

THE HEART OF THE MATTER

"See that your chief study be about your heart, that there God's image may be planted, and His interest advanced, and the interest of the world and flesh subdued, and the love of every sin cast out, and the love of holiness succeed."

Richard Baxter

EXODUS 19, 20, 32

Your heart is a muscle that is located to the left of the middle of your chest. It is about the size of your fist. The heart sends blood around your body and this provides your body with the oxygen and the nutrients it needs. Every day, an adult heart pumps 2,000 gallons worth of blood by filling and contracting. The heart is made up of 4 chambers: the atria (top chambers-2, receives/accepts blood back to the heart) and the ventricles (bottom chambers-2, sends blood out to the body). Running down the middle of the heart is a thick wall of muscle called the septum.

THE DIAGNOSIS:

A Hard Heart?

A Soft Heart?

An Undivided Heart?

"...the Lord searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts."

1 Chronicles 28: 9

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

Psalms 139: 24, 25

THE TREATMENT:

Loving Beyond REASON:

"By entering through faith into what God has always wanted to do for us – set us right with Him, make us fit for Him—we have it all together with God because of our Master Jesus. And that's not all: We throw open our doors to God and discover at the same moment that He has already thrown open His door to us. We find ourselves standing where we always hoped we might stand—out in the wide open spaces of God's grace and glory, standing tall and shouting our praise...We can't round up enough containers to hold everything God generously pours into our lives through the Holy Spirit." (Romans 5, The Message)

I can because God has always wanted to do that for us!

Living Beyond FEAR:

*"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."
Isaiah 41: 10*

I will because God is with me! (He has promised!!).

Looking Beyond FORGIVENESS:

*"Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your unfailing love...Your great compassion
...Against You, You only, have I sinned...I was sinful at birth...
...You desire truth in the inner parts
...Cleanse me with hyssop,...wash me and I will be whiter than snow
...Create in me a pure heart, O Lord
...Restore me to the joy of Your salvation
Psalm 51, selected passages*

I must because I want to be a strong woman with a soft heart.

"In the end it doesn't matter how well we have performed or what we have accomplished – a life without heart is not worth living. For out of this wellspring of our soul flow all true caring and all meaningful work, all real worship and all sacrifice."

Brent Curtis and John Eldredge

LESSON FOR LIVING: A healthy heart is a heart connected to the Source and lived out in a life of obedience, prayer, and joy!