



Lead Your Heart - Part 1

INTRODUCTION

Most of us have the misconception that the mind thinks and the heart feels. This is a wrong understanding. According to the Bible, the heart was seen as the source and seat of: emotions, will, moral conduct and thoughts (Matt 15:19, Luke 5:22).

Proverbs 4:23 says, "Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life." God wants us to pay careful attention to our heart. All of our responses to life emanate from the heart. If we allow sinful responses to life to settle into our heart, then that is who we become. Emotions are not bad. Our God created us to have them, but emotion is a problem when it is unwarranted or harmful. For example, when resentment or bitterness settles in, it will damage relationships around us.

How do we lead our heart out of anger, bitterness or resentment? Forgiveness leads your heart out of anger.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Has anger ever clouded your judgment – you reacted rashly – and lived to regret it? Share your experience.
2. Read Genesis 2:15. What do you actively and intentionally do to keep and tend your heart?
3. Anger is a natural emotion – but anger is a secondary feeling. That is, it is suggestive of something deeper: either we have been wronged and wounded emotionally or our sense of rights has been violated. When we are angry with someone, we are saying to them "you owe me." Ephesians 4:26 says, "In your anger do not sin: do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold."

When does anger lead us to sin?

4. Read Ephesians 4:25-32. Do an inductive bible study (observations, interpretation and application). You can use the following as a guide.
 - a. Posture your heart. Spend some time in prayer and ask the Holy Spirit to be your teacher. Open your heart to the Lord to speak to you.

- b. Read the passage aloud
- c. Ask some context questions of the passage:
 - What sort of writing is this? (a letter, a poem, a narrative etc?)
 - Are there any clues about the circumstances under which it was written?
 - What has happened so far in this particular book of the Bible?
- d. Some observation questions of the passage:
 - Are there any major sub-sections or breaks in the passage?
 - What is the main point or points?
 - What surprises are there?
 - What are the key words? What words or ideas are repeated?
- e. Some leading questions of the text:
 - How does this passage relate to other parts of the book?
 - How does the passage relate to Jesus?
 - What does this teach us about God?
 - How could we sum up the meaning of this passage in our own words?
- f. Some application questions of the passage:
 - How does this passage challenge (or confirm) your understanding?
 - Is there some attitude I need to change?
 - How does this passage call on me to change the way I live?

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Do not let anger fester, we are giving the devil an opportunity to attack us. Start to deal with our anger as soon as possible. We are to re-prioritise our life and decide to get rid of anger in our life. Set a date to get rid of our anger, bitterness and resentment. If not we will carry it to our own grave.

Forgiveness leads your heart out of anger.

In order for forgiveness to happen, we need to take these 4 steps:

1. Identify who has hurt you
2. List what they owe you
3. Cancel their debt
4. Remind yourself that the account is closed.

We owe God our creator everything but we live most our life without Him. God in Christ has cancel all our debts owed to Him. We are forgiven so that we can forgive one another.

Is there someone in your life whom you need to forgive, or seek forgiveness from? If you are not ready to forgive, are you willing to let God work on your heart?

CHANGE YOUR MINDSET

“Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamour and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.” ~ Ephesians 4:31-32 (ESV)