

WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT?

Message by Steve Hahn January 4, 2015

1. THE MOTIVATION FOR LIVING A SOLD OUT LIFE FOR JESUS IS _____

Without love our faith tends towards _____, _____ & _____

2. OUR IDENTITY MUST COME FROM CHRIST, NOT FROM WHAT WE _____

Our activities can get in the way of _____

Henri Nouwen: "the main obstacle to loving God is _____ for God"

When communion with God gets replaced by activity for Him then it leads to doing things out of _____ rather than from _____. See Revelation 2:2-4

3. _____ IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN _____

Read Luke 10:25-28

Read Mark 12:32-33

4. CHRISTIANITY IS A _____ OF THE HEART

Oswald Chambers: "It is by the heart that God is perceived (known) & not by _____....so that is what faith is: God perceived by the heart"

5. YOUR HEART IS THE _____ OF LIFE

Proverbs 4:23 Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

It is the place of: emotions, desires, affections, thoughts, understanding, conscience, reasoning powers, intentions, will, and faith.

6. WE NEED TO _____ OUR HEARTS

We can care for our hearts by _____

7. LOVING JESUS IS THE _____ OF SERVING

John 14:15 Jesus said, "If you love me you will _____ me"

8. WHERE DO YOU SCORE?

RITUAL

HEART

Are you content to live there one more year?

The following questions are designed to help you examine your spiritual life over the past year and to prayerfully seek God's help in areas where you desire to grow in the New Year.

Loving God with all your heart, soul and mind.

- How is my personal relationship with God?
 - Do I have a growing desire to spend more time with God?
 - Am I growing in my desire to obey and please God? Do I obey out of gratitude for God's love? Or from guilt or fear?
 - Have I fully surrendered to the Holy Spirit? Do I ask God to fill me each day with the Holy Spirit?
 - Are there areas I am holding back from God? Which ones? Why?
 - Am I more aware of the sins in my life?
- Am I actively serving God?
 - Volunteering at church?
 - Praying regularly for the pastor, staff, missionaries and volunteers?
 - Am I seeking to make others feel welcome in my church?
 - Doing my job with excellence?
 - Reaching out to those around me?
- Am I growing in my desire and actions to give sacrificially to God's work in the church, in caring for the poor, and in other ministries? Am I teaching my children about sacrificial giving and putting God before materialistic desires?
- Am I living in humility before God, my family, friends and co-workers?
- Is there evidence of grace growing in my life? Do I thank God every day for his love, grace and mercy and saving me from what I deserve? Am I seeing evidence of the fruit of the Spirit in my life (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control)? Am I learning to see others through the mind of Christ? Am I treating others with the same grace God has shown me?

Loving Your Neighbor

- Am I loving my family as I should?
 - Spouses, are you loving your partner? How, specifically?
 - Parents – are we teaching our children the Bible, how to pray, and how to please God?
 - Children, are you honoring your parents? How, specifically?
 - Am I managing my time in a way that reflects God's priorities and honors my family?
 - Are there any outside influences that are harming my family relationships?
- Am I forgiving others? Is there anyone among my family, friends, neighbors or co-workers that I refuse to forgive? Do I fully trust that God has forgiven my sins?
- Am I growing in fellowship with other believers?
 - Am I part of a small group? Is it making a difference in the lives of participants?
 - Do I have a godly mentor to help me grow in my walk with Christ?
 - Am I mentoring/discipling a newer believer?
- Have I personally witnessed to anyone in the past year? In my neighborhood? In my workplace? Am I prepared to share my testimony? To share the Gospel?
 - Am I fervently praying for and planning opportunities to witness in this coming year?
 - Am I being salt and light in my neighborhood, workplace and social groups?
- Am I focusing part of my time and money to help the poor and disadvantaged? Am I teaching my children about the importance of helping the poor? How?

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Sometimes it's useful to begin discussion by asking if there was anything from this week's message that stood out – either a point that was made that really resonated with them, or perhaps a question or difficulty that came up for them.

1. THE MOTIVATION FOR LIVING A SOLD OUT LIFE FOR JESUS IS LOVE FOR JESUS

Without love our faith tends towards rules, rituals & religion

Steve described these 3 r's as "lifeless and boring." Do you agree? Can routine be a positive thing?

What does Christian passion look like? Does passion = enthusiasm? How does personality affect our expression of passion?

What does "loving Jesus" mean to you?

2. OUR IDENTITY MUST COME FROM CHRIST, NOT FROM WHAT WE DO

Our activities can get in the way of loving Jesus

Henri Nouwen: "the main obstacle to loving God is service for God"

When communion with God gets replaced by activity for Him then it leads to doing things out of duty rather than from passion.

Read Revelation 2:2-4

When have (spiritual) activities seemed like a duty for you?

How do we keep our activity for God from replacing communion with Him?

3. LOVE IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN SACRIFICE/ACTIVITIES

Read Luke 10:25-28 and Mark 12:32-33

How do we love God and our neighbour? Does it involve sacrifice/activities? How do we reconcile this apparent difficulty?

How can we ensure that we are responding at the heart level (ie. that our hearts are centred on Jesus)?

4. CHRISTIANITY IS A LOVE AFFAIR OF THE HEART

Oswald Chambers: "It is by the heart that God is perceived (known) & not by reason....so that is what faith is: God perceived by the heart"

Do you agree with Oswald Chamber's statement? What place does reason have in our walk of faith?

Can activities express love for God? (can you love someone and do nothing for them?)

How can we attain an appropriate balance in our lives between faith and reason?

5. YOUR HEART IS THE WELLSPRING OF LIFE

Proverbs 4:23 Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

It is the place of: emotions, desires, affections, thoughts, understanding, conscience, reasoning powers, intentions, will, and faith.

Read through the scriptures for each if time allows.

Does one (or more) stand out? Why?

6. WE NEED TO PROTECT/GUARD/NURTURE OUR HEARTS

We can care for our hearts by solitude & silence, friends, His Word, prayer, worship, meditation, nature

What are some other ways we can care for our hearts? (eg. art, journaling)

Can "activities" nurture our hearts?

What are some other things (distractions) that can capture our hearts?

Think of one thing you could do (on a more regular basis) which would nurture your heart toward greater love for God.

7. LOVING JESUS IS THE FOUNDATION OF SERVING

John 14:15 Jesus said, "If you love me you will obey me"

What does it mean to you to "obey" Jesus?

What is one way you sense that God is calling you to be obedient to Him?

8. WHERE DO YOU SCORE?

RITUAL

(DUTY?)

(ACTIVITIES?)

HEART

(Assuming you are closer to the Ritual side) are you content to live there one more year?

How can we make sure that the activities we engage in flow out of our love for Jesus?

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Spiritual Checkup Activity (original at

http://www.cslewisinstitute.org/Annual_Spiritual_Check_Up)

Introductory remarks:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the law and the prophets hang on these two commandments.” Matthew 22:37-40

Each year many of us will go through a physical check-up, perhaps do a financial check up at year's end or at tax time, and perhaps do a performance review at our workplace. But how often do we take time to review our spiritual life?

Those who are saved by grace are called to grow in grace (2 Pet. 3.18). As disciples of Jesus, we are to live a life of love – love for God and love for our neighbor, in the power of the Holy Spirit. Too often, in the busyness of our day-to-day lives, we let other priorities crowd out the two highest priorities Jesus gave us.

Concluding remarks:

Jesus says that if we love him, we will obey him (Jn. 14.15), and he calls us to grow in grace and love. Do you have a plan for growing in your love for God and love for your neighbor for this next year? Will you prayerfully prepare one before the end of the year? To help you grow in these areas, you'll find a variety of resources on our website.

Scriptures

Revelation 2:2-3, I know your deeds, your hard work & your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked men, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, & have found them false. You have persevered & have endured hardships for my name & have not grown weary

Revelation 2:4 Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first.

Luke 10:25 What must I do to inherit eternal life?

Luke 10:26 “What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”

Luke 10:27 He answered, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

Luke 10:28 “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

Mark 12:32-33 “Well said, teacher,” the man replied. “You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.”

Proverbs 4:23 Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

Matthew 7:21 Jesus said: Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

Our Heart:

It's the place of our emotions.

John 14:1 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me."

Ephesians 5:19 ... be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord.

It's the place of our desires.

Matthew 5:28 But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

It's the place of our affections.

Acts 21:13 Then Paul answered, “Why are you weeping and breaking my heart? I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.”

It's the place of our thoughts.

Matthew 9:4 Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, “Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts?”

It's the place of understanding.

Matthew 13:15 For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.

It's the place of our conscience.

Acts 2:37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

It's the place of reasoning powers.

Mark 2:6 KJV But there was certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts...

It's the place of our intention.

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

2 Corinthians 9:7 Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

It's the place of our will.

Romans 6:17 But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance.

It's the place of faith.

Romans 10:10 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.