

“Heart vs. Habit: How To Develop A Deeper Heart For God”

Pastor Jim Lowe III
Sunday Morning, 9:30am Stream
02/04/24 (1st Sunday Message)
(Final Version)

hashtags:

#guidinglight #pastorjim
#givingthanks #hearinggod
#hearing #voiceofGod
#faith #whatdoesGodsay
#forgiveness #Godworks
#savedtoserve #overflow
#protector #Expectation
#worry #Favor
#deliverance #listeningears
#Godspeaks #blessings
#servingGod #heartafterGod

{All scriptures are “NIV84” unless stated}

Message Title:

“Heart vs. Habit: How To Develop A Deeper Heart For God”

We are moving into the 2nd month!

All last month we talked about getting ready for the blessing.

God has declared:

2024: A Year of Favor For The Faithful!

Meaning if we show ourselves faithful...we receive the favor.

For those who have been showing themselves faithful to the Lord this year...

God Is Going To Start Overflowing The Blessings In The Lives Of Those Who Have Been Faithful To Him!

Last month we studied on this.

we fasted on this.

we prayed on this.

we had an oil anointing service.

We are working to make sure we are ALL positioned and in line to receive the blessing of the Lord this year!

Last month we talked about the parable of the talents.

Matthew 25:14-30

14 “Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. 15 To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. 16 The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. 17 So also, the one with the two talents gained two more. 18 But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.

We read this a few weeks ago.

Did the servants all do the same thing?

They actually did 3 different things.

The Parable Of The Talents Talks About Three Types Of People

Verse 16-18

16 The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. 17 So also, the one with the two talents gained two more. 18 But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.

1st person - went AT ONCE - doubled money

2nd person - went (eventually) - doubled money

3rd person - went somewhere else - did nothing

2 of them did the work

- one did not.

We spent last month talking about the one who did nothing.

But what about the other 2 people?

What Separated The Two Servants?

BOTH servants did NOT leave at once.

The bible says the first servant left AT once.

put the money to work and gained more.

likewise the second servant gained 2 more.

For the first one to leave AT ONCE...

he was ready.

he was dedicated to the task/vision

his heart was in it.

The second servant may have been dedicated.

but for him to not leave at once...

it doesn't seem as he was ready.

This made me think of us as people.

Many of us may be willing to do the work.

But there's still something that separates us...

Which makes us take a look at our motivations.

This leads to the title:

Message Title:

“Heart vs. Habit: How To Develop A Deeper Heart For God”

do we serve God based on

Today we talk about why we do what we do.

do we serve God based on our heart for him?

do we serve God out of habit?

This made me think about this scripture here:

2 Timothy 3:1-5

But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. 2 People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, 4 treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of

pleasure rather than lovers of God— 5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.

Terrible times in the last days.

People would be lovers of themselves.

lovers of all these things that are NOT God.

placing all of these things above God.

wanting these things more than God.

V. 5

5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.

Having a form of Godliness...

could this be talking about some of us??

Do we have only a form of Godliness?

but no true power?

This is saying that there will be believers in the last days...

they have no power...

they are chasing too many things OUTSIDE of God.

they have no power...

because they are missing what it's all about.

they are missing a heart for God.

Are Our Hearts In The Right Place?

2 Timothy 3 talks about many of the things that distract us from God.

The things many people are after...

are pushing them away from God!

People are lovers of themselves:

Lovers of money. {it's the LOVE of money that's the root of all evil}

Love to talk about themselves. {all about me}

Proud {I'm too good for this...or something is beneath me}

Ungrateful {for the times people have helped us...we can't say thank you.}

Unholy

Unforgiving

Lovers of pleasure than Lovers of God

These things are preventing many from getting closer to God!

If We Want The Power Of God, We Have To Have Hearts Towards God!

But where does the habit part come in?

This is where we examine the “why” of what we do.

Why are we believers?

Why do we come to church?

Why do we pray?

Is it because “that’s just what we do?”

There are some who are in church because it’s what they were taught to do.

we go to church every Sunday

because we were “taught” to do so.

we pray before we eat...

because we were “taught” to do so.

This means we can be doing things out of habit.

What about habits?

They say it can take an average of 22 days to make a habit.

Some of us have been in church so long...

we can fool ourselves into thinking it's heart

when it's just habit.

Some of us have to ask some hard questions.

Do We “Pray” Out Of Habit Or Heart?

Do We “Serve” Out Of Habit Or Heart?

Do We “Give” Out Of Habit Or Heart?

Do We “Show Up” Out Of Habit Or Heart?

It may LOOK like we're doing the right thing...

Doing Things Out Of Habit Doesn't Move God. Doing Things Out Of The Heart Does!

How do we know God looks at the heart?

1 Samuel 16

God sent Samuel to anoint one of Jesse's sons to be the next king.

David was selected.

ALL the other brothers were rejected.

Why were they rejected?

Samuel was looking at Jesse's sons:

he saw one named Eliab.

he was thinking this was the one he was to anoint.

1 Samuel 16:7

7 But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

David was not even there!

Jesse brought the sons that fit THEIR description of a king.

these men had qualities that made others think they were king material.

God wasn't looking at their outward appearance.

He didn't care about how strong they were.

their ability to lead or command...

God wasn't looking at what they were “doing.”

He was looking at their heart.

Where Is Our Heart Focused?

This is the one thing God wants to see.

It's the one thing he truly cares about.

It's the one thing he tells us to watch.

Proverbs 4:23

23 Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.

Above ALL!

Guard your heart...

We read all the things that would happen in the last days...

The bible tells us to keep our hearts on God.

Psalms 141:4

4 Let not my heart be drawn to what is evil, to take part in wicked deeds with men who are evildoers; let me not eat of their delicacies.

We have to make sure our hearts are in the right place!

There are some of us who may be lacking the power of God in our lives.

we have to examine "why" we do what we do!

If You've Been Doing Things Out Of Habit, Now's The Time To Change!

We know God looks at the heart.

Joel 2:12-13

12 "Even now," declares the Lord, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning." 13 Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.

Return to him with all our hearts...

Rend your heart and not your garments...

"Change Your Heart and Not Just Your Clothes"

If we want more of the power of God

We have to develop stronger hearts for him.

How To Develop A Better Heart For God:

Spending Time With God Develops Your Heart For Him

Our hearts are on the inside...

that's where we should make sure God is.

David had plenty of time to spend with God while tending to sheep.

but God was looking at his heart.

Quiet Time With God Is What Grows Your Heart For Him

You have to spend your own time with God.

In prayer.

In worship.

In your private time.

James 4:8

8 Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

As you seek God...he will show himself to you.

Jeremiah 29:13

13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

We can't just seek God "at church."

These are the things that go on at home.

Sometimes we need to step back...

and see him.

Psalms 46:10 (a)

10 "Be still, and know that I am God;

Stop the busy work...

Stop the habit stuff...

Be still and know...

He is God.

If You Want More Of The Power Of God, You Have To Examine Your Heart Towards Him.