

thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." It is with the heart that man believes on the Lord Jesus Christ to receive eternal life (**Acts 15:8-9, 16:14, 8:26-37, II Corinthians 3:15-16**). As one author so clearly put it, "God alone sees the heart, the heart alone sees God." Only God can create a clean heart in an individual (**Psalm 51:10**).

CONCLUSION

As Christians, we are to love the Lord Jesus Christ with all our hearts (**Matthew 22:37**) and sanctify the Lord in our hearts (**I Peter 3:15**). As David prayed in **Psalm 139:23-24**, shall we pray that the Lord would search our hearts and lead our steps, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

"But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart."

I Samuel 16:7



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**"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."
Acts 16:31**

The RICHIES

OF GRACE

"hath appeared to all men." Titus 2:11

Robert W. Reed
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The Heart

"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."

Proverbs 4:23

+ Heart Matters +

The heart is mentioned 830 times in the Scriptures showing the importance of this subject. Only about three times does it speak of the heart as a physical organ that pumps blood. Most of the time when the Bible speaks of the heart of man, it is used in a spiritual sense and not referring to the physical heart. It is used as a metaphor to represent the inner man (**I Peter 3:4**). The word heart comes nearer to any other term in describing a person. It is the very essence and center of man. The heart is what makes you what you are and causes you to do what you do. Since this is true, it behooves every Christian to find out what God has to say about this topic, for as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. Amen.

"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee."

Proverbs 23:7

In this article we will be looking at the Holy Scriptures dealing with the basic truth about the heart. God alone has the answers to man's problems; for He is the Creator of all things. The world of psychology only has theories about the nature of man and fails in understanding his make-up. May we prayerfully seek the truth from God's Word.

THE DEFINITION OF THE HEART

As we have already stated, the heart is a term to describe the center of any thing (**Matthew 12:50, Jonah 2:3, Deuteronomy 4:29, Exodus 15:8**). Physically speaking, the heart is the center of man's physical life. It is the chief organ that pumps blood through the body to sustain life (**Leviticus 17:11**). Spiritually speaking, the heart is a term that describes man's spiritual life. It is the seat of personality, the center of his thinking, emotions, and will. According to **Proverbs 4:23**, the heart is the very essence of man, "*Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*" It is the heart that determines what you are, "*For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee*" (**Proverbs 23:7**). Please understand that circumstances do not make a person, but only reveals them for who he is.

The mind and heart are used interchangeably, for thinking may be a function of the brain, but it is the heart that determines what the brain is thinking. This is why we are told to guard our hearts and trust in the Lord with all our hearts (**Proverbs 3:5-7**). So the heart stands for the man himself and is never ascribed to animals except as a bodily organ. When the Bible speaks of the heart, it is describing the real you, the inner most part of your being (**Ephesians 3:16-17**).

THE DEPRAVITY OF THE HEART

The first mention of the heart is in **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.*" The corruption of the human heart is clearly seen throughout the Scriptures. In **Genesis 8:21**, we are told that "*the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.*" According to **Jeremiah 17:9-10**, the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked, "*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the*

LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings." It is the heart that defiles the whole man (**Matthew 15:8-11, 18-20**). What is in the heart will come out of man through his speech (**Matthew 12:34-35**), for the tongue is the index of the heart.

The Lord Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, dealt with the root of the problem, the heart of man (**Matthew 5:8, 21-28**). As one writer so plainly stated, "The heart of the problem is the problem of the heart." The children of Israel were told on a number of occasions that their hearts were uncircumcised (**Jeremiah 9:26, Ezekiel 44:7, Acts 7:51**). In **Matthew 13:15**, spiritually speaking, there was a layer of fat around the hearts of the people that hindered their belief in Messiah. Again, the heart is bad from birth, for **Proverbs 22:15** says, "*Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child.*"

The Bible has a lot to say about hard hearts. In **Matthew 19:8**, the hardening of the heart begins with unbelief. It continues to become harder when there is a refusal to repent (**Romans 2:5**), and the end result is a heart that cannot be penetrated (**Zechariah 7:11-12**). The preaching of God's Word will either soften the heart or harden the heart (**Matthew 13:10-16, Isaiah 6:10, John 12:40**). This was Pharaoh's problem when he refused to believe God's Word (**Exodus 5:1-2**). The Bible says God hardened Pharaoh's heart (**Exodus 4:21**), but we also know that Pharaoh's hardness was self-induced as he rejected God's Word and refused to repent of his wickedness (**Exodus 9:33-35**). He was fully responsible for his unbelief. In **Ephesians 4:18**, the Bible also speaks of the blindness of the hearts of those who are not saved.

THE DECISIONS OF THE HEART

The heart may be renewed by the grace of God (**Ezekiel 11:19**). Through the new covenant and the new birth, the stony heart is changed into a heart of flesh, that is, one that is tender, loving and obedient. God is an interior decorator in the lives of those who turn to Him in repentance and faith (**I Samuel 16:7, Acts 13:22**). We can be partakers of the new birth only through the blood of the new covenant that Jesus shed for us at Calvary's cross (**Jeremiah 31:3-34, Hebrews 8 and 10, Matthew 26:26-30**).

According to **Romans 10:9**, salvation begins in the heart, "*That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in*