

The Work of God in Our Heart

by Jesse Stoltzfus

The sermon emphasizes the importance of having a sound heart, which is necessary for God's work, and provides practical advice on how to keep the heart sound.

Duration: 40:16

Scripture: Exodus 35:5, Psalm 37:1, Proverbs 14:30, Matthew 6:19

Topics: "Heart Renewal", "Spiritual Freedom"

Description

This sermon delves into the significance of the heart, exploring the spiritual heart as the core of one's being where feelings, will, and intellect reside. It emphasizes the impact of what stirs in the heart, whether for good or bad, and the need to address hidden sins or burdens that hinder one's walk with God. The message highlights the importance of allowing Jesus to cleanse and heal the heart, enabling individuals to fulfill their calling and experience freedom from condemnation and spiritual burdens.

Transcript

You know, this is interesting. As I was listening to the testimonies, I heard a number of people say something about what God did in my heart or what's happening in my heart. And I found that very interesting because that's the topic that God laid on my heart to share this morning.

And I started to search this topic out when I realized God wants me to share it on the heart this morning, and it is vast. What's going on in the heart or what can go on in your heart is really, really big. And it can be big to the bad or big to the good.

It's very interesting. Another thing that I find, I was trying to wrap my mind around this, with all these things that go on inside our heart, we talk about what's going on in our heart. Is it actually happening inside this organ? There's an organ in there that's a muscle and it's doing its job.

Are these things actually going on inside that organ? I think that organ is affected in many ways by what goes on. But the other concept that I came up with is there's a spiritual heart that we have. That spiritual heart is who you are.

That is who you are. This organ inside your chest here can fill and stop its duty, stop its job, and your body will die. But there is a spiritual heart, a spiritual being that will not die.

That is who you are. That is where things are going on. It's inside your spiritual heart and it does affect the organ in your heart there also.

I started looking through scripture and finding out a lot of what was going on when God talks about the heart of people or when verses that talk about the heart. The Hebrew meaning of the heart is the area of feelings, will, and even the intellect make up what the Bible talks about, heart. The Greek meaning simply says thoughts and feelings.

That's what the Bible is talking about when it talks about your heart. I'm going to ask for some participation here this morning because I have a lot of verses that I want to look up just to read it and bring out a short point. So I'm just going to ask people to look up a verse and read it so we can move through it faster instead of me paging to everyone.

But I'm going to start with Exodus 35. There's a small passage there that I want to start with that. Exodus 35, verse 5, they had a big job on their hands right in front of them here.

This is after they had come out of Egypt. There was a project there laying in front of them God had asked them to do. And they were going into the details of this when God was giving them instructions and Moses was giving instructions to the people.

In verse 4, Moses spake unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, This is the thing which the Lord commanded, saying, Take ye from among you an offering unto the Lord, whosoever is of a willing heart. Let him bring it, an offering unto the Lord, gold, silver, and brass. Verse 21, And there came everyone whose heart stirred him up, and everyone whom his spirit made willing.

And they brought the Lord's offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation for all his service and for the holy garments. And so when God calls you into something, when something is going on, and God wants you to see something, there is a stirring going on in your heart. And it's that stirring.

That stirring can be a revelation of what God has called you to. That stirring can be an indication of something that's wrong in your life too. If you go back to the days where you walked in a guilty conscience or had sin in your life, there was a stirring going on.

But it wasn't the stirring that was motivating you to God's work. It was a stirring that was showing you, you've got to deal with something before you can go on with God. Or maybe you didn't even at that point even have an intention to go on with God.

There was a desire to live in sin. And there's all that too. When I was looking at this, I was coming up with many things.

There's the willing heart, the clean heart, the pure heart, a sound heart, a merry heart. Those are good things. And on the other side, there's a heavy heart, a sorrowful heart, a deceitful heart.

There's the hardness of heart. There's a stony heart, a proud heart, a wounded heart, a broken heart. And all of these things, there's more, but all of these things create some kind of stirring in your heart.

And I know, according to what was going on here this weekend, the messages being taught, you were being challenged on your body area, how to eat properly, what is healthy for the body. You were being challenged on your emotions, on your gifts and your callings, and there was many challenges going on.

These things that you're being taught will now stir something up in you.

There will be a stirring in your heart. Follow that stirring. The stirring in your heart is a revelation from God.

Many times it's a revelation from God to take you where He wants you to go. I want someone to look up Psalms 37.1 and read it when you found it. Someone else, Psalms 24.4. This stirring, when you talk about stirring of your heart leading you into things, this same stirring can come from the sinful side, where your heart longs after sin.

And people or things in life cause that stirring. Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. That can cause a stirring in the heart, that fretting, that worrying, that concern.

Those types of stirrings will hold you back and drag you down. If it's a stirring toward evil, but you want to walk in a clean heart, pure heart, 24.4. Psalms 24.4. He that has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. There's an indication of a pure heart.

We can have pure hearts before the Lord. Proverbs 14.30 and Proverbs 15.13-15. Proverbs 14.30 and Proverbs 15.13-15. Go ahead. A sound heart is the life of the flesh, but envy the rottenness of the bones.

We talked about a sound mind. I heard the words this morning doing testimony or doing songs, a sound mind. And so there's a sound heart too.

A sound heart is the life of the flesh. That's talking about your body. And so if your heart is sound, if your heart is healthy, if your heart has been healed by the Lord, then your body will also be more healthy.

And that word sound has a good way to explain that word sound is sometimes when you go to the horse sale, you want to buy a horse, they'll tell you this horse is safe and sound. Meaning safe, he's been trained, he's not irrational, he's a good horse, he's been trained well, but he's sound. When a horse is not sound, he usually has a problem in his legs.

That can be, it can be okay for a while, but if he overexerts himself, then he becomes lame. And then he needs to take some time off for that leg to be healed. But then when you work him too hard again, he's lame again.

And he's not sound. And so he's ineffective. And that's how it is if a person does not have a sound heart.

If your heart is not sound, if your heart has not been healed, it's not been, it's not where God wants it to be, it's not pure, it's not clean, it's not free from the sin of the life, the sin that was there, then there's an unsoundness. And if there's issues in your heart, maybe you've even come part ways to seeking after God and serving God, but there's things in that heart that hinder it. So you can run well for a while, but then there's issues in your heart, there's things back there that are hidden, maybe you never confessed it, maybe you never brought it out, maybe you didn't realize it was there, but there's an unsoundness, something unhealthy in your heart, and it will hinder you in the same way that it hinders a horse when he goes out to do his work.

He cannot run well because there's a hurt there in his leg. And you want your heart sound. So that when God calls you to a work, you can rise to it, and you can run into it, and you can go where God calls you to do it, and you don't need to be hindered by the issues of your heart.

And a lot of times when there's issues in your heart, on this other list, a heavy heart, sorrowful, deceitful, hardness, stony, proud, wounded, broken, those things will hinder you. You can rise up for a while maybe, but they will bring you down again. Then you've got to start over and rise up.

We don't want to walk that way. You want the issues of your heart resolved so your heart is sound, and so you can run and not be hindered by health issues even. How about that? If the Word of God, Proverbs 14.30, says that a sound heart brings healing to your flesh or brings a sound flesh or a healthy flesh, meaning your body, then we need a sound heart.

So that when God really calls us to the mission or whatever you're called to do, you're not hindered by health issues. So is it possible that Proverbs 14.30 is the best health care plan you could ever pick up? It probably is. To have a sound heart, to be healed in your heart, free from the issues of your heart, free from a heavy heart, deceitful heart, hardness of heart, sinful heart, free from those things.

Even a wounded heart can hinder you. Matthew 6.19-21, I'm going to read that one. Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt and where thieves break through and steal.

But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. And so even as God, back here in Exodus 35, He had a plan for His people and He called and He gave a commission.

And for some people, some people were called to certain things, whatever their hearts heard. And they set their heart to that thing. If you read that following, there were people stepped into those calling, they set their heart to it and there was a mighty work done there.

And it's the same way today. It's the same way right here in this room. It's the same way wherever you are listening.

If God has called you to something and there's a stirring in your heart, if you follow that calling and you follow that stirring, God can do a mighty work through you. If there's hindrances and issues in your heart, the work still needs to be done. There's still a call for it, but if the person doesn't ride up, the work's not going to get done, at least not by that person at that time.

In Deuteronomy 6, verse 4 to 7, there's another one that talks about throwing your heart into something. Here, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord, and thou shalt serve the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul, with all thy might. And these words which I command thee, they shall be in thine heart.

The word of God is to be in our heart. Our heart is not to be filled with the things of the world. It's not to be filled.

That's not what God intended. If your heart is filled with the things of the world, there is no way that you can serve the Lord thy God with all your heart, because a portion of it is given to the world. In Luke 24, verse 32, there was, it's the story of where Jesus, after Jesus had been crucified, and he was resurrected up from the grave, he had his new body, and he was appearing unto his disciples, and he appeared to his disciples in one place, and some of them had not been there, and two of them were walking home to Mass after the resurrection there, and they didn't know where Jesus was, and they didn't know how to find him anymore, and they had heavy hearts.

They were sorrowful. They were burdened down, because their vision was gone. They weren't sure what had happened, but they knew that something was drastically different than the way it was, and they felt it was not good.

And they're walking along, walking home to wear a mask, and they talked about this, and this third person starts walking beside them, and unbeknownst to them, it was the Lord Jesus. Their eyes were blinded. They did not see it.

Jesus asked, Why are you so sorrowful? And so they told him what had happened. What? They were like, Don't you know? Are you a stranger in these parts? Don't you know what just happened? Don't you know about this guy Jesus that was crucified? He was to be our leader and our master, and we don't know where he is? And Jesus goes back into the Old Testament, back into what they understood, and began to expound to them. The rest of the walk home, and I think it was an 11-mile walk.

I'm not sure. Somewhere in that area. It was a long walk.

He began to teach them. It was probably the most wonderful Bible study they ever had. So he taught them, and he taught them, and he taught them.

How long does it take to walk 11 miles? An hour and a half, two hours, somewhere in that area. So he was teaching them. Then they got to the place where they wanted to stay, and they went in, and they invited Jesus to come in, set food on the table, and Jesus took the food, and he blessed it, and their eyes were opened, and they saw that it was Jesus.

They just, and he disappeared from their sight. They jumped up and ran. The Bible says they ran back to Mass where they had come from.

They ran back. As they were running, one said to the other, did not our hearts stir within us? While they were walking home, while this man was teaching them, there was a tremendous stirring going on in their hearts. It was a burning.

It was a passion, but it didn't come alive until they recognized Christ. Then it exploded, and their physical body, which had to be tired by then, it was energized, and they ran the whole way back. Hallelujah.

Amen. How about that? That is amazing, but that is what can happen when God stirs in your heart, and a vision bursts forth. In Luke 6.45, someone look up Luke 6.45, and Hebrews 4.12. When your heart begins to stir like this, and it is God stirring in your heart, there is something starting in your heart, or waking up in your heart.

Does someone have Luke 6.45? Loud and clear. For of the abundance of the heart, your mouth speaks. And so whatever is stirring in your heart is what you are going to speak out.

These guys had just met Jesus after walking home. There was a tremendous stirring going on. And when they got back, when they met the rest of the brethren, the rest of the disciples, I think they had the floor for a while.

I believe these guys spoke out of their mouth the abundance of what stirred there the last three hours. And likewise for evil. When the heart is full of evil, and there is a stirring going on in your heart inclined toward evil and for evil, that is what comes out of those people's mouths.

Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. Hebrews 4.12. So there is thoughts and intentions going on inside our heart. Those thoughts and intentions that are going on inside your heart are there depending what you are feeding it.

Depending what is stirring your heart is what creates the thoughts and intentions of your heart. And you will do what is stirring in your heart many times. Philippians 4.7. And Ephesians 5.16-20. And the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and your minds through Christ Jesus.

So there is something in our heart, something about our heart and our mind that needs to be kept. That kept could be the same word as guarded. Like a guard, a keeper of a prison.

They guard that. They need to contain there. And that is what that verse is talking about.

Jesus, the one that we say that we want to serve, the one that we want to live for, you submit to him so that he guards. Your thoughts and your hearts. He guards what is stirring in your heart.

If there is evil starting to stir in your heart, maybe not necessarily even evil, but you are starting to be of a heavy heart. You are starting to be sorrowful. Things are starting to weigh you down.

We have the Holy Spirit to guard us. And we can be kept in the way of righteousness and the way of truth by that guard. What is the guard going to do when a prisoner comes walking up and starts rattling on the door and trying to push his way out? That guard is going to come up here and take authority over that.

And so we have the Holy Spirit. We don't need to go down under depression. We don't need to go down under a heavy heart.

We don't need to go down under a deceitful heart. We don't need to go down under these things because we have the Holy Spirit to show us that when these things are starting to happen, and then turn toward the Holy Spirit and allow him to stir up the good things in our heart again so that we can walk in the good and the righteous way. Ephesians 5, 16-20 Redeeming the time because the days are evil.

Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, and singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. So if you get a picture of that, in the first part, it's a picture of the evil.

It's warning, don't be there. But be over here. Be over here in that singing and in that praising and in blessing the Lord.

And that's actually stirring up your heart. Again, that is your spiritual heart which reflects how you will walk out in the physical part of your life. There's that beautiful stirring going on in your heart.

There's that praising the Lord going on in your heart. There's those good things going on in your heart. In your spiritual being, those good things are going on.

You've been forgiven of your sins. You've been washed. You've been cleansed.

Your name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. And you're walking in power. You're walking in love.

And you're demonstrating forgiveness. You're demonstrating love. And that is a radiating forth from you.

There's a radiance comes forth from you. Your body responds to that. Depression is the other way.

Depression, heavy heart, sorrowful heart, sinful heart. These things shut your body down. Bitterness.

Those things shut your body down. Revenge. Vengeance is mine.

I will repay I say of the Lord. Your body was never created to carry revenge at all. It's not created to carry bitterness.

It's not created to carry unforgiveness because it will shut your body down. Literally. In some cases, faster than others.

In some cases, more. I have had the opportunity to watch this. Not really watch it, but to hear of it and to know about it.

A dear friend of mine, he's now passed away a number of years ago. I got to know this man when I was about 10 years old. And his wife was in a wheelchair, didn't do much.

She was almost a vegetable at the time that I had gotten to know her. So I asked, what happened to your wife? What's going on? And the story that came out was they had an only son. This couple had an only son.

And he had gone through high school and gone through college. He was set for life. He was just stepping into his career.

He had just met this girl or been dating this girl for a while. They were planning on getting married. Set for life.

Everything looked really good. This young couple that was planning on getting married were walking home from someplace one evening, walking on the sidewalk. A drunk driver careening up the street, up on the sidewalk, and slammed into both of them and killed them both.

Instantly. Okay, the father of this son was able to forgive and release this happening, this incident. He was able to forgive God, if you want to use that term.

The mother was not. She refused to forgive. She was perfectly healthy at that time.

Within 15 years, she was completely crippled, completely helpless in a wheelchair. No medical explanation as to what was wrong with her. It was the bitterness, the unforgiveness, and the anger against this person who had struck and killed this young couple that crippled her.

Our bodies are not designed to carry bitterness and unforgiveness and those ugly things. It does not function well. Broken hearts.

Broken heart is another one. Could someone look that up? Psalms 34, 18. In a wounded heart, Psalms 109, verse 16.

The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. That broken heart could have two aspects. One would be broken before the Lord.

But what I want to bring out here with the broken heart is there could be things happening in your life or things happen to you that cause that broken heart. There could be rejection. There can be abuse.

There can be a crushing of a vision or a dream that you had that something you were going to pursue, and all of a sudden it becomes an impossibility. It looks impossible. And it can break that heart.

It can bring you down to where your heart does, yes, your organ keeps on pumping, but the heart, the spiritual heart has no desire or excitement to go forward. And with that broken heart, other things can enter in with that. But the Lord is nigh unto those who are of a broken heart.

If you've got a broken heart, if your heart has been broken, the Lord is nigh. The Lord is to heal you. He can bring that broken heart, bring those pieces back together again, put His purpose in there, put His desire, and His fire, and His passion in that.

The Lord can stir that up again, that broken heart. Wounded heart, Psalms 109, verse 16. Because that He remembered not to show mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, that He might even slay the broken in heart.

Jeremiah 17, 9, talked about a deceitful heart. A deceitful heart. But Ezekiel 36, all these things, especially the dark side, the heavy heart, the sorrowful heart, Ezekiel 36 talks about God taking that hard heart of stone out of you and putting in you a heart of flesh.

That's talking about a soft heart, a new heart. And He writes His commandments on that heart. So if you've given your life to the Lord Jesus, and He has given you that new heart, and He's written those commandments on you, we know what's right.

And if you follow the Word of God and follow the leading of the Spirit, God will stir something up in there. And it will help you to step into your destiny, and your calling, and your gift. Certain people get stirred up about certain things for certain reasons.

It's because of what God put in you. But with all these other things, and there's going to be many other things that hinder the function of the heart, Luke 11, 24 to 26. It's talking about what's inside a heart.

Luke 11 says, Jesus is saying, He that is not with me is against me, and he that does not gather with me scattereth. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man and walks through dry places seeking rest, finding none, he says, I will return unto my house once I came out. And when he comes and he finds it swept and garnished, then he goeth and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there.

And the last state, last condition of that man is worse than the first. This is talking about a person. Let's put this in New Testament context.

Of a person coming and believing on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. Recognizing the need to be saved and forgiven. Recognizing the need to be free from his sins.

Recognizing the need to confess them and to walk free from them. And he does that. Maybe a response to an over call.

Or something. And he pours out things that were in his heart. And then he goes back into life again.

Life in general. And he allows the things of the world, even the things that he had a tendency or an inclination to before, he allows them to come back. Those things come back into his heart.

Back into his life. The condition of that person is worse than it was before. Because it's a spiritual thing.

Spirits come back. The spirit of unforgiveness. The spirit of bitterness.

The spirit of anger. The spirit of lust. Those things come back and they're stronger than they were before.

And that's why we need the Holy Spirit like in Philippians 4-7. There to guard our hearts and our minds. To keep those things out.

To keep us on the alert as soon as those things are there. Now I have a story here that I'm going to connect with a heavy heart or a sorrowful heart to tie into this. Because it is a picture of a person who did just that.

He came to a place where he confessed his sins. He lived a very sinful life at one point. Very shameful life.

Did many wrong things. And he came to a place in his life where he asked for forgiveness. He came and put his faith in Jesus Christ.

He started the walk of righteousness. He was walking a life of holiness. But there was a heaviness starting to come on him.

And it was a condemnation of the devil coming against him. Telling him he's not forgiven. Telling him he can't be victorious.

Telling him these bad things are too shameful. That they'll never be erased. Telling him that when he gets up to heaven and judgment day, they're going to be there in front of him.

And so he began to walk under this condemnation. It began to drag him down and make him heavy and weaker. And leading to depression.

And he didn't want to be there. And so he started to cry out to God. And asking Him, what's going on? Why am I feeling this way? Am I not forgiven? What has happened? What is happening with me? And in God's love and His mercy, He allowed this man to have a dream.

And in his dream, this man had a room. And in the room, it was more like a library type. But instead of books, it had file cases.

File cabinets. And he was okay to walk into that room with Jesus. Jesus walked him into that room.

And He started showing him all. One was listed with the mission work He had done. Another one was the file cabinets of the money He had given to other areas.

Another one had good deeds He had done. And he was walking through there. And then there was a file there that had listed all the shameful ones.

And he just backed up to it and put his hand on it. And he didn't want Jesus to look into that one. Because it was those things that were in that file cabinet, the shameful things He had done, those were what were bothering him in his real life.

Those are the ones the devil was accusing him. You're not forgiven. You can never get into heaven because of that stuff in that file.

You'll never make it. You're just worthless. And all that rotten, those accusations were coming against him.

The devil, he is the accuser of the brethren. Jesus is not that. Jesus is the one who sets us free.

Jesus is the one who forgives us. And so Jesus gently pushed him aside and pulled the file cabinet open. And he's like, no, don't look in there.

And Jesus pulled the first one out. And it was the one of his, the immorality, that whole list. And He showed him the first page.

There's a big red X on it. And an X page. And an X page.

That whole file of shameful sin was covered in red, in the red blood of Jesus Christ. And he realized that he had been forgiven for these things. He didn't wander back into them.

It was the devil accusing him. It was the devil coming against him, trying to shut him down and drag him down. But when he realized that he is forgiven, those files are there, yes, they're there.

The things that we do in our life, good and bad, are written in the books of our life. But if your name is written in the Lamb's book of life, then those are crossed out in red. I don't think they'll ever bother looking at them.

I'm not sure if they will or not. That's not the point. When they look into the Lamb's book of life, if your name is there, you enter into the joy of the Lord.

And the last... There's one thing that just really stirs me up, and that is when we see people who have been forgiven, who have dedicated their lives to Jesus, started out on a walk, victorious walk with Jesus, and then the worst one is if you fall back into sin, but others are depression. And you see the old things cropping up again. That burdens me because it hinders the purpose that God has called you to.

And so I want to take the next few minutes here, and I want you to allow the Lord to minister to your heart. Again, it's your spiritual being. It's a spiritual part of you.

If you know there's something hidden in there that doesn't belong there, those things need to be confessed. In 1 John 1-9 it says, if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we're of a heavy heart, if we have a wounded heart, or any of these things, you know what's there.

If you've been through this and your heart is free, I rejoice with you. But if there's something stirring in your heart, I want you to go there. As David plays this song, I want you to allow the Holy Spirit to minister to your heart, to your spiritual being.

My heart is like a house
One day I'll let the Savior in
There are many rooms
Where we would visit now
and then
But then one day
He saw that door
I knew that it'd come too soon
I said, Jesus, I'm not ready
For us to visit in that room
Cause there's a place in my heart
Where even I don't go
I have some things hidden there
I don't want the one to know
But He's handing me the key
With tears of love on His face
He says, I want to make you clean
Let me go in your secret place
Let me go in your secret place
Then I opened up

the door And as the two of us walked in I was so ashamed His lies revealed my hidden sin But when I think about that room now I'm not ashamed anymore Because I know my hidden sin No longer hides behind that door Cause there's a place in my heart Where even I wouldn't go I have some things hidden there I didn't want the one to know But He's handing me the key With tears of love on His face He said, I want to make you clean Let me go in your secret place . . . Is there a place in your heart Where even you don't go You have some things hidden there That you don't want the one to know But He's handing you the key With tears of love on His face He says, I want to make you clean Let me go in your secret place He'll make you clean Just let Him in your secret place

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