

The Heart of the Matter

by Sonny Bowman

Slide Notes

The Heart of the Matter

- **Carl**

We seem to be driven by things inside us that lead us to do things that even we don't want to do sometimes.

- **Dennis the Menace**

"I may be sitting down on the outside, but I am standing up on the inside!"

Our Dilemma

- **There seems to be a little of Dennis the Menace in each of us**
- **We have often tried to change, but failed**
- **We probably have even prayed asking God to help us do better**
- **But there still seems to be something inside us that interferes with us living godly lives**

Love with What...?

- **Mark 12:30 — And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' ... [NKJV]**
- **We talk about heart in many ways...**
 - Artichoke hearts
 - The heart of Texas (Can you find it with your GPS?)
 - Getting to the heart of an issue
 - Believing from the bottom of my heart
- **So what does God mean by the heart?**

Heart in the Bible

- **Proverbs 23:6-7 — Do not eat the bread of a miser, Nor desire his delicacies; For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. "Eat and drink!" he says to you, But his heart is not with you.**
- **1 Peter 3:3-4 — Do not let your adornment be merely outward ... rather let it be the hidden person of the heart...**

- **Your heart is the unseen (hidden) person who you really are deep inside your soul.**

Your Heart Includes...

- **The foundational things you strongly believe**
 - Including truth and lies
- **The things that define your character**
- **Your worldview**
- **The fundamental core of your soul**
 - mind, will, and emotions

It is critical that we be intentional with what we believe in our hearts!

Simply Believing is Not Enough

- **You can believe things in your mind that don't actually change much about who you are or what you do.**

- Important to read the Bible

Generally we don't read the Bible very much because of deeper beliefs in our heart that it is more important to spend the time working out to get in shape, sleep in an extra 30 minutes, or check Facebook.

- Prayer changes things

If we really believe that prayer changes things, wouldn't we pray more?

- **Luke 6:46 — “But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?”**

Jesus address this disconnect in our lives.

- **When you honestly look at where you spend your time, money, talents, and energy, you can spot those things that you think you believe, but they are not really in your heart.**

Changing You Mind

- **We can change our mind quite easily...**
 - And we often do!
- **But those easily changed beliefs are not the ones rooted in your heart.**
- **How do you change the deep seated beliefs in your mind — those in your heart?**

Trying the Impossible

- **Changing your heart by sheer will is impossible.**
- **Jeremiah 13:23 — Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Then may you also do good who are accustomed to do evil.**

Get to the Core Issue

- **Matthew 15:18-19 — But evil words come from an evil heart and defile the person who says them. For from the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, all other sexual immorality, theft, lying, and slander. [NLT]**
- **You can't just work on the symptoms.**
- **You have to fix the core heart problem.**
 - By rooting out lies, replacing them with truth in a process the Bible calls "transformation," which comes through "renewing your mind."

Renewing Your Mind

- **Romans 12:2 — And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...**

There are two options: Do things the world's way or do them God's way.

We have "stinking thinking," "bad wiring," and "viruses" in our mental programming. We need our minds to be renewed.

Transformation

- **Heart transformation requires renewing your mind to the truth and ways of God.**

God's foundational truths, His character, and His worldview.
- **Proverbs 4:20-23 — Pay attention, my child, to what I say. Listen carefully. Don't lose sight of my words. Let them penetrate deep within your heart, for they bring life and radiant health to anyone who discovers their meaning. Above all else, guard your heart, for it affects everything you do. [NLT]**

It is not enough to look at God's words just one. We need to meditate on them. You are what is in your heart, and you will act according to what is in your heart.

So how can we be transformed?

#1 - Acknowledge

- **Jeremiah 17:9 — "The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?"**

This is still true to some degree after salvation.

- **Acknowledge to God that there are things in your heart that are ungodly and need transformation.**

But don't do this as a "worm," someone who is hopeless and unacceptable.

- **Hebrews 4:16 — So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it. [NLT]**

When you were born again into God's family, He made you acceptable. You now have bold access to come to God, acknowledge your need, then get help from Him.

#2 – Invite God's Help

- **Psalm 51:10 — Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.**
- **First step is salvation. You must be born again.**
- **Invite God to work in you to bring about transformation as you work to renew your mind to His truth.**

This is a joint venture between you and God. Your part is to regularly renew your mind. His part is to transform you.

- **You cannot transform your heart without God's help, and He will not transform it without your cooperation.**

Holy Spirit Help

- **Galatians 5:22-23 — But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.**
- **He works in our heart to transform our character**
- **John 16:13 — However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth...**

The Holy Spirit works in us to replace the lies we have believed with God's truth.

#3 Renew Your Mind

- **Romans 12:2 — And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind... [NKJV]**
- **Romans 12:2 — Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. ... [NLT]**

Read the Bible daily. I suggest that you read the New Testament through a couple of times, then add daily chapters from the Old Testament while you continue to read chapters from the New Testament.

How do you meditate on the Bible? Some things that can help include asking yourself...

What is this passage saying?

What does it mean?

How does it apply to my life?

What changes should I make based on this passage?

- **Best way to spot a counterfeit is to be familiar with the real.**
- **Best way to spot a lie is to be intimate with God's truth.**
- **Fill your mind and thoughts with God's Truth which can be found in the Bible**

#4 Repent from Lies

- **Repent – turn around and walk in a new (God's) direction**
It's not just feeling sorry or bad about it.
- **Stop following the lies you used to believe and choose to follow God's ways of truth.**
- **Choose to cultivate new habits of thinking and doing.**
You must actively replace old habits with new, godly habits.
- **Don't just listen to the truth, you must apply it to your life!**

No Obey, No Transformation

- **James 1:21-22 — So get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly accept the message God has planted in your hearts, for it is strong enough to save your souls. And remember, it is a message to obey, not just to listen to. If you don't obey, you are only fooling yourself. [NLT]**

Get to the Root

- **Matthew 23:25-26 — "... Hypocrites! You are so careful to clean the outside of the cup and the dish, but inside you are filthy—full of greed and self-indulgence! Blind Pharisees! First wash the inside of the cup, and then the outside will become clean, too. [NLT]**
Their outward actions looked good, but their hearts were not changed.
- **Peppervine**
Had to dig down to get the long root that ran back to the fence line to stop the peppervines from popping up in my yard from time to time.

A New Lifestyle

- **Many of us may just want to fix our circumstances, then move on to a care free life.**

I used to feel like the goal of a good life was to not have any problems or challenges. So I resented anything that interfered with my personal peace and prosperity. But I learned that God has equipped and sent us to be problem solvers for this world.

- **That heart attitude is one of the first lies that needs to go!**
We must replace the lie that life should be easy and problem free.
- **This is not a get-fixed-quick solution.**
- **God is calling us to a lifestyle of transformation and growth.**

Life Lived in Relationship

- **You are being invited into an intimate, growing relationship with your Father God.**
- **Transformation of your heart is how that relationship is practically lived out on a day-to-day basis.**
- **You start that relationship by being born again and adopted into God's family.**