

The Goal Is Love # 3: Love From A Pure Heart

INTRODUCTION

We are looking at the goal of love. The launch pad for this series is 1 Timothy 1:5, which says the “goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. In the first message, we looked at why we should have the goal of love. We looked at 1 Corinthians 13 and we saw the surpassing value of love. We saw six reasons that love should be our goal.

(1 Tim 1:5) "But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith."

In our second message we looked at the characteristics of love. Many people do not understand love. They think that love is just a romantic feeling that you may have. Some feel it is an emotion that you feel. Very few people know the characteristics of love. They do not know that it is something that we can possess. They have been around it. They have seen love. They may not have recognized love, but they have seen it. But, they have never received Christ into their lives. John tells us that if we do not have or possess this love, we do not know God, for God is love. The one that knows God, loves. We must receive and possess God to possess this agape love.

People do not know that love is something that we can abide or dwell in. We looked at four ways to abide in love. We abide in love by laying our lives down for one another and serving one another. We abide in love by keeping God's commandments. We abide in God's love by confessing Jesus to others. All of us have the responsibility of sharing our faith with others. It is part of abiding in love. We also abide in love by walking in the Spirit. The first fruit of the Spirit is love.

People do not know that love is something that we can know. They do not know that God has given us lots of different ways to know love. For example, we know love by this, that Jesus laid His life down for us. We know love by laying our lives down for others. We know love by being patient and kind with others. We know love by rejoicing with truth. We looked at fifteen different ways in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 of how to know love. If we are going to make love our goal, we must know what the goal is. We must be able to identify the goal. We must know the definition and characteristics of love. Most importantly, we must possess love ourselves.

This morning and for the next two weeks, we will be looking at what love flows or springs out of. You may know the Lord and possess love, but the love of God is not what is flowing out of your life. There is a reason for that. Sometimes there are things which muddy the waters before it gets to you.

When we built our house on our farm in Georgia, we decided to use well water. The property already had a deep well on it. I tested the quality of the water, and found out that it was hard. In the East Mountains we are pretty familiar with hard water. We all have water softening systems. I also tested the purity or quality of the water. Our well water was pure and had no bacteria or other contaminants in it.

As we began to use our well water, we noticed that it became very muddy when it rains. Atlanta gets 50" of rain each year, so it rained quite frequently. Apparently, there was an underground stream that flowed into the well and when it rained, we had red, Georgia clay water in our house. Therefore, we put in a large filtering system.

The Goal Is Love # 3: Love From A Pure Heart

Some of us have and know the love of God, but when the storms of life come and it pours down on us, our love is like our well water; it gets murky. Our patience runs short instead of being long. Our gentleness and meekness turns harsh. Our forgiving repeats a matter. We take into consideration a wrong suffered. We get provoked. We get selfish instead of laying our lives down for others. Instead of hoping and believing the best, we lose hope and doubt the other person. The water flowing or springing from our heart is murky. Today, we are going to look at where this love we have been looking at, springs from. We are going to look at several ways to keep our water clean or pure at all times. We are going to look at the LOVE THAT SPRINGS FROM A PURE HEART.

I. THE CONTEXT OF THE PASSAGE

In the text today, there are people in Ephesus who have wrong motives for instructing God's people. Their heart was to be teachers of the Law. They were motivated to be seen, to be up front, to be THE Teachers. They were there for position and the respect of men. They were there for selfish motives and reasons. Their heart was not pure. They were not there to help people walk uprightly and draw close to God. They were not there to help people love God and love their neighbor. They were there to make themselves look good. They were there to exalt themselves.

(1 Tim 1:3-7) "As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus, in order that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, {4} nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith. {5} But the goal of our instruction (*command or charge*) is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. {6} For some men, straying from these things, have turned aside to fruitless discussion, {7} wanting to be teachers of the Law, even though they do not understand either what they are saying or the matters about which they make confident assertions."

Paul's heart was pure. He had no selfish motives. He was laying his life down for the kingdom. His desire was to see the kingdom of God established in these Ephesian believers. His desire was for the Law to be used lawfully. His desire was for believers to live uprightly. Sound doctrine produces sound lifestyles. A sinful lifestyle is contrary to sound teaching. Paul also made mention that it was the Lord who put him in service. Paul was not self promoting.

(1 Timothy 1:12) "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service;"

If you recall in Acts 13, the Holy Spirit said to set apart Barnabas and Paul for the work for which He had called them. Then, the leadership team, after fasting and praying, laid their hands on them and sent them away.

(Acts 13:1-3) "Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers: Barnabas, and Simeon who was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. {2} And while they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." {3} Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away."

The Goal Is Love # 3: Love From A Pure Heart

A pure heart is not self promoting. It allows God to promote and raise up at the right time. A pure heart serves and waits for God to raise up and exalt. It is not from the east or from the west that exaltation comes, but from the Lord. We are to be leery of anyone wanting position.

(Psa 75:4-7) ""I said to the boastful, 'Do not boast,' And to the wicked, 'Do not lift up the horn; {5} Do not lift up your horn on high, Do not speak with insolent pride.'" {6} For not from the east, nor from the west, Nor from the desert comes exaltation; {7} But God is the Judge; He puts down one, and exalts another."

II. THE DEFINITION OF HEART

What is the heart that Paul is referring to? We know that the heart is the central organ in our body that pumps and supplies all the blood to all the body. It is a muscle that we need to keep in good shape. But what is the meaning of heart in Scripture?

The word for heart in the O.T is LEB and in the N.T. it is KARDIA. Both words are almost identical in their meaning and usage. The word heart is used over 900 (955) times in Scripture and almost never is it used literally. The exception is in Exodus 28:29-30, which speaks of the breastplate of decision over the heart of Aaron.

A. It Represents The Seat Of Our Affections. The heart is regarded (as in the modern usage) as the seat of the affections. An example is in Psalms 62:10, which says that if riches increase, we are not to set our heart upon them. Heart is used as the seat of affections.

(Psalms 62:10b) "If riches increase, do not set your heart upon them."

B. It Represents The Seat Of The Intellect. The heart is also used as the seat of the intellect. In Genesis 6:5 it says, "every inclination of the thoughts of his heart." Here, the word heart is speaking of the place where our thoughts come from, the seat of our intellect.

(Genesis 6:5) "Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

- **Ponders in the heart**

(Luke 2:19) "But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart."

- **Imaginations originate**

(Pro 6:18) "A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that run rapidly to evil,"

- **Considerations are made**

(Jer 12:11) ""It has been made a desolation, Desolate, it mourns before Me; The whole land has been made desolate, Because no man lays it to heart."

The Goal Is Love # 3: Love From A Pure Heart

- **Beliefs are made**

(Luke 24:25) "And He said to them, "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!"

(Romans 10:10) "for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation."

- **Understanding comes from**

(1 Kings 3:9) ""So give Thy servant an understanding heart to judge Thy people to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Thine?""

(Job 38:36) ""Who has put wisdom in the innermost being, Or has given understanding to the mind?"

C. It Represents The Seat Of The Will. The heart is also used to speak of the seat of our will. Psalms 119:2 says, "who seek Him with all their heart." This refers to their will. They have set their will to seek God. There is a choice that they have made in their heart and it has been set on seeking God. It is the seat of the will.

- **Intentions are made**

(Hebrews 4:12) "For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart."

- **Purposes and plans are formed**

(Proverbs 20:5) "A plan in the heart of a man is like deep water, But a man of understanding draws it out."

- **Will is exercised**

(Ephesians 6:6) "not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart."

D. It Represents The Seat Of Emotions. Often the heart refers to the seat of our emotions or our innermost being. Genesis 6:6 says that "his heart was filled with pain." It is talking about the deep feelings and the innermost being of a person.

- **Astonished heart**

(Deuteronomy 28:28) ""The LORD will smite you with madness and with blindness and with bewilderment of heart;"

The Goal Is Love # 3: Love From A Pure Heart

- **Broken heart**

(Psalms 34:18) "The LORD is near to the brokenhearted, And saves those who are crushed in spirit."

(Psalms 69:20) "Reproach has broken my heart, and I am so sick. And I looked for sympathy, but there was none, And for comforters, but I found none."

(Psalms 147:3) "He heals the brokenhearted, And binds up their wounds."

(Isaiah 61:1) "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives, And freedom to prisoners;"

- **Bitter heart**

(Ezekiel 27:31) ""Also they will make themselves bald for you And gird themselves with sackcloth; And they will weep for you in bitterness of soul With bitter mourning."

- **Discouraged heart**

(Numbers 32:7-9) ""Now why are you discouraging (the heart of) the sons of Israel from crossing over into the land which the LORD has given them? {8} "This is what your fathers did when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to see the land. {9} "For when they went up to the valley of Eshcol and saw the land, they discouraged (the heart of) the sons of Israel so that they did not go into the land which the LORD had given them."

- **Failing heart**

(1 Samuel 17:32) "And David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail on account of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine.""

- **Fainting heart**

(Genesis 45:26) "And told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not."

- **Fearful, trembling, or anxious heart**

(Deuteronomy 28:65) ""And among those nations you shall find no rest, and there shall be no resting place for the sole of your foot; but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing of eyes, and despair of soul."

(Isaiah 21:4) "My heart panted, fearfulness affrighted me: the night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear unto me."

The Goal Is Love # 3: Love From A Pure Heart

(Isaiah 35:4) "Say to those with anxious heart, "Take courage, fear not. Behold, your God will come with vengeance; The recompense of God will come, But He will save you.""

- **Glad**

(Deuteronomy 28:47) ""Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and a glad heart, for the abundance of all things;"

(Psalms 104:15) "And wine which makes man's heart glad, So that he may make his face glisten with oil, And food which sustains man's heart."

(Proverbs 24:17) "Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, And do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles;"

(Proverbs 27:11) "Be wise, my son, and make my heart glad, That I may reply to him who reproaches me."

- **Grieved heart**

(1 Samuel 25:31) "that this will not cause grief or a troubled heart to my lord, both by having shed blood without cause and by my lord having avenged himself. When the LORD shall deal well with my lord, then remember your maidservant.""

(Psalms 73:21) "When my heart was embittered, And I was pierced within,"

- **Heavy heart**

(Proverbs 12:25) "Anxiety in the heart of a man weighs it down, But a good word makes it glad."

(Proverbs 25:20) "Like one who takes off a garment on a cold day, or like vinegar on soda, Is he who sings songs to a troubled heart."

(Proverbs 31:6) "Give strong drink to him who is perishing, And wine to him whose life is bitter."

(Matthew 26:37) "And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and distressed."

- **Joyful, cheerful, or merry heart**

(Job 29:13) ""The blessing of the one ready to perish came upon me, And I made the widow's heart sing for joy."

(Ecclesiastes 2:10) "And all that my eyes desired I did not refuse them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, for my heart was pleased because of all my labor and this was my reward for all my labor."

The Goal Is Love # 3: Love From A Pure Heart

(1 Samuel 25:36) "Then Abigail came to Nabal, and behold, he was holding a feast in his house, like the feast of a king. And Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunk; so she did not tell him anything at all until the morning light."

(1 Kings 21:7) "And Jezebel his wife said to him, "Do you now reign over Israel? Arise, eat bread, and let your heart be joyful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.""

(Esther 1:10) "On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carkas, the seven eunuchs who served in the presence of King Ahasuerus,"

(Proverbs 15:13) "A joyful heart makes a cheerful face, But when the heart is sad, the spirit is broken."

(Proverbs 15:15) "All the days of the afflicted are bad, But a cheerful heart has a continual feast."

(Proverbs 17:22) "A joyful heart is good medicine, But a broken spirit dries up the bones."

E. It Refers To The Character Of A Person. Sometimes the word heart is referring to the character of a person, whether good or bad. It is referring to his nature, character, or reputation.

- **Honest and good**

(Luke 8:15) ""And the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance."

- **Pure**

(Psalms 24:4) "He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood, And has not sworn deceitfully."

(Proverbs 22:11) "He who loves purity of heart And whose speech is gracious, the king is his friend."

(Matthew 5:8) ""Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

(1 Timothy 1:5) "But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith."

(2 Timothy 2:22) "Now flee from youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart."

- **True or sincere**

(Hebrews 10:22) "let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water."

The Goal Is Love # 3: Love From A Pure Heart

- **Understanding**

(Job 38:36) ""Who has put wisdom in the innermost being, Or has given understanding to the mind?"

- **Wise**

(Job 9:4) ""Wise in heart and mighty in strength, Who has defied Him without harm?"

- **Deceitful and desperately wicked**

(Proverbs 12:20) "Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil, But counselors of peace have joy."

(Isaiah 44:20) "He feeds on ashes; a deceived heart has turned him aside. And he cannot deliver himself, nor say, "Is there not a lie in my right hand?""

(Jeremiah 17:9) ""The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?"

- **Froward and proud**

(Psalms 101:4-5) "A perverse heart shall depart from me; I will know no evil. {5} Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, him I will destroy; No one who has a haughty look and an arrogant heart will I endure."

- **Stubborn and rebellious**

(Jeremiah 5:23) ""But this people has a stubborn and rebellious heart; They have turned aside and departed."

- **Wicked**

(Psalms 58:2) "No, in heart you work unrighteousness; On earth you weigh out the violence of your hands."

F. It Represents The Core, Center Or Middle Of An Object. In Psalm 46:2 we are told that we should not fear even if the earth should change or the mountains slip into the heart of the sea. The heart of the sea means the middle of the sea. It is not talking about the coast, but into the depths of the sea.

(Psalms 46:2) "Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, And though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea;"

The Goal Is Love # 3: Love From A Pure Heart

III. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A PURE HEART

Paul says that the goal of his instruction comes from a pure heart. What is the significance of having a pure heart? We are going to take a look at some reasons why a pure heart is so significant.

A. To See God. Jesus said in the sermon on the mount, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." We want to see God. We want to enter into His presence. We want an intimacy with God. We desire fellowship with Him. If we are not pure in heart we are not going to see God.

(Mat 5:8) ""Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

David says the same thing in Psalms 24. He asks a question about who can ascend the hill of the Lord. He asks who can stand in His holy place. The answer was those who had clean hands and a pure heart. In order to be in the presence of the Lord, we need a pure heart.

(Psa 24:3-4) "Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? And who may stand in His holy place?
{4} He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood, And has not sworn deceitfully."

B. To Bring Sound Doctrine. Sound Doctrine is that which challenges and changes our behavior to more like Jesus. If leaders in a church are going to lead you into intimacy with the Lord, their hearts need to be pure. If their teaching is going to help you see God, they need pure hearts. This is why Paul points out the difference in his heart and the heart of some that want to be teachers.

(1 Tim 1:5) "But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith."

David again, shows the importance of this in Psalms 51. After he has confessed his sin and repented, asks God to create in him a clean heart. Then, he goes on to say that he will teach transgressors God's ways and sinners will be converted to the Lord. A pure heart comes before effective teaching.

(Psa 51:13) "Then I will teach transgressors Thy ways, And sinners will be converted to Thee."

C. For A Sincere Love Of The Brethren. We are told in 1 Peter that we need to purify our hearts for a sincere love of the brethren. Without a pure heart, we cannot love our brothers and sisters in Christ like we are supposed to. If there is selfishness in our heart, we can not love our brothers and sisters with agape love. Love is not selfish, therefore, we cannot sincerely love our brothers. If we are full of pride, we cannot love our brothers, because love is not arrogant. If we are impatient or unforgiving, we cannot sincerely love our brethren. We must have pure hearts in order to love our brothers.

(1 Pet 1:22) "Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart,"

D. For Stability In Life. We are told in James that if we lack wisdom, we are to ask from the Lord and He will give generously to us. If we ask with doubt, we are told that we are like the waves of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind, being unstable in all our ways, being double minded.

The Goal Is Love # 3: Love From A Pure Heart

(James 1:5-8) "But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. {6} But let him ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. {7} For let not that man expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, {8} being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways."

A double minded man does not have a pure heart, resulting in an unstable life. Instability is a result of being double minded. Listen to what the Lord tells the double minded to do a little later in the book of James. Being double minded is a condition of the heart—the seat of the intellect.

(James 4:8) "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded."

E. For An Effective Prayer Life. James also tells us, let not that man expect to receive anything from the Lord. An impure heart will result in an ineffective prayer life. You ask for things and you don't see any results. I am one that is for getting rid of any and all hindrances to my prayer life. I want to get rid of any double-mindedness. I want to get rid of all doubt and unbelief. I want to get rid of all bitterness and pride. Why? Because I want to have an effective prayer life. I want our church to be an effective house of prayer.

(James 1:7-8) "For let not that man expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, {8} being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways."

Jesus had taught this in the gospel of Mark. He said that when we are praying, and we do not doubt in our heart, but believe what we say is going to happen, it shall be granted. We must have a pure heart to have an effective prayer life.

(Mark 11:23-24) ""Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it shall be granted him. {24} "Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they shall be granted you."

Paul exhorts Timothy in his second letter to flee from youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. If we are going to call on God and see God, we must come to Him with a pure heart.

(2 Tim 2:22) "Now flee from youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart."

In Psalms 66:18, we find that when we regard iniquity in our heart, when our hearts are not pure, the Lord will not hear. God knows our thoughts and our words. He knows them before we say them, but He does not respond to those prayers, when we are unrepentant of sin in our lives. If we want to see God, we must come to God in repentance. He will forgive us and cleanse our hearts.

(Psalms 66:18) "If I regard wickedness in my heart, The Lord will not hear;"

The Goal Is Love # 3: Love From A Pure Heart

F. To Keep From Defiling Yourself. Jesus taught the disciples in Matthew 15 about what defiles a man. He made it very clear that it is not what we eat that defiles a man. The Pharisees got mad that the disciples did not wash their hands before eating. Jesus gives them a very important Scriptural principle.

(Mat 15:11-20) ""Not what enters into the mouth defiles the man, but what proceeds out of the mouth, this defiles the man.... {17} "Do you not understand that everything that goes into the mouth passes into the stomach, and is eliminated? {18} "But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man. {19} "For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders. {20} "These are the things which defile the man; but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile the man.""

Notice that it is the things which come out of the heart that defile a man. A man's words can defile him, and a man's thoughts can defile him. A man's actions can defile him. All these words, thoughts and actions begin inside the heart. It is important to keep our hearts pure so that we do not become defiled. You are fighting a losing battle when you constantly try to put out forest fires. You need to catch the arsonist that is setting them.

A couple of year ago I did a message on Ephesians 4:29. I mentioned that there were two ways to stop unwholesome words or corrupt communication from proceeding from your mouth. The first way is to carefully monitor every word we say, which I highly recommend everyone to do. However, this is not the best solution. It is always better to get to the root of the problem. If you are saying things that are rotten, corrupt or unwholesome, things that are defiling, not edifying, not giving grace to those who hear, there is a root problem. The root problem lies in your heart. You must examine your heart. You must cleanse your heart of the unforgiveness, bitterness, etc. so that the words that proceed from your mouth do not tear down, but build up or edify.

(Mat 12:34) ""You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart."

One time I heard a preacher say that the church is too busy cleaning out cobwebs. Instead they should be getting rid of the spiders that cause them. The cause of the cobwebs in our lives are not spiders, but an unclean heart. Out of an unclean heart come all kinds of cobwebs that entangle and defile our lives. How do we get rid of the spiders? How do we clean up or purify our hearts?

IV. PURIFYING OUR HEARTS (Gaining and Maintaining a pure heart) We have looked at the context, the definition of heart, and the importance of having a pure heart. We will now look at how to gain and maintain a pure heart. Why do I say gain and maintain a pure heart. It is because we are born with a heart problem. Jeremiah says that we have a stubborn and evil heart in Jeremiah 3:17. He repeats this many times in the book of Jeremiah.

(Jeremiah 3:17b) "nor shall they walk anymore after the stubbornness of their evil heart."

(Jeremiah 5:23a) 'But this people has a stubborn and rebellious heart."

The Goal Is Love # 3: Love From A Pure Heart

In Jeremiah 17:9, he says “the heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it? He goes on to say that the Lord searches the heart and tests the mind. We have a heart problem, and it is called sin.

(Jeremiah 17:9) ""The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?"

In Jeremiah 4:14, he asks a question, “how long will your wicked thoughts lodge within you?” Then, he exhorts us to wash our hearts from evil. He is telling us that we have an evil heart and need to gain or acquire a pure heart.

(Jeremiah 4:14) "Wash your heart from evil, O Jerusalem, That you may be saved. How long will your wicked thoughts Lodge within you?"

For us to have a soft heart, rather than a hard, rebellious, and stubborn heart, **we must be born again**. For us to have a good pure heart, rather than an evil heart, something must change. The prophet Ezekiel speaks about this in chapter 11. He speaks of the people coming to the Lord in repentance, and that the Lord will take the heart of stone out and give them a heart of flesh. He says that He will put a new spirit within them. I believe this is a picture of what happens at salvation. God forgives us of our sins and He gives us His Holy Spirit. We are spiritually born again. We become His people and He becomes our God. We enter into a covenant relationship with him.

(Ezekiel 11:18-20) ""When they come there, they will remove all its detestable things and all its abominations from it. {19} "And I shall give them one heart, and shall put a new spirit within them. And I shall take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, {20} that they may walk in My statutes and keep My ordinances, and do them. Then they will be My people, and I shall be their God."

Notice that Jeremiah says that when they come there, they will remove all its detestable things and all its abominations from it. He is speaking about coming to God in repentance. There is not much said today about repentance, but I believe that when someone confesses Jesus as Lord, they are confessing that Jesus is the master and ruler of their life. They have yielded and submitted their lives to the rule and reign of Jesus. I think that many people in the church go to church, but they have never yielded their lives to Christ. They have never come in repentance.

This principle of coming to God in repentance reverberates throughout the Bible. John the Baptist was the forerunner of Christ, and his message was very clear: repent! Jesus also taught repentance. He told the rich young ruler to go sell his possessions, give to the poor, and then to come follow Him.

(Matthew 19:21) "Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.""

Peter, when preaching at Pentecost, was asked, what shall we do. Peter responded by telling them to repent.

(Acts 2:37-38) "Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and

The Goal Is Love # 3: Love From A Pure Heart

the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" {38} And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

The first step in gaining a clean heart is to receive Christ into our lives. We must receive that heart of flesh and God's Holy Spirit in our lives. Unfortunately, we still have a mind full of worldly ways, thoughts, and ideas. Jeremiah also tells us that the Lord will remove from us the heart of stone and give us a heart of flesh. I believe this is a process. It is a process called sanctification or progressive sanctification. Positionally, we are holy or sanctified, but we need to work out our salvation. We need to have our hearts purified. We need to continue to repent and purify our hearts.

David is a man who is known to have a heart after God. He was a man who walked in the integrity of his heart. However, like all of us, David had his moments. After he fell with Bathsheba, David confesses his sins and asks the Lord to create in him a clean heart. .

(Psalms 51:1-5, 10) "(For the choir director. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came to him,) (after he had gone in to Bathsheba.) Be gracious to me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness; According to the greatness of Thy compassion blot out my transgressions. {2} Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin. {3} For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before me. {4} Against Thee, Thee only, I have sinned, And done what is evil in Thy sight, So that Thou art justified when Thou dost speak, And blameless when Thou dost judge. {5} Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me... {10} Create (bara) in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me."

This word BARA in verse ten means to create something from something which does not exist. It is the same word used in Genesis 1:1 when God created the heavens and earth. It is a creation by divine power. David is saying that he did not possess a clean heart. It didn't exist in him at that time. He was asking God to do a fresh creative miracle in him, giving him a clean or pure heart.

CREATE: H1254. bara', baw-raw'; a prim. root; (absol.) to create; (qualified) to cut down (a wood), select, feed (as formative processes):--choose, create (creator), cut down, dispatch, do, make (fat).

(Gen 1:1) "In the beginning God created (bara) the heavens and the earth."

We cannot give ourselves a clean heart. We cannot forgive ourselves. God can forgive us. We can receive God's forgiveness and cleansing by faith. We cannot create a pure heart. God cleanses and purifies our heart. We must acknowledge our sins and ask God to cleanse and purify our hearts. John 1:9 tells us "if we confess our sins, He is faithful to forgive us our sins and to CLEANSE us from all unrighteousness." Acknowledging or confessing our sins is the first step.

(1 John 1:9) "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

One day in 1993 as I was studying my Bible on my computer, I came across Acts 15:9, which says, "He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith." The three Greek words

The Goal Is Love # 3: Love From A Pure Heart

for cleansing their hearts by faith are katharizo, kardia, and pistis. Katharizo is the word for cleanse or purify. Kardia is the word for heart. Pistis is the word for faith. Our hearts are cleansed by faith. The Spirit impressed me that this was to be the name of our daughter who Karen was carrying. We did not do ultrasound with any of our babies. But, the Lord spoke to me in advance about the sex of many of our children before they were born. So when Karen delivered a healthy little girl on April 29, 1993, we named her Kathleen Faith Murchison. Kathleen means purified in heart by faith. It is a constant reminder to me and to everyone that we are purified in heart by faith in what Jesus has done for us on the cross.

(Acts 15:9) "and He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith."

However, we must do more than ask forgiveness for our sins. We must repent. True repentance is more than lip service. The Greek word for repent is metanoia, which means to do an about face. It is to change direction and go the other way. If we are cheating, we stop cheating. If we are lying; we start telling the truth. If we are stealing; we give back what we have stolen and stop stealing.

G3341. metanoia; met-an'-oy-ah; from G3340; compunction (for guilt, includ. reformation); by impl. reversal (of decision):--repentance. G3340. metaneo, met-an-o-eh'-o; from G3326 and G3539; to think differently or afterwards, i.e. reconsider (feel compunction):--repent.

Notice what John the Baptist says to the Pharisees and Sadducees who were coming to him to be baptized. He says to bring forth fruit in keeping with repentance. A public action, like a baptism of repentance, should be confirmed by a change in behavior. This is what John is telling them.

(Matthew 3:7-8) "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? {8} "Therefore bring forth fruit in keeping with repentance;"

In 2 Chronicles 7:14, which is quoted by many in the church today in regard to prayer, we find more than just an exhortation for God's people to pray. The Lord says if, "My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." Notice that the Lord says to turn from our wicked ways. That is repentance. There is a softening of the heart when we repent. There is a cleansing and healing of our hearts when we repent.

(2 Chronicles 7:14) "and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

Maintaining A Pure Heart

To maintain a clean heart, we must watch over it with all diligence. We must be very careful what we allow into our hearts and minds. In the book of Proverbs, Solomon tells us to watch over our hearts with all diligence. The wisest man on earth knew some things. He knew that our heart was the key to our actions and words. Whatever a man put in his heart or allowed into his heart was going influence his actions. He says that from it flow the springs of life.

The Goal Is Love # 3: Love From A Pure Heart

Prov 4:23 "Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life."

That is exactly what Paul is saying in 1 Timothy 1:5. Love is going to flow out of a pure heart. If the heart is not full of love, if the heart is not pure, then what flows or springs out of it will not be pure. Love cannot flow out of an impure heart. How are we to watch over our heart? What are some ways that we can do this? **Humility adds softness to our hearts and lives.**

Our property in Georgia was tested by the University of Georgia. It was good water, and had no contamination. Its only drawback was that it was hard; it had lots of calcium, which could be resolved with a water softening system. A water softening system would keep the dishwasher, hot water heater and other appliances from being ruined by the hard water. It would also reduce the amount of soaps, shampoos, and detergents that needed to be used. The ion exchange water softening system would also pull out the iron and manganese from the water, which had color and odor drawbacks. The primary negative effect was that it increased the level of sodium in the water.

The ion exchange water softener works this way. The softening system uses salt, which has a negative charge. The calcium and manganese have a positive charge. There is an ion exchange when the salt is mixed with the minerals in the water. Then, the calcium and manganese get flushed out with the salt. The water coming out of the water softening system has a slight bit more sodium, but all the minerals and metals have been displaced and flushed out.

Our hearts can get hard and stubborn. What is it that works as a softener to keep our hearts pure? It is humility. Humility is like the salt in our water softener. It has an ion exchange with the hard minerals that come its way. When someone says something harsh to you, humility responds with a gentle answer and turns away wrath.

(Prov 15:1) "A gentle answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger."

When someone accuses you, humility has an ionic exchange and dissolves the accusations. It does not revile back. Jesus did not revile back when He was reviled.

(1 Pet 2:23) "and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously;"

When someone slaps us, we are to put that through the softening system of humility. When humility has the ionic exchange with anger, the result is love. It is not provoked. It is slow to anger. It turns the other cheek. The first thing we can do to maintain a pure heart is to put it through the softening system of humility.

The Scriptures teach us to humble ourselves. I do not believe this is a one-time action. I believe this is a lifestyle. We are to continually humble ourselves. We can humble ourselves by confessing our sins. We can humble ourselves by prayer and fasting. We can humble ourselves by fasting. We can humble ourselves by submitting to our authorities, spiritual or otherwise. There are many ways of humbling ourselves. We must continually add humility to everything that comes into our life, so that the water in our lives is soft.

The Goal Is Love # 3: Love From A Pure Heart

We should filter our lives through the word of God. The other filter that we needed was a reverse osmosis filter, or RO filter. It would take out any sodium or other minerals and/or contaminants. It would give us pure drinking water. We bought an RO filter with four stages. The first stage had a sedimentary filter which removed particles of 0.5 microns or larger. This removes dirt, sand, etc. The second stage has a carbon block. The carbon treats four different problems: taste, odor, color and organics. The third stage is the reverse osmosis membrane. This is a thin film composition and water is forced under pressure through the holes in the membrane. Only pure water is allowed through the membrane. All bacteria is removed; all dissolved solids and minerals are removed. This treats the problems of taste, color and odor again. The filter also flushes out any contaminants and keeps itself clean. The fourth stage was a granular activated carbon filter. It treats the water one final time for anything objectionable in taste or odor.

The spiritual reverse osmosis filter is the Word of God. God's word is pure. In Ps 12, we find that the words of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times. The RO filter in my house went through 4 steps. The word of God has been refined seven times. The number 7 refers to perfection, completion, indefinite.

(Psa 12:6) "The words of the LORD are pure words; As silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times."

My RO filter delivered water that was 99% pure, but the Word of God gives results that are 100% pure. We must filter everything in our life through the word of God. It is our plumb line. It is our final authority. If something in my life does not line up with the word of God, I may not like it; I may not understand it, but I must be obedient to the word of God if I want my heart pure.

The Scriptures ask a question in Ps 119:9-11, "How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to God's word." Then, it goes on to say in verse 11, "Thy word I have hid in my heart that I may not sin against Thee." It is critical that we obey the word of God. The Scriptures promise that we can keep our way pure if we will keep it according to God's word.

(Psa 119:9, 11) "How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Thy word....Thy word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against Thee."

Jesus taught the same principle. He told the disciples that they were clean because of the word that He spoke to them. He cleansed them by the Word of God.

John 15:3 "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you."

The only way that we can keep our way according to the word is to meditate on the word day and night. Joshua 1:8-9 says, "This book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it, for then you shall make your way prosperous and then you will have success." When we meditate on the word of God day and night, when we run everything in our life day and night through this filter of God's word, we can be assured that our hearts will stay pure.

It is when we don't CONTINUALLY run things through that filter, that impurities find their way into our heart. The things we see on TV, the magazine cover pictures at the grocery store, the

The Goal Is Love # 3: Love From A Pure Heart

conversations we engage in, and many other things can all bring impurities into our heart. We must filter everything through God's word. This really demonstrates the need for Scripture memory. Children and youth, let me speak to you for just a minute. You are right now at the best time of your life to store up God's word on your heart. There will never be a more opportune time to memorize. Your capacity to learn, memorize and retain is at an all time high. Your time availability is at an all time high. Your potential to use what you memorize is the greatest. You have your whole life to benefit from what you hide in your heart.

Notice in Proverbs 4 when the Lord tells us to watch over our hearts with all diligence what He said immediately before that. He says to give attention to His words, to incline our ears to His sayings. We are not to let them depart from our sight. We are to keep them in the midst of our heart. It will bring life and health to our whole body. We are given the primary way that we are to watch over our hearts before we are given the command to watch over our hearts.

(Prov 4:20-23) "My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. {21} Do not let them depart from your sight; Keep them in the midst of your heart. {22} For they are life to those who find them, And health to all their whole body. {23} Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life."

Husbands, let me talk to you for just a minute. I encouraged the youth and now it is your turn. In Ephesians 5:25-27, the Lord commands us to "love our wives just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her; that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and blameless."

(Eph 5:25-27) "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; {26} that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, {27} that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless."

We have been given the responsibility of not only keeping our hearts pure, but also watching over our wives hearts. We need to wash them with the water of the word. We have a responsibility to wash them and keep them pure. Husbands, we cannot do this if we are not keeping our own hearts pure. We must keep ourselves pure so that we can keep our wives pure. We need to constantly be sharing the word with them. We need to be encouraging them with the word. We need to rise up to our God ordained positions in marriage.

CONCLUSION

Today, I hope that you have first of all been given a better understanding of the heart. If we are going to love the Lord with all our heart, we have to know what that means. If we are going to have a pure heart, we must know what that means.

It has also been my goal to see the importance of the heart. Having a pure heart is important so that we can love the Lord. It is important so that we can love one another. It is important for ministry.

The Goal Is Love # 3: Love From A Pure Heart

It has also been my intention to give some understanding about how to gain and maintain a pure heart. This morning, the Holy Spirit may have convicted you of some impurities in your heart that have not been cleared up. You may have some murky water springing up from the well of your heart. You need to be cleansed again. You need to confess to the Lord and to others your sins. You need to repent and forsake your sins. You need to install some filters in your life so that the water springing up out of your heart is pure, refined seven times.

Some of us need to install a water softener. We have found yourself getting provoked, being critical or judgmental or harsh. We have hard water coming out. We need to really focus on humility. We would do well memorizing and meditating on verses about humility. You need to make a commitment to humble yourself regularly with fasting and prayer. Humble yourself before others by going and confessing your sins, instead of covering them up.

For others, you may have realized that you have never received Christ into your heart. He has been softening your heart. He has been drawing you to Himself. God is wanting to take out the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. He is wanting to give you His Holy Spirit. God is wanting to forgive you and cleanse you from all sin. If you have never received Christ into your life, let me ask you to come up right now. One of the ministry team members would love to pray with you. Do not harden your heart this morning. Respond to the Lord and give your life to Him.

If there are others of you with needs this morning of any kind, please come forward. If you need prayer for a physical ailment, come forward. If you need a word of encouragement, come forward. Our ministry teams would welcome the opportunity to pray with you.

Let's pray.

INTRODUCTION (1 Tim 1:5)

I. THE CONTEXT OF THE PASSAGE (1 Tim 1:3-7, 1:12, Acts 13:1-3)

- A pure heart is not _____. It allows God to promote and raise up at the right time. (Ps 75:4-7)

II. THE DEFINITION OF HEART

A. It represents the seat of our _____. (Ps 62:10)

B. It represents the seat of the _____. (Gen 6:5)

- Ponders in the heart (Luke 2:19)
- Imaginations originate (Pr 6:18)
- Considerations are made (Jer 12:11)
- Beliefs are made (Rom 10:10, Luke 24:25)
- Understanding comes from (1 Kings 3:9, Job 38:36)

C. It represents the seat of the _____. (Ps 119:2)

- Intentions are made (Heb 4:12)
- Purposes are formed (Pr 20:5, Ac 11:23)
- Will is exercised (Eph 6:6)

D. It represents the seat of _____. (Genesis 6:6)

- Astonished (Deut 28:28)
- Broken (Ps 34:18; Ps 69:20; Ps 147:3; Is 61:1)
- Bitter (Ezek 27:31)
- Discouraged (Num 32:7-9)
- Failing (1 Sam 17:32)
- Fainting (Gen 45:26)
- Fearful, trembling, or anxious (Is 21:4; Is 35:4, Deut 28:65)
- Glad (Deut 28:47; Ps 104:15; Pr 24:17; Pr 27:11)
- Grieved (1 Sam 25:31; Ps 73:21)
- Heavy (Pr 12:25; Pr 25:20; Pr 31:6; Matt 26:37)
- Joyful, cheerful, or merry (Job 29:13; Ec 2:10, 1 Sam 25:36; 1 Kings 21:7, Esther 1:10; Pr 15:13; Pr 15:15; Pr 17:22)

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- E. It refers to the _____ of a person.
- Honest and good (Luke 8:15)
 - Pure (Ps 24:4, Pr 22:11, Matt 5:8, 1 Tim 1:5; 2 Tim 2:22)
 - True or sincere (Heb 10:22)
 - Understanding (Job 38:36)
 - Wise (Job 9:4)
 - Deceitful and desperately wicked (Pr 12:20; Is 44:20; Jer 17:9)
 - Froward and proud (Ps 101:4-5)
 - Stubborn and rebellious (Jer 5:23)
 - Wicked (Ps 58:2)

F. It Represents the _____ of an object. (Psalm 46:2)

III. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A PURE HEART

- A. To _____ God. (Matt 5:8, Psa 24:3-4)
- B. To bring sound _____. (1 Tim 1:5, Psa 51:13)
- C. For a sincere _____ of the brethren. (1 Pet 1:22, 1 Cor 13:4-7)
- D. For _____ in life. (James 1:5-8, 4:8)
- E. For an effective _____ life. (James 1:7-8, Mark 11:23-24, 2 Tim 2:22, Psa 66:18, 1 Chr 12:33, 12:38, Psa 78:8)
- F. To keep from _____ yourself. (Matt 15:11-20, 12:34)

IV. GAINING & MAINTAINING A PURE HEART (Jer 3:17, 5:23, 17:9, 4:14, Pr 4:23)

- We must be _____ . (Ex 11:18-20)
- We must _____. (Matt 19:21, Acts 2:37-38, Matt 3:7-8, 2 Chron 7:14)
- We must ask God to _____ in us a clean heart. (Ps 51:1-10, Gen 1:1)
- We need to _____ or acknowledge our sins. (1 John 1:9, Acts 15:9)
- _____ adds softness to our hearts and lives. (Pr 15:1)
- We should filter our lives through the _____ of _____. (Ps 12:6, 119:9-11, John 15:3, Pr 4:20-23, Eph 5:25-27)

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