence was not in himself, but solidly grounded in God’s righteousness!

We need these same attributes of humility and confidence. Humility of heart will allow us to go before our God and ask Him to judge us. We will want Him to look into our hearts and convict us of any wrongdoing so we can be pleasing to Him. We do this by allowing His Holy Scriptures to cut us, dividing joint and marrow, so that we can see ourselves as our righteous Judge sees us. Only then will we see the necessary changes to make in our life. Having done so, we can move forward with a heart that is upright in His sight and be pronounced righteous by God based on His promise that He will forgive our sins and make us clean!

When hard trials hit home, we can take refuge in our righteous Judge and plead with Him, as David did, to arise and lift Himself up against our enemies. Calling on God’s judgment, knowing God is just, knowing He will save the upright in heart, and knowing He will “whet” (sharpen) His sword against His enemies, we find our security.

David gave thanks to God and praised His name in song because God is just! May God help us to have the same humility and confidence that David had when he wrote “Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting! - Psalm 139:23-24. Judge Me, O Lord!

- Lucas Griggs

ASSEMBLY TIMES

Sunday

Morning Bible Class 9:30
Morning Assembly 10:30
Evening Assembly 5:00

Wednesday

Evening Bible Class 6:30

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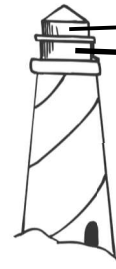
Act as if what you do
makes a difference –
because it does.

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DOWNTOWN GOSPEL BEACON

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The Authority of Examples

Many find fault with the CENI approach (command, example, and necessary inference) to establishing authority. “Not all **commands** in the Bible are for us,” they say (true – think ‘build an ark’). “**Necessary inference** is too vague,” they say (which is only true if we ignore the ‘necessary’ part – which means an inference demanded by the text, as Jesus demonstrated – Mk 12:26-27).

“**Examples** in the Bible are just descriptive, not prescriptive,” they say. In other words, the examples we read in the Bible are just there for informational purposes, not for the purpose of communicating the will of God. But is this true?

Paul wrote to the church at Corinth that the OT examples of Israel’s sins were written for us (1 Co 10:6-11). And he told the Philippians to follow his own example (3:17). Clearly examples are more than theater.

Many would undoubtedly prefer if God simply gave us a list of do’s and don’ts. But He didn’t. Instead, He communicated His will to us in a lively narrative, full of setting and characters and situations – all with a message for the “honest and good heart” (Lu 8:15), that we might “discern what is the will of God” (Ro 12:2). Those looking for His will can find it; those looking for an excuse can find that, too. *-WKing*

FAMILY NEWS

PRAYER LIST –

Preachers we support: Japan, Philippines, Vietnam, Canada, Mexico, Peru, & U.S.

Sick: Swims, JMarshall, RStarr, MiBader, JTerrell

Shut-ins: SCole, SWiese, VCarter, KHeilighenthal, TrDeen

Military: Kyler Sullins, Sean Potter

REJOICE! – We rejoice at the recent baptism of Jacob Selvey – and also with Aidan Williams, who recently placed membership with us! Encourage them!

CONGRATULATIONS! – We rejoice with Nathan & Beth Johnson at the recent birth of their daughter, Madeleine Elizabeth! All are doing well!