

Lesson 4

The Saint's Heart that Sins

Out of the heart come all sins as the overflow of the heart.

Summary

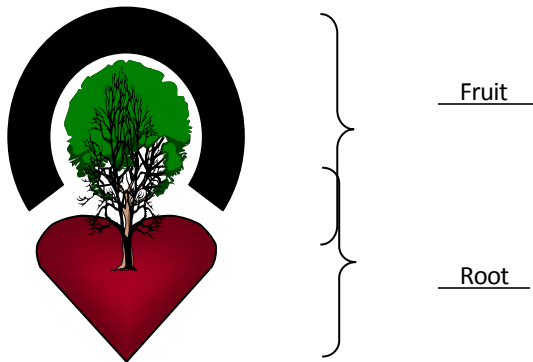
Using our communication, talk and words as the primary example, Jesus highlights the inner man, the heart, as the root source and sole cause of all actions and emotions. Thus, true Biblical change takes place through heart change as provided by the work of the cross and our identity as New Covenant believers.

TEACHER: Use an illustration about the symptoms of heart trouble and the problem of merely addressing the symptoms. If there is a blocked artery, you have to address the underlying medical issue.

Review

Two Dimensions of Each Person: Fruit and Root

The biblical concept of the "heart" involves your beliefs and motives (*Hebrews 4:12*). It is the seat or source of your inner person--what rules you, drives you, controls you, etc.



Do not merely think of the fruit as outer behavior sins – fruit may also be thinking evil of another that wants to destroy (anger) and yet has no occasion or opportunity to commit an outward act. Some thinking/wanting is fruit; thus, there may be a cycle of root and fruit in the inner man that produces deeply “gnarled” fruit in the outer man.



	Defines	Desires	Texts
Vulnerable to	Lies	Lusts	Genesis 3; Romans 1
Repented by	Believing	Bowing	Romans 10:9-10

The Heart as the Source of All Actions and Emotions

From the wisdom of Proverbs to the teaching of Jesus, we have underscored the centrality of the Bible's teaching on the heart.

The Need for Diligent Observation Proverbs 4:20-27

Command to diligent observation of how the heart is thinking and wanting in the midst of the occasions, situations, temptations to sin.

Our Responsibilities in Relation to our R o o t s (v.20-23)

The first focus is on God's Word and our inner beings, our hearts.

Pay a t t e n t i o n to God's Word by intentional hearing.

I m b e d God's Word into the heart so that we think with and in Bible.

B e l i e v e God's declarations about God's Word.

G u a r d your heart as the source spring of your life's expression and experience.

Our Responsibilities in Relation to our F r u i t s (v.24-27)

Along with heart change, there must be behavior change. This is a "Both-and" not an "either-or" nor is it exclusively one or the other. The commands here illustrate three areas of walk and wisdom.

Teacher: It is not necessary to expound on what is being commanded; only to note that a wide array of fruit issues is being addressed illustratively.

In our t a l k (v.24)

In our f o c u s (v.25)

In our l i f e s t y l e (v.26-27)



The Root and Fruit in Jesus' Teaching

Jesus' often uses the root and fruit, the heart and actions as the way to interpret people. He does not offer it as "a" way, but as a final, authoritative and definitive way of understanding and interpreting people.

The Heart as a S t o r e h o u s e

Luke 6:43-45; Matthew 12:33-37

The heart is a storehouse out of which good and evil behavior flows. So, what one says is the overflow of what one thinks and desires. This explains why we can so easily see the evil in another and so easily deny it in ourselves. We see the fruit and are to find the root. So we comb through fruit looking for themes and connections to heart themes.

In the Matthew text, our words as an expression of our heart, will be the final and irrefutable evidence of heart sins. The word, "careless" here means "casual, unguarded" etc. He is not talking about small talk, but talk in the unguarded moment.

The Heart as the S o u r c e of Evil

Matthew 15:1-20 // Mark 7:1-23

All the evil behaviors, choices and emotions described in verse 19 flow upward from the heart into fruit. A hypocrite is when lips do not match heart – covering action to hide sin in the heart.

Jesus is concerned here with the Pharisees who emphasized external moralism, traditions and legalism. He is reframing their categories. Behavior and emotions do not arise from the external situation. They arise from the heart, from the inner man.

Also notice that this is an illustrative list across broad categories including evil thoughts as a the fruit of an evil heart. The evil thoughts here are fruit in that they are a chosen flow of words known to be evil, a "script". Some scripts may be erotic, some may be violent, some may be vain-glorious. This is what is meant by "evil thoughts".



The Glorious Provision in the New Covenant

God has made a glorious provision for us in the New Covenant, We are recipients and participators in the New Covenant. The promises of the New Covenant shape how we are now to work out our salvation in terms of the heart.

Its Provisions for All

Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 10:11-18

While a discussion of the New Covenant itself is too big a topic for this study, one of the key provisions in it warrants our attention.

(Note – connect the context of Hebrews as explaining the intent of Jeremiah...)

Every person in the New Covenant k n o w s the Lord.

Unlike the Old Covenant where unbelievers were in the Covenant, all persons in the New Covenant are believers and will know the Lord.

Every believer r e c e i v e s a new heart

Ezekiel 11:19;36:26

We receive the Holy Spirit

We receive a new heart

By receiving the Holy Spirit, every believer will have a new heart. The hard heart is taken away and a soft heart is given instead. The new heart is NOT receiving *something* but rather, according to the New Testament, it is the spiritual ability to renew the mind and change the inner man by the Word and Spirit's inward work.

The Word is put in every believers heart/ mind.

The key provision for our study is that God will embed the Word of God in the inner being. He promises to do so in a parallelism of “putting it in their hearts” and “writing it on their minds.”

Its Perfection in Salvation **Hebrews 8:13; 9:15**

The New Covenant replaces the Old Covenant so that it is obsolete. It served its purpose and is now replaced. We no longer live by the Old Covenant. We no longer live by the Law. Later, we will see in Romans 6-8 how this works out for practical holiness and godly living.



Its Practice in Ministry

2 Corinthians 3:6

Paul locates all ministry in the church as a ministry of the New Covenant. The following key features show the heart-orientation embedded in that ministry.

A ministry of the S p i r i t, not the letter of the Old (v.6).

Our approach to grow and change is now a matter of the Word and Spirit in a new and transforming way.

A ministry full of greater g l o r y than the Old (v.7-11).

True New Covenant ministry will have a distinct glory about it. As it works to help people grow and change, it will be God-centered and God-magnifying.

A ministry that unveils the f a d i n g glory of the Old (v.12-16).

New Covenant ministry will help people to live by and in the New Covenant and not to return to the Old as a way of life.

A ministry that t r a n s f o r m s in a Christ-centered way (v.17-18).

New Covenant ministry affirms the transforming power of beholding Christ and therefore will hold him up to people's gaze and will rest in that transforming work. Our hearts will become like what the gaze at.

A ministry that gives f r e e d o m from the slavery of the old (v.17-18).

New Covenant ministry will free people from heart and behavior slavery both to the Old and to what the Old could never set us free from.

A ministry that is exercised with godly i n t e g r i t y (4:1-6)

New Covenant ministry exemplifies godliness in its exercise while expecting heart transformation. There will be no disconnect from the way the ministry works from what is expected of people in their Christian lives.

A ministry that will lead to great s u f f e r i n g and great r e w a r d (4:7f)

Because New Covenant ministry is about exalting the glory of Christ, then there will be great suffering as God breaks the earthen vessel. There will be great reward accruing *while* we are gazing on the eternal, not the temporal.



The Foundational Principle of Old and New

There is a fundamental organization of God's working in redemptive history and in personal history that is parallel. We must understand this or we may go about heart transformation in unbiblical or extra-biblical ways.

Old and New Covenants (2 Corinthians 3:1-18)

We have just spent a lot of time talking about this. We are under the blessings of grace by the Spirit and Word in the New Covenant.

Old and New Creation (2 Corinthians 5:16-21)

We are part of the new creation with all things new as a result.

Flesh and the Spirit (Galatians 5:16-25)

We are in the realm of the Spirit and still dwell in the flesh with the tensions that ensue.

Old and New Realm (Colossians 1:13; 2:16-3:11)

We have been raised with Christ and now have a life in the heavens in Him. We are also yet dwelling physically in the old realm where there is conflict.

Old and New Adam (Romans 5:12-21)

Paul establishes two spheres that relate to our justification and establish our identity. All people are either in Adam or in Christ. Unbelievers are in Adam and will die condemned. Believers are in Christ and experience the reality of justification, forgiveness and freedom from the penalty and power of sin.

Old and New Man (Romans 6:6; Ephesians 4:22; Colossians 3:9)

Also, there is an old and new man referred to in the above texts. Do NOT think old and new nature. This is simply another way to say the old or new realm, being in Adam or in Christ. It is a realm, a sphere, a spiritual location. It affects both the inner and outer of a person.



Lessons for Living

We must allow the S c r i p t u r e to define and interpret people, their roots and fruits.

While some modern theories have bits and pieces of the Biblical view, the Biblical view contradicts some of the most commonly accepted notions. Many of these notions are so embedded in many Christian's thinking that it will take real effort to retrain our thinking.

The Bible in both the Old and New Testaments, clearly teaches that the heart is the source of all that corrupts people.

The heart, the inner man, the process of thinking in the mind are the roots of sin and holiness.

Live in the blessing of the New Covenant having received the Spirit and the Word embedded into your heart.

Remind the students of the greatness of the New Covenant, not just in the forgiveness of sin, but also in the provision for holy living.

New Covenant ministry is what it is because of the focus on Christ's glory and heart transformation.

Central to the New Covenant ministry is not going back to the Old Covenant for salvation or transformation. In Christ the veil that keeps people from seeing that the glory of the Old Covenant has faded and is now obsolete, also keeps them from seeing the glory of Christ. That veil is lifted in Christ.

Learn and memorize these key "New and Old" foundational truths for the sake of your growth and change.

Most errors in transformation (sanctification) are a misuse or a misunderstanding of one of these areas.

Looking Ahead

- Visual Models to Clarify Truths
- Understanding our Identity in Christ for Heart Change
 - Romans 6-8
 - Galatians 5:1-26
 - Ephesians 4:17ff
 - Colossians 2:16-3:11
- Heart Dynamics – Pursuing and Pleasing God



Questions for Discussion

What is the root of our behavior (actions and emotions)?

It is in the heart, the inner man...

What are the two primary causes for our behavior?

What the heart believes and what the heart desires

Do emotions cause behavior? Are they root or fruit?

No, they interact with behavior – emotions are themselves fruit

What error is Jesus' teaching on the heart countering?

The error of moralism or legalism as taught by the Pharisees. This put an emphasis on the external behavior and added to God's Word.

In the New Covenant, what is the primary provision for the heart? What does this consist of?

God gives a new heart by implanting His Word and Spirit. This heart consists of a renewed mind, a new way of thinking. It is a transformation of the beliefs and wants of the heart.

How does the description of a New Covenant ministry affect our understanding of the heart?

Shows that the focus of growth and change is on the inner man as we gaze on the transforming glory of Christ.

List the "Old and New" that are foundational for our next studies.