

Nothing New Under The Sun

Week 5: Make Your Heart for God

ICEBREAKER

What is something that always fills your heart with joy?

INTRODUCTION

For some people the idea that there is nothing new under the sun can be deflating. What is the purpose of life if everything has already been done and mapped out? However, they are missing the point that your life and opportunity is what's new. Your life is unique and God created you in this world in the hopes of winning your heart. This week we will be looking at how our heart directs our experience in life.

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The bible mentions the heart almost 1,000 times. There is great importance put on our heart as it is considered the engine of thoughts, emotions and desires. Jesus understood that a corrupted heart is capable of doing horrible things, saying:

"For it is from within, out of a person's heart, that evil thoughts come—sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and defile a person."

--Mark 7:21–23 (NIV)

These impure thoughts and actions come when we have a heart problem and it requires us to change our hearts. This change can only occur when we address what is causing our heart to be sick and believe that Christ can heal us from it.

For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.

--Romans 10:10 (NIV)

Do you have any 'heart' problems you can give to Christ? What is holding you back?

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God created you as a perfect vessel with the engine needed to discover and fulfill all the wonderful plans and purposes he has for your life.

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we would walk in them. --Ephesians 2:10 (ESV)

However, he also gave us free will and the ability to fill our engine with whatever we want. When we fill our heart with sin, we are filling our engine with fuel that is bad for our vessel and won't get us to our destination. Much like eating junk food, the pleasure of our desires are short lived and leave us uncomfortable and often still hungry. Luckily, scripture gives us the recipe for filling up with clean and nutritious fuel.

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. "The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!" --Matthew 6:21-23 (NIV)

When we fix our eyes on things that are from God and treasure the relationships and experiences that give our life meaning instead of on material wealth and external approvals, we move our hearts closer to God. There is so much to be grateful for in our families and opportunities that we can always refuel for the next phase of our journey.

**What are you grateful for that fills your tank to keep going in the right direction?
What 'junk food' can you cut out of your life to help keep your engine strong?**

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When it comes to getting the most enjoyment and purpose out of life, it doesn't come from chasing fame, fortune or material wisdom. It comes from submitting to the will and desires of God. Much like our thoughts and desires come from our heart, His desires and plans for our life comes from His heart.

after removing Saul, he made David their king. God testified concerning him: 'I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.'
--Acts 13:22 (NIV)

The greatest examples of Godly people in the bible are the ones who put their hearts after God's own heart. When we align our hearts with God's Will for us, He can use us to our fullest potential and allow us to overflow with joy and happiness. He desires nothing more than for us to choose his love and provision for our heart.

Unfortunately finding God's Will in this fallen world is not easy and will take work and effort from you and your family. The best place to start is with what you already have already been given.

"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much.

--Luke 16:10 (NIV)

The more you prove your faithfulness to God in what you have been given, the more he will reveal where His heart is for your life. Do not be discouraged because there is nothing the enemy wants more than for you to stop pursuing God's heart and fall back into worldly ways, so:

Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

--Proverbs 4:23 (NIV)

We must always be careful of who and what we allow into our lives as we live in obedience to God's Will. We will not be able to help ourselves or others if we allow our heart to be corrupted. Praise God no matter how much we stumble He will be waiting with an open heart.

What has God given you to be faithful with now? What do you need to guard yourself from to stay on track?

WHAT WILL YOU DO

- Do a heart check to see what you need to give to God.
- Show gratitude for all the blessings in your life.
- Remove any "junk food" from your spiritual diet.
- Be a good steward of what He has entrusted you with.
- Guard your heart from the enemy to keep it for God.

PRAYER: Father God, thank You for Your heart to know, love and provide for me. Clean my heart of any impure thoughts and fortify it in my faith and belief in Jesus Christ. Allow me to be a good steward of all resources under my care and guide me in them for Your glory. Align my heart with your desires for my life and move me into your plans and purposes. Reveal to me what I need to be fulfilled in this season. In Jesus' name, Amen.

READ GOD'S WORD DAILY using S.O.A.P.

Day 1:

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;
in all your ways submit to him,
and he will make your paths straight.*

Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)

Day 2:

But now your kingdom must end, for the Lord has sought out a man after his own heart. The Lord has already appointed him to be the leader of his people, because you have not kept the Lord's command."

1 Samuel 13:14 (NLT)

Day 3:

*Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they shall see God.*

Matthew 5:8 (ESV)

Day 4:

*"All right then," Joshua said,
"destroy the idols among you,
and turn your hearts to the Lord, the God of Israel."*

Joshua 24:23 (NLT)

Day 5:

Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God.

Hebrews 3:12 (ESV)

TIPS FOR ONLINE SMALL GROUP

1. **HOSTING A SMALL GROUP MEETING ON ZOOM.** If you are interested in hosting a small group on zoom through New Hope Windward, let us know. Our small group team will help you get started. Zoom training is available.
2. **EMAIL INVITE.** Ensure to send out a calendar invite with the meeting details and how to connect to the meeting platform on zoom.
3. **REMINDER DURING THE WEEK.** Keep everyone in your group connected by sending a reminder during the week of your upcoming small group meeting.
4. **START ON TIME & STICK TO YOUR TIME SCHEDULE.** For your scheduled meetings, it's recommended to get started within 5 minutes of your scheduled start time. Most small group meetings are held for about 60 minutes.
5. **ZOOM'S BEST PRACTICE.** Familiarize yourself with the Zoom features on your electronic device. It is helpful for everyone to know where the mute button is located. Ask the attendees to self-mute to avoid environmental noise when someone else is talking & sharing. Doing this will help with the flow of your SG discussion time.
6. **DOWNLOAD ZOOM APP.** In order to participate in the Online Small Group, download the Zoom App from your iPhone or Android. You may also download the Zoom App from your laptop PC or iPad device.

TIPS TO IN-PERSON GROUP

1. **START & FINISH ON TIME.** Doing this will show your small group you value their time.
2. **BE COMFORTABLE WITH SILENCE.** Uncomfortable silences are bound to happen. It's okay! A long pause during a group discussion can be powerful. A *pause* gives space for quieter people to break into the conversation; silence allows people to figure out exactly what they would like to say.
3. **CONFIDENTIALITY IS IMPORTANT.** Confidentiality is the key to building trust in relationships. Here are a few mottos to remember to be confidential: "What is said in small group, stays in small group." **Nothing, nobody, never...** *"Share nothing, to nobody, never"* outside of the group.
4. **MAKE GROUP A PRIORITY.** Communicate in advance when you will be unable to attend by either calling and/or texting your host or responding to the zoom email invitation by accepting or declining. This will help your host to plan accordingly especially if it is an in person small group gathering.
5. **AVOID TALKING or TEACHING TOO MUCH.** Small groups are designed for everyone to share and grow together.
6. **ASK FOR HELP.** The Small Group Ministry is here to help. Email smallgroups@nhww.org to ask any questions, request training or other assistance for your Small Group.