

Lesson 2

Words like rebellious, corrupt, madness, evil, foolish and destructive are used in Scripture to describe the nature of the heart. One other word used in the Bible to describe the heart is pride.

HEART INFECTED WITH PRIDE

Proverbs 16:5a “Everyone who is _____ in _____ is an abomination to the Lord.”

Proverbs 21:2 Pride persuades a person that “every _____ a man chooses to take is _____ in his own eyes.”

Proverbs 21:4 The Bible declares a “_____ look and a _____ heart... is sin.” (It is sin because God calls pride a sin.)

Proverbs 28:25 It is a “_____ heart that stirs up strife.”

Jeremiah 48:29 In a reference to the people of Moab, they were said to be exceedingly proud and arrogant which was due to the “_____ of their heart.”

Obadiah 1:3 “The _____ of your _____ has deceived you.”

The proud heart deceives the soul into believing he is more special than any other soul. Thus, he deserves better treatment; he deserves the best; he deserves to be first. Why? Because he is superior, and since superior, more deserving of special treatment, privileges, consideration and advantages than others. His proud heart promotes him to the head of the class. The pride of the heart is contagious and will infect the soul.

The proud heart will create a very self-centered attitude in the soul. If the soul follows the lead of the heart, selfishness will reign on the throne. What will naturally follow will be the soul’s primary interest in what promotes his own welfare, own plans, own work, own benefits, own pleasure, own profit, own interests. He will have little time or desire to devote to the well-being of other kings (souls). His philosophy will be to follow the path of “me, myself and I”, that’s all that matters. The question of “what’s in it for me” will be given first consideration.

The heart will convince the soul it should pursue a course of:

self-interests

self-satisfaction

self-pleasure

self-indulgence

self-advancement

self-ease

self-possession

simply because this is what a person as special and and superior as you are deserves.

The heart will flatter the soul, giving it the big head. The praise received from the heart will convince the soul it has a control and ability and power it does not have. This will be seen in the soul making all kinds of wild boastings.

Psalms 10:3 “The wicked _____ of his _____ desire.”

The king is deceived into thinking he controls the future or the outcome of certain events. The Bible warns against such arrogance.

Proverbs 27:1 “Boast ____ thyself of tomorrow; for _____ not what a day brings forth”

James 4:13 James wrote a warning to all who boasted by saying,
“Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy
and sell, and get gain.”

4:14 The truth is “you know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is
even as a vapor, that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.”

4:15 What you ought to say is, “If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this or that.”

4:16 “But now you rejoice in your _____: all such rejoicing ____ _____.”

The soul is made to think it controls its own destiny. It will boast about what will take place in the future as though it has the power and ability to bring such predictions to pass. It boasts of tomorrows as though tomorrows were its own creations. He regards the future as his to command.

Another conclusion we can draw is that a proud heart will be totally opposed to self-denial. Self-interests can't be promoted if you end up taking a back seat to those less deserving than you are. You can't get ahead by getting behind. You can't come in first by choosing to come in second. You can't win so long as you choose to lose. Self-denial will help someone else but it won't help you. Self-denial will cause you to cheat yourself out of what you deserve to have.

The heart puts up a strong case for self-love. Still, the soul can turn a deaf ear to the heart's cry to be selfish, and instead listen to its affections and emotions and deny self-advancement and self-gratification. The soul can choose to be generous instead of stingy, compassionate rather than indifferent, caring rather than inconsiderate. It can also choose to be entirely selfish just as the heart directs.

If the heart had its way all the time, this world would soon cease to exist. If everyone was totally selfish, no one would do anything for anyone. No one would get along with anyone else. No one would tolerate anyone. All would demand their own way and set out to get it any way they could. Too many people do this now. The heart controls far too many as it is. When the heart's pride takes over the soul, then it will be you and you alone who matter, for you alone are the great one, the worthiest to survive.

I want us to realize the potential for danger the soul faces in having the heart as its chief adviser. I also want us to realize how unpredictable the heart can be. You can never be sure what the soul will be advised to do. The heart is like a ticking time bomb inside the soul. Beware, the heart is an evil counselor to the soul. This situation is not to be taken lightly. Everyone is potentially liable to become whatever his heart is capable of imagining. You are never safe from harm's way so long as the heart can manipulate the soul and make it feel justified in whatever evil action it takes.

In light of the heart problem inherent in the soul, there is yet another dilemma the total man faces. It concerns the various ways that can be chosen by the soul for the total man to follow. We hear souls announce, “you go your

way and I will go mine”, “you do your thing and I will do mine.” But how will the soul decide which way to go and what thing to do?

The soul continually deals with the question of which way it should go. Which way is the right way?

Which is best? Which way is good? It is such questions as these that the heart is called upon to help the soul answer. What hope is there for an evil heart to come up with the correct way to do anything? Let’s see how the Bible answers the question of how successful the soul will be at choosing the right way to go under the guidance of the evil heart.

- Jeremiah 10:23 “It is _____ that walketh to _____ his steps.”
- Psalm 1:1 “Happy is the man who walks not in the _____ of the ungodly.”
(men who follow the counsel of ungodly man’s evil hearts)
- Proverbs 2:13 Evil men prefer “to walk in the _____ rather than the paths of uprightness.”
- Proverbs 2:15a The wicked choose “ways that are _____.”
- Jeremiah 9:14 God reprimanded Israel for disobeying His voice and put the blame on their having “walked after the _____ of their own _____.”
- Jeremiah 18:12 God warned Judah to stop walking the evil way and start walking the good way. Their response was “we will walk after our _____ (schemes, plans) and we will everyone continue to _____ the imagination of his _____.”
- 1 Peter 4:3 Peter, when referring to the way the people walked before they came to know Christ, said they once had “walked in _____ (sensuality) in _____ in _____ (drunkenness) in _____ (orgies) in _____ (drinking parties) in _____”
- Psalm 10:5 The ways chosen by the wicked, ways devised by a proud heart, are said to be ways that are “_____.”
- Psalm 10:3 When the wicked considers the way he has chosen he “_____ of his _____ desire.”
- Psalm 146:9c The Psalmist said “the way of the wicked God would _____.”
- Proverbs 4:14-15 Scriptures give the warning “enter not into the _____ of the wicked, and go not in the _____ of _____ men, _____ it _____ by it, _____ from it, and escape.

- Proverbs 4:19 The way chosen by the wicked “is as _____: they know not at what they _____.”
- Proverbs 12:15 “The _____ of a fool is _____ in his _____.”
- Proverbs 14:12 “There is a way which seems right unto a man, but the _____ thereof are the ways of _____.”
- Proverbs 14:14 “A backslider in _____ shall be _____ with his _____ ways.”
- Proverbs 19:3 “The _____ of man _____ his way; and his _____ frets against the Lord.” (Lord’s ways)
- Proverbs 21:2 “Every way of a man is _____ in his _____.”
(or the eyes of his evil heart)
- Isaiah 55:7 “Let the wicked forsake _____.”
- Isaiah 55:8 God makes it clear when referring to the way of the wicked, “My _____ are _____ your thoughts, _____ are your ways _____ ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are _____ than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”
- Isaiah 65:2 God said to Israel, “I have spread out my hands all the day unto a _____ people, who walk in a _____ that was _____ good, after their _____.” (reference again refers to thoughts fed to the soul by the heart)

The natural man will go the wrong way simply because he will follow the instructions of his depraved heart. The heart, filled with pride, aims to prove God is not superior in wisdom when it comes to picking the better way. Therefore the heart will set a course, lay out a path, prescribe a way which will seek to challenge the path God lays out, hoping to prove God is not wiser than the heart. It will be a contest to see who can pick the “right way to go” in matters related to character, behavior, temperament, disposition, personality, emotional displays, attitudes and display of affections. The heart believes it knows best in determining what the soul should love and how it should act.

The heart will not be a reliable source of truth for the soul. All the heart can do is give the soul bad counsel. The Bible calls the heart’s wisdom foolishness. If the heart’s counsel is heeded, the soul will eventually end up a fool. The heart paves its prescribed ways with guaranteed regrets. You would think the soul would stop consulting the heart when making decisions. But, as was stated in the beginning, the soul is not very smart.

HEART IS AN EXPERT IN THE ART OF LYING

When it comes to matters pertaining to questions about character, conduct, morality, right and wrong, good and bad, the heart never gets it right. In these areas it is the master deceiver. It will speak lies on these matters which the soul will find believable and acceptable. The soul prefers lies and despises truth on such matters. The soul loves a lie regarding questions of ethics. The soul will regard the lie as truth and act accordingly. The soul also loves lies about the consequences of wrong doing. The heart convinces the soul the path it prescribes is a safe one.

- Isaiah 28:15f In describing the conduct of a wicked people, it was said of them, they “made _____ their _____ and hid themselves under _____.”
- Isaiah 59:4 God charges a people with iniquity and states their sins were the result of none “_____ for truth, and all _____.”
- Jeremiah 9:3 When describing a rebellious people, God says they “bend their tongues like their bows for _____ they are _____ for the truth.”
- Jeremiah 9:5 “They will _____ the truth, they have _____ their tongue to _____ lies.”
- Isaiah 30:9-10 In describing a rebellious people, God says of them, “they _____ hear the law (wisdom) of the Lord.” Instead they say to their counselors, “prophesy _____ unto us _____ things, speak unto us _____ things, prophesy _____.” (lies)
- Jeremiah 5:30 An astounding and horrible practice was committed in the land, “The prophets prophesy _____.....and my people love to _____.”
- 2 Timothy 4:3-4 Timothy was told of a day when people would “_____ sound doctrine (truth) but after their own lusts would heap to themselves teachers, having _____ ears. And they shall _____ their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto _____.” (lies)

The soul is not receptive to truth regarding the way one is supposed to live (conduct, character, morality, behavior, affections, etc.) The soul wants guidance but not from anything God has to say. The soul prefers lies in this instance and even shuts its ears to the truth God speaks.

- Isaiah 5:20 What does God have to say to those who prefer lies to truth? “_____ unto them that _____, and good evil; that put _____ for _____, and light for darkness; that put _____ for _____, and sweet for bitter.”

It does not bode well for a soul that is antagonistic to truth and demands to be told a lie. The heart will be more than happy to provide the soul the kind of lies it wants to hear. The problem is you are dealing with a heart that believes it is telling the truth and that it knows which way is the right way to go.

THE HEART IS ALLOWED TO JUDGE THE SOUL

The heart sends one message to the soul it never tires of hearing. It is a message that speaks a favorable appraisal of the soul’s goodness.

The heart does not insist the soul is perfect, but it does insist the soul is good. You should look upon yourself as basically being a good person, not without some faults, but none so bad as to ever render

you bad, sinful, wicked or corrupt. Keep in mind this stamp of approval is coming from a source that sees itself as also good, although the Bible declares it to be wicked, evil, corrupt, sinful, etc.

The heart persuades the soul to reject any insinuations that it is not good. It does not need to confess to any charges it is bad. No matter what wrong the soul is accused of, the heart will come to its defense and maintain its innocence of not deserving the “bad-guy” label.

At times the heart may have difficulty convincing the soul to maintain a high “self-esteem” image, but it will have no problem convincing it to maintain a high “self-goodness” image. It is the pride of the heart that insists the soul regard itself good rather than bad. The soul will therefore be heard to boast of goodness when it can’t boast of anything else. The heart sets the soul on a pedestal it does not deserve. The soul is not as good and as the heart makes it out to be. This boasting of the soul, promoted by the pride of the heart, will become the most difficult obstacle God will face in trying to get the lost soul to become His child.

God does not agree with the appraisal of the heart regarding man’s goodness.

Romans 3:10 It is written in the Bible (Psalm 14:1-3), “There are _____ good, no not _____.”

Romans 3:12 From God’s viewpoint all mankind has “gone out of the way (way He commands), _____ together have become _____ (to God). There is _____ that does good, no not one.”

Matthew 19:17 When some critics called Jesus good but refused to say He was God, He responded by saying “_____ but God is _____.”

From God’s standpoint, good means perfect, sinless perfection. Adam was good before he fell into sin in the garden. After just one sin Adam was bad, because one sin would keep him from deserving to be called good or perfect. Once sin spots you, you are no longer spotless.

Psalms 145:17 Only of the Lord can it be said “the Lord is righteous in _____ His ways.”

Romans 3:23 God declares “_____ have sinned, and fallen short of the _____ (goodness) of God.”

One who sins rates the title of sinner in God’s eyes. God does not play by the same rules the heart follows. God uses a different standard of judgment than the heart uses. The heart will call the soul good while God will declare the soul bad. Sad to say, the soul is convinced the heart is right and thinks God should think like the heart does. It is at this point the devil enters the picture and tells the soul God does agree with the heart and will declare the sinner just as good as the heart maintains. Of course, the devil is labeled by God as the “father of lies”. The devil told Eve she would not suffer any consequences for disobeying God. She found out it was the devil who lied, not God. After she had disobeyed, she passed from good to bad, saint to sinner, and life to death.

When the soul comes under suspicion or is charged with wrongdoing, the heart instructs the soul to lie its way out of the dilemma. The heart is the soul’s instructor in the art of lying.

LIE TO ESCAPE BLAME

LIE TO ESCAPE SHAME

