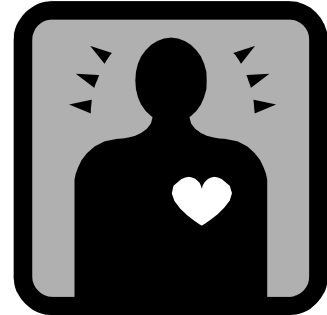


HEART

When I think of the word “heart”, several meanings come to mind:

- ♥ The organ than pumps and helps circulate blood
- ♥ A spirit or courage – *Seabiscuit had the heart to win the race*
- ♥ The central or core part – *Here is the heart of the matter, children are a gifted from God*
- ♥ An indication of love or compassion – *She had a heart for old horses left otherwise to the pasture*
- ♥ Center of our emotions, our attributes, our values; from which comes our thoughts, our words, our actions, and all other aspects of our personality, behavior, our will and the way in which we live



The last of these five meanings is the focus of this letter and, let me add, a very important word among all the words contained in these letters.

In Matthew, Jesus tells us: *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.* Continuing in this book, Jesus tells us: *Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.* Other scriptures within the same book also indicate that the heart is a processing center: the patterns of our thought-life, the words expressed toward others, and the actions applied in our lives are all indications of the condition of our heart. God is able to understand our heart, to change our heart, and to transform that heart toward purity – from which comes thought patterns, words and actions that are pleasing in his sight.

In some passages of the Bible, the heart is described as being calloused are hardened; a description of one who cannot or will not listen, accept and practice the will and purpose of God. Romans describes the heart as being “darkened”

For although they knew God, they neither glorified as God nor gave thanks to Him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened...

or in state such that the worship of God as God is not possible; instead, that hearts in such a state are foolish and result in foolish thinking.

You may remember the children’s song that included the following words: *In to my heart, in to my heart, come in to my heart Lord Jesus; come in today, come in to stay, come in to my heart Lord Jesus.* Such a request made into song is the essence of the relationship with Jesus: a simple yet certain decision, desire and request to have Jesus come into our hearts and change our hearts to that of his own. By such a transformation can we think, speak, and act in his character and life.

In a **WORD**