

## **Hope For The Humble Heart**

***Matthew 11:28 - 30 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."***

This week I heard the story about a pet-store delivery truck going down the road. And every stop light he came to he'd run to the back of the truck, grab a 2x4 and start beating on the side of the truck. Nobody could figure out what he was doing, so finally somebody asked him, "What are you doing?" He said, "This is only a two-ton truck and I'm carrying four tons of canaries. I've got to keep two tons of them in the air all the time."

Many of you are out there beating yourself, trying to keep it all in the air, to keep it from all crashing down. We tend to get stuck in life. We get stuck in relationships, stuck with habits, stuck in grief when we lose a loved one. We get stuck in anger. We get stuck in our work. And then we can't get out of it and then on to a cycle. Once you get stuck, then you start feeling guilty that you're stuck. You say, "I wish I could get out of this, but I can't." And then you have a lot of guilt after you can't get out of it and can't change, and then comes anger and you say I should be able to change, and you get angry at yourself. I ought to be able to get out of this. But you don't. And then your anger turns to fear that I'm never going to get out of this. It's got control of me. I'm going to end up in the hospital. Then your fear eventually turns to depression, and you start feeling sorry for yourself and having a pity party, until finally you say, "I give up I can't change." And you start the cycle all over again, sinking further.

How do you break out of that "stuckness"?

We need to ask ourselves what is in our hearts?

***Matthew 5:3-10*** gives us 8 principles of the heart.

***"Blessed are the poor in spirit,***

***For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.***

***Blessed are those who mourn,***

***For they shall be comforted.  
Blessed are the meek,  
For they shall inherit the [a]earth.  
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,  
For they shall be filled.  
Blessed are the merciful,  
For they shall obtain mercy.  
Blessed are the pure in heart,  
For they shall see God.  
Blessed are the peacemakers,  
For they shall be called sons of God.  
Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,  
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.***

We know God is seeking our hearts so, what does the Bible tell us of what is in our hearts?

***Jeremiah 17:9***

***“The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure.  
Who can understand it?”***

***Romans 1:28-31***

***“And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:***

***Mark 7:21-23***

***For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.***

**A) The Heart of Pride: trying to be the God of our lives will keep us from admitting we need help. Proverbs 18:12: "Arrogant people are on the way to ruin because they won't admit it when they need help." How many fathers will not stop to ask directions? Proverbs 10:8: "The self-sufficient fool falls flat on his face." Maybe you're not ready to take this step. Maybe you're not ready to say, "I give control and care of my life to Christ. I'm not ready yet to do that." All you need is a greater dose of pain. God will gladly allow it to get your attention.**

We need to seek after God's heart and not rely on our own heart.

The heart of pride!! This heart is a weary heart it takes a lot of energy to keep going. The "I'm God" Pride. Trying to play God.

Think about it...because they tried to control everything, Adam and Eve ended up in the garden eating the fruit.

1. Control Image (Psalms 139 :14,) (Ephesians 2:10 )
2. Control People (Romans 16 :17-18)(Proverbs 29:11)
3. Control Pain

Consequence to playing God

1. Fear
2. Frustration
3. Fatigue
4. Failure

Denial holds you back. You must admit it and work on the cure

You need to realize these facts

1. Powerless to change your past
2. Powerless to control people
3. Powerless to cope with hurts, hang ups, habits on my own.

The question to ask is what needs to change in MY life?

What pain are you running from? What is in your heart?

WHAT KEEPS ME FROM DOING THAT?

B) **The Heart of Guilt** will keep you from taking this step. I may be ashamed to ask God to help me. ***Psalms 40:13: “Problems, far too big for me to solve are piled higher than my head. Meanwhile, my sins, too many to count, have caught up with me and I’m ashamed to look up.”*** Ever felt that way? I’m ashamed to look up. I don’t want to ask God for help. You know how many times I’ve asked God for help, and I’ve made a promise and I’ve broke the promise? God if you just get me out of this ... I’m embarrassed to ask God for help. You don’t know all the things I’ve done wrong. I couldn’t go to God and ask for help.”

You’re wrong. Dead wrong. There’s no sin that God cannot forgive. And He wants to help you. Don’t let pride or guilt keep you from taking this step. He wants to forgive your guilt.

C) **The Heart of Fear**. I’m afraid of what I might have to give up. One of my favorite stories about fear: The guy that falls off a cliff, and halfway down he grabs a branch. He’s hanging on for dear life. Five hundred feet down. Five hundred feet up. He cries out, “Somebody help!” He hears the voice of God, “This is the Lord, trust Me, let go and I’ll catch you.” He looks back down the five hundred feet down; he looks up. “Is there anybody else up there?” God is the last resort. I’m afraid to let go. Some of you are hanging on for dear life by that branch and saying, “This isn’t that bad. No problem, really, I’m fine.”

What are you afraid of if you commit your life to Christ? What are you afraid will happen if you give God care and control of your life? “I don’t want anybody controlling me.” Who are you kidding? You’re being controlled all the time. It’s just that you choose who you’re being controlled by when you let God control your life. You’re controlled by the opinions of other people. You’re controlled by hurts you can’t forget. You controlled by habits, hang-ups, by the way your parents brought you up.

So, what heart should we have ?

A heart that seeks after God

**D) The Heart of Grace : James 4:6**

**But He gives more grace. Therefore, He says:**

**“God resists the proud,**

**But gives grace to the humble.”**

**E) The Heart of Freedom.**

We seek this heart through the truth. Do you know what freedom is?

Freedom is choosing who controls you. When you give your life in care and control of Christ, He sets you free. He said, “Those who sin are slaves to sin, but if you know the truth, the truth will set you free.” Jesus says, “I set you free.” Even if it’s your own ego. Real freedom is choosing who your master will be. So, what are you afraid of? What are you holding on to that you think, “I can’t let go of this in order to give my life to God?” A relationship, ambition, a habit, a lifestyle, a possession.

“How does a man benefit if he gains the whole world and loses his soul in the process? Is anything worth more than his soul?” No.

Now here is the action you can take on it

1. Pray about it
2. Write about it - Journal

What people, places, or things do you have the power to control?

What people, places, or things, have you been attempting to control?

Describe how you try to control your image, other people, or pain.

Write down your fears, frustration, fatigue, and failures, and how it affects your relationship with people and God.

What habits, hurts, hang-ups, have you been denying?

### 3. Share about it

With someone you trust. Share the details with someone of the same sex because it could be very intimate details.

- F) **The Humble Heart** : The Lord looks on David's heart, and sees a faithful one, a heart that recognizes the values humans admire are not the ones needed when facing impossible tasks. A heart that will rely on God is, I think, what God wanted to raise up in the new king.

When we look at people's hearts, and not their bank accounts, the car they drive, or the clothes they wear, it messes up our ability to compare our lives to theirs. It blurs the image we hold of what makes someone successful.

But to look at people's hearts, we must get past the outer surface of people's lives. We must put ourselves in places where we have opportunity to share stories with people who have led different lives, with people who have voted differently than we do, with people who have not had the privileges and opportunities we have had.

How often do we pass by people on the street with only the time to see as mortals see, without taking the time to see how our hearts might be similar?

The Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.

In conclusion, try telling yourself these four things.

I accept God's Son as my Savior. I need to be saved. I need help. I realize I need Him in my life. "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved." What does it mean? It means committing as much of myself as I understand at this moment to as much of Christ as I understand at this moment. Is that good enough? That is good enough.

I accept God's Word as my standard for living. From now on I've got a manual that I'm going to live my life by. We have a great gift from God, It's the Bible. God says this is your standard by which you evaluate life around you. Notice: "All Scripture is inspired by God and useful for teaching the

faith and correcting error for resetting the direction of a man's life, training him in good living."

I accept God's will as my strategy, as my goal in life. God, what do you want me to do? The first question I always ask is "Lord, you woke me up this morning. It obviously means you have another day for me, a purpose for my life. What do you want me to do with it?" As David says, "I delight to do your will." I seek first God's will. "God, I'm willing to do anything, anywhere, anytime. I don't even have to understand it but I'm living my life on Your terms because You made me for a reason. You have a purpose and I want to fulfill that purpose that You made me for." And God's will has become my strategy for life, whether I understand it or not.

I accept God's power as my strength. ***Philippians 4:13: "I can do everything God asks me with the help of Christ who gives me the strength and power."*** No longer do I have to rely on my own energy. Things work better when they're plugged in. You get plugged into God, you're not so tired all the time. God says, "I will give you My power to be all I want you to be."

Jesus says, ***"I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door I will come in and fellowship with him."*** Jesus says, "I'm standing at the door of your life and I'm knocking and I'm saying I want to come into your life," but He's a gentleman. He'll not beat the door down. You have to open the door. The key that unlocks that door is willingness. "Willpower is willingness to accept God's power." You don't need willpower; you need willingness to accept God's power in your life, go by His controls, His system.

Will you open the door today? Will you make that total Commitment to Him? You won't be sorry, it's the best decision that you will ever make. You have a church family all around you who will encourage you, love you, accept you, and who will share your victories and David's heart is, as we'll discover, a complicated thing. At the beginning of his story, he's the underdog, the youngest son out tending sheep.

For much of the rest of David's story, he's large and in charge—not the boy anointed by Samuel. He's the king of Israel. The one we look at to remember the "glory days" of Israel. It's from his family tree that Jesus claims kingship.

David loves God. He writes beautiful psalms. Those are the good parts of David's heart. In the darker moments of his heart, David "takes" other men's wives, adding more women's voices to the refrain of "me too" that echo through history. When David's children join the narrative, we discover he is not father of the year, which is the nicest thing I can say about his parenting.

I often wonder if David ever really acknowledged his privilege and his power? Or if he always saw himself as the young shepherd, anointed by Samuel, the plucky underdog? David is a complicated man, showing us the best and worst of humanity. One of his many Psalms is the one we use often in worship.

Create in me a clean heart, O God. And renew a right spirit within me.

Friends, we live in a world where we've mastered the art of seeing each other only as mortals see, leading to much discord and hostility. We categorize people by their behavior. In other words, instead of saying "a man who is unhoused", we say "did you see the homeless on the corner?"

People lose their humanity and are reduced to labels of "an illegal", or "a loser", or "a liberal". Even if the labels are good ones, they don't capture all our complexity.

When we see people as mortals see them, instead of looking at their hearts as God does, we lose our ability to see nuance and complication and connection.

The moral of this story is not to have the most perfect heart anyone has ever had. God doesn't call us to perfection—that would just be another way of seeing as mortals see. God also doesn't turn away from our failings, pretending they aren't there.

God calls us for our hearts. Hearts that beat with life and joy. Hearts that work for justice. Hearts that are broken open for love and loss. Hearts that get dirty and then washed in God's mercy to be clean, so we can try again, greet another day,



and go honestly into our complicated world, forgiving of ourselves and of each other.

Let us bring our hearts to this work of faith and community, seeing each other as God sees us. Caring for each other as God cares for us. Whether you see yourself as top dog or underdog, if you look for the hearts of others, and tend to your heart, you will have a heart that relies on God