

Lesson 79

TEXT Mark 7:14-23; Luke 6:45

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES Psalm 139:1-14; Proverbs 4:23; Jeremiah 12:3; Ezekiel 11:5,19-21; Revelation 2:23

OBJECTIVE The students will have the ability to show through the Scriptures the importance of the heart as an instrument through which they find and serve God.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. — Proverbs 3:5

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts. — 1 Chronicles 28:9

**ANSWER
TITLE:** **Fix the Inside!**
**SEARCH
TITLE:** **Heart**

Reference Information

We use the term “heart” as symbolic of the intellectual, moral, and emotional functions of individuals or their inner being. It occurs more than 900 times in Scripture. Commonly the heart is regarded as being the seat of the intellect, the feelings, and the will. For example: In Genesis 6:5, “every imagination of the thoughts of his heart” would imply intellect; Genesis 18:5 would imply feeling; while “that seek him with the whole heart,” Psalm 119:2, means the will. It is often used to signify the innermost being; i.e., “it grieved him at his heart,” Genesis 6:6. In modern usage, “heart” is used to imply affection, as “I have you in my heart,” or to express sympathy, as “It touches my heart.”

Since the beginning of time God has shown us the importance of the heart. Genesis 6:5 tells us God saw the imagination and thoughts of man’s heart. In 1 Chronicles 28:9 we read, “the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts.”

The circumstances under which the text in Mark 7 was written were brought about by Christ’s reproaching the scribes and Pharisees for their hypocrisy. He let them know that their ceremonies and traditions—honoring Him with their words and actions—were in vain because their hearts were not right.

YOUR OPENER

Heart

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KEY VERSE: And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts. — 1 Chronicles 28:9

RESPONSES

1. Your students' definitions should bring out that a treasure is "something of great worth, precious." On the second part of the question allow time for your students to give their answers which will possibly include wisdom, knowledge of sins forgiven, and the hope of a heavenly home. Discuss with the class that the verse points out the good man—the saved man—brings forth from his heart these good things. How is this accomplished? The fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22,23) is also an important part of this good treasure that is to be displayed and lived before men.

2. Jesus said that evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, and foolishness, come from within the evil man. A discussion can center around the contrast between these evil things and the good things mentioned in the previous question. It is easy to see that these evil things correspond to the works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21). The Apostle said that they who do such things will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

3. These verses tell us that we must confess our sins and believe in Jesus Christ with our hearts, in order to be saved. Discuss with the students that this initial experience is the basis for a righteous life. Emphasize that believing in Christ and obeying Christ are practically synonymous in Scripture. Many people in the world claim that they have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ and therefore have the hope of eternal life, but they do not obey His commandments. See Matthew 7:21-23 and 1 John 2:17.

4. The three key words to a successful search for God are "all your heart." Discussion of this verse should bring out that God does not turn away any who seek and search for Him with all their hearts. This might be a good time to ask some of your students to relate their own experience of conversion or answered prayer, tying it with this verse.

The physical heart is a muscular organ which maintains life by pumping blood through the body. But in our lesson we are dealing with the spiritual heart which is the seat of life and strength—the mind, soul, spirit, will—one's entire emotional nature and understanding.

1. Using the dictionary, define *treasure*. Read Luke 6:45 and, in the context of this verse, list some things that might be considered good treasures of the heart.

2. If we haven't confessed and believed unto righteousness, what things did Jesus say will come forth from our hearts?

3. What does Paul say is necessary in order for us to receive God's salvation into our hearts? See Romans 10:9,10.

4. Look up Jeremiah 29:13. What three words in this verse give us the key to a successful search for God?

3

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

5. Read 1 Samuel 10:9-11. Who was the man this Scripture refers to and what happened to him?

6. Read 1 Samuel 15:3,13-24. What happened to the spiritual condition of the man mentioned in the preceding question? What does this show?

7. In Proverbs 4:23 the writer tells us to keep a careful guard on our hearts. In doing this, the actions of other members of our body will be guided. Name several of these. See Proverbs 4:24-27.

8. What did Jesus say was the first and great Commandment? Is our love for Him complete? See Matthew 22:37,38.

9. Proverbs 3:5-9 shows that if we will yield our hearts completely to the Lord, He will direct our lives. Name several ways we can do this.

5. Saul. God gave him a new heart, and the Spirit came upon him and he prophesied. Bring out that as a result of this new heart, Saul could be used of God. Ask some of your students to parallel this to what happens in their lives when they yield their hearts to God.

6. Saul did not follow the Lord with all his heart. He disobeyed a part of God's command; he allowed rebellion and stubbornness to enter his heart (verse 23), therefore he sinned. Discussion of this event should bring out very clearly that, though we may have been genuinely converted, unless we follow the Lord with all our hearts, we will miss the mark and lose our salvation.

7. Your students' answers should include: the words of their mouths, the things they look at, the path of their feet. The point of this question is to emphasize the importance of having their hearts right. If their hearts are right, the other members will do what is right also.

8. The first and great commandment is to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart. Discuss with your class some ways they might be able to tell if their love for Him is truly complete.

9. Referring to Proverbs 3:5-9 will bring out the thought that we must trust Him with all our hearts; lean not to our own understanding; acknowledge Him in all we say and do; humble ourselves before Him and seek His wisdom; honor Him with our substance. Discuss with your students the meaning of the Biblical phrases offered.

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

Is there an alternative for obtaining happiness other than a change of heart? If so, what would it be?

Why do we refer to the heart when we speak of salvation?

What are some ways we can look to Christ for direction in our lives?

Are there areas in our lives in which we do not need Christ's direction?

Are all your actions determined by your heart's condition? Can you support your answer with a Bible verse?

What was the point made in our ANSWER story about Jim and the clock?

How does a person trust the Lord as stated in our key verse, Proverbs 3:5?

How can we know our hearts are clean?

What things defile a man?

How much does God expect of us?

THINGS TO DO

Bring a clock or watch that works and one that does not work. Explain how the fact that one needs work on the inside to make it worth anything relates to the ANSWER story.

Cut a paper or cardboard heart into pieces. (Have it cut in such a manner that it would be difficult for the children to put it together.) Have the pieces coded so you can put it together easily. Explain that this is like our lives. We cannot put our own lives together properly, but when we go to Jesus, He knows exactly what to do to make all things right.

The teacher should prepare to relate a series of incidents which would invoke some emotion or response. For example: "Yesterday, at a playground, I saw a child swinging. The little boy lifted both hands off the chains and tumbled onto his head. My immediate feeling was that of compassion. I wanted to help him right away." The teacher should then explain that every day we have feelings of all sorts, and encourage the students to think about some of their own for a moment. As students are thinking, pass paper and pencil to each. Ask them to write down their feelings, or response to each incident you read. They need not put their names on the paper.

(The teacher may want to distinguish between the feelings that bring actions and the carnal temptations with which the devil tempts a Christian.) After the students have written down their feelings (emotions), ask them to put them into categories: Christian feelings or not-Christian feelings. This should help the students locate themselves spiritually, also to gain insight and understanding from Mark 7:21, "out of the heart of men, proceed . . ."

Bring a package to class. Discuss what makes up a package and lead up to the fact that what it contains is what counts. Ask the students how they would feel if, after having been given a desirable package, part of it was taken back. Bring out how our gift to Jesus should be our hearts and all, and that nothing should be taken back.

Bring a candy bar. Tell someone he can have it, but then eat part of it and offer the remainder. Tell the class this is what some people do to God. They tell God He can have their heart, but only offer a small part or "almost" all of it. Remind them that God wants all of their heart.

Answers for ANSWER

Here's My Heart

Write the Key Verse (Proverbs 3:5) on the lines under the heart. Next, using the number of letters in each word as a guideline, write all the words in the spaces provided inside the heart. The word UNDERSTANDING has been given to start you off. NOTE: Use THINE only once.

Trust in the LORD with all
thine heart; and lean not
unto thine own understanding.

Proverbs 3:5