

The Deceitfulness of the Heart

by Paris Reidhead

The sermon emphasizes the inherent deceitfulness and wickedness of the human heart, urging believers to trust in God rather than their own understanding.

Duration: 1:01:20

Scripture: Genesis 16:13, Job 7:20, Psalm 56:8, Psalm 139:2, Jeremiah 17:1-10, Acts 15:8, Hebrews 4:13

Topics: "Deceitfulness"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the deceptive nature of sin and the false promises it offers. He warns against being deceived by the temporary pleasures and illusions of sin, comparing it to cyanide that may smell sweet but ultimately leads to death. The preacher also highlights how the heart can deceive in matters of profit, leading people to seek quick and illegal ways to gain wealth. He references Jeremiah 17 to emphasize that God knows the motives and actions of every individual and will judge them accordingly. The sermon aims to awaken sinners and encourage them to turn away from sin and seek righteousness.

Transcript

Will you turn to me, if you have your Bible, to Jeremiah, chapter 17. Many of you have been in attendance on each of the Sunday evenings when we've been speaking from these themes, scriptures intended to awaken sinners. I am sure that what is happening in my heart is in some degree, more or less, happening in your heart as well.

That the pressure of the word considered week after week is giving you an increasing concern for the unsaved around you and about you. I trust that this is the case. Tonight's message, tonight's text, is on a very serious, a very difficult portion of scripture, because it leaves absolutely no escape for the unconverted mind and heart.

You will note that as I read. I'm going to begin reading with the first verse, conclude with the tenth verse, even though our text actually is verses nine and ten. The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron and with the point of a diamond.

It is engraven upon the table of their heart and upon the horns of your altars. Whilst their children remember their altars and their groves, by the green trees upon the high hills. O my mountain in the field, I will give thy substance and all thy treasures to the spoil, and thy high places for sin throughout all thy borders.

And thou, even thyself, shall discontinue from thine heritage that I gave thee. I will cause thee to serve thine enemies in the land which thou knowest not. For ye have kindled a fire in mine anger, which shall burn forever.

Thus saith the Lord, Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh, but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land, and not inhabit it. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.

For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green, and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit. Now comes the text. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.

Who can know it? I, the Lord, search the heart. I try the reins, even to give to every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings. This text brings us right into the very heart of God's controversy with Judah.

Judah had sinned against the Lord. Idolatry, pretense, superficiality, immorality was all part of God's case against the Jews. And all reason for this prophecy concerning the destruction of the Jews and of Jerusalem.

He said, your sins are graven upon the table of their heart, and thus were seen by him upon his heart. And he also realized that the minds of their children had been shocked and marred and scarred by the abominations of the worship of Moloch. Do you understand something of what he refers to here? Making the children to pass through the fire? Moloch was one of three gods that Israel served.

First was Baal, the god, the evil spirit of any locality that gave possessions to the worshiper. The second was Ashtoreth, the goddess of sex that gave license for immorality and the promise of progeny. And the third was Moloch.

Moloch was the god that was appeased and placated and entreated in order that he would give status and position, power and authority. The purpose of the worship of these gods, or goddesses as the case might be, was that the individual who made the sacrifice might get something for himself. They never served the god for his own sake, never gave to these gods because of their worth and merit, but simply out of fear of being deprived of something they wanted, or in the hopes that by the sacrifice they would have certainty of getting what they wanted.

Now in the case of Moloch, the parent would bring the child, usually the firstborn son, while still an infant. He would stand before the god, make his prayer, his entreaty for power, for position, for the blessing of Moloch. And then he would take the little child and throw it up into the kindled fire of coal, charcoal, that was made on the knees between, on the knees and between the folded arm of the statue god.

And the child would thus rest right in the lap of Moloch, passed into the fire. If the child should roll out, it was a sign that Moloch didn't want him, the prayer wasn't answered. Or if the child should pass over in such a way that it passed through the flame but wasn't killed by it, then again.

And so said he, the little children of Israel have watched the sins of the people, have witnessed them and they've been scarred by it. As I have become acquainted with the poems and situations of some of the

children that come with us in our afternoon Sunday school, I have been made to feel something the way God must have felt as he looked upon Israel in her idolatry. The scars, the shocking stains produced in the minds of the children.

All of this enraged God, kindled his anger, not a capricious anger that burned in hatred, but an anger that rested upon righteous ground because of the continued and persistent rebellion of his people against him. And they added insult to injury because then they made covenant with the nations around them and said, yes, we have sinned against God, but why should we fear? Because these nations have promised to protect us and they put their confidence in man. I am sure that everyone that ever sins feels he has a good reason to do it and he has made some subtle, clever manipulation of his mind to justify him in it and protect him.

And it's a strange thing, you know, we've dealt with this previously, why it is that sometimes the wicked go on for such a long time after their sins have been seen. And sometimes the hearts of the righteous are caused to faint because they see wicked people prospering. Do you remember how patient God has been with Judah? He sent his servants to them and Jeremiah has come and ministered now, entreating them to return to the Lord.

God gave them a well of living water. They spurned that and they hewed for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that could hold no water. They chose Egypt.

They chose Assyria. They said, we'll trust in these nations and thought thereby to protect themselves from the judgment of God. But I know, you know, that it's impossible to do it.

And I'm speaking to someone tonight that's come into this house with sin. You perhaps don't even know why you're here. And yet somehow you're here and you're here with the realization that you have not dealt honorably, not dealt as God demanded that you do with the sin in your life.

You thought that it was covered. You thought that it was hidden. You thought that God had forgotten.

But here he speaks to Judah and he said, my anger burns against you. Your sin is not covered. It's not forgotten.

But just patience. Patience until I see that you're absolutely set on your impenitence. Then when that's the case, says God, I'll take the matter in my own hands.

His word comes to you, comes to me. This is a universal word. There's not a one of us that are omitted, not a one of us that can pass it on to someone else.

Not a one of us that can say it doesn't apply. Listen to it. The heart is deceitful above all things.

The heart, your heart, cheats you. You have been cheated, foiled, deceived, robbed by your heart. First, it deceives you in respect to sin.

It's made sin seem a little thing, a light thing, an inconsequential thing. Everybody's doing it. Must not be so bad.

Well, it's the day we live in. Things are like that now. It can't be so bad.

This is the way your heart has tried to minimize God's law. God's too strict. God doesn't understand me.

He doesn't know my problem. If he were in my place, what would he do? These are some of the ways that your heart has deceived you in trying to make sin appear something less than God has said it is, a crime against him. Then your heart has deceived you in respect to the pleasure of sin.

Satan is a great specialist in neon lights. The glitter, the spangles, the bunting, all that adds color and attractiveness. This is his specialty.

I was rather overwhelmed when I was in California a few years ago for ministry. To go by the various pieces of country property that I said was owned by movie companies, and to see whole villages, three feet thick, that's all. Here was a whole town, three feet thick, just a facade, just a front.

And one day I asked the pastor with whom I was riding, our brother Erickson, I said, would you mind pulling over to the side of the road? I want to see this and never forget it again. And as I sat there and stared at this facade, beautiful houses in some places, magnificent mansions, three feet thick, nothing more, I said to my own heart, don't ever forget that this is really the best that the devil can do. It puts on a good show of reality, but it has height and breadth, but doesn't have any depth.

How many times your heart has deceived you into thinking that this particular pleasure, this particular sin, this particular act of disobedience was the knot without which of your happiness if you didn't have it, you couldn't survive. And then you disobeyed, did what God forbade, and it turned ashes in your mouth, bitter saline ashes, because there's no reality. He promises so much, does the God of this world, but he yields no real pleasure.

It's all fancy, all imagination, all an illusion, all a dream, is this matter of sin? Stolen waters are sweet, someone has said. No, they're not sweet. They're advertised as sweet, but there's, it's like cyanide, it smells sweet, but it kills.

Your heart has been deceived. Don't look back and say, well, that's the way it is on Times Square, where all the million lights are gleaming. It's that way on Times Square, but you don't need to go that far to find victims of this deceit of the human heart.

You're one. In some time, some area, some place, some phase, you have listened to the subtle siren voice, oh, how many times the student in school thinks, if I can just pass this test. And so he cribs.

I hope the doctor that you go to when you're sick didn't crib on his final examinations to get his degree and his license to practice. And how many times the person thinks that if they could just change a little bit. I was talking to someone that has to do with people that fill out their income tax.

And the wife said to her husband, we don't need to report the income from these stocks. They'll never catch up with us. So a matter of a few hundred dollars.

Now this heart, these hearts are filled with shame, grief, heartache. It looks so luring, so enticing. A way to save a little bit.

Their heart deceived. Your heart's been deceived that way. So is mine.

What the God of this world gives is for such a little while, just a few moments, just a season. Remember what Moses said? He chose to accept the afflictions of Christ rather than the pleasures of sin for a season. A season.

It always ends in bitterness and ends in death. Will you remember that? And then of course, deceives not only in respect to sin, respect to pleasure, but your heart deceives you in respect to profit. How many times men have thought that they could get rich quick by a simple way and be happy.

They have so said that there's a psychological compulsion for people that get money in an illegal way to spend it as rapidly as they can. This is the reason why you will often find those that have gotten it as the gangsters squandering it in some futile, useless way. Because of the fact that it has promised so much and brought so little.

Whatever you get by dishonesty, whatever you get by deceit, whatever you get at the compromise of your character and the sacrifice of your virtue causes you to be the loser rather than the gainer. This is a subtle thing that we as Christians face today. I was talking just today with one of our folk in the hospital, a young man.

He said, I've been so shaken. I went to a man in the city of New York to make a purchase. And in the course of the conversation, he said, well, you know, the federal government demands a 10% tax, but none of my competitors give it.

What am I supposed to do? Go out of business? My friend said, I made him take the 10%. And I said, yes, you'd better go out of business. Then same business at the expense of your character.

You know, how many times we've been deceived into thinking that we could profit dishonestly. But it always comes back to bring, pierce the heart through with many sorrows. Then your heart deceives you in respect to honor and preferment and position.

How many times people have thought that if somehow they could just get to a certain place, they'd be happy. And they've used means, dishonorable means, unfair means, even un-Christian means. But all it's done is promote them to shame.

The enemy comes along and promises honor, promises satisfaction. But what he does is to bring bondage, bring grief, bring heartache. The enemy says to your heart, your heart responds to it.

You do this, you'll be protected, you'll have insecurity, you'll have peace. Then sudden destruction comes. Will you remember that? I'm pointing at you tonight, I'm talking just as personally as I know how to talk.

But I've not only got my finger pointed at you, but I've got three fingers pointed at me. My friend, there'll never come a time as long as you live when you can trust your heart. Say I've been a Christian 20 years.

That doesn't change anything. You can't trust your heart! It's deceitful. They say there are two times when an aviator, a pilot, haven't heard that word aviator for a long time, when a pilot is in greatest danger.

Two times or more. That is, when he's been in the air 500 hours, when he's been in the air a thousand hours, and when he's been in the air 10,000 hours, he begins to feel complacent because he's such a good pilot. And you've been in the Christian way for 10 years, 20 years, and you say, well now.

But my friend, there's been many a gray hair brought down to shame because someone thought at long last he could trust his heart. But you can't do it. You can't trust your heart in regards to knowledge.

Oh, how many times your heart persuades you that you're a very knowing person. I remember in Africa when I had malaria. Very seriously.

Almost went into black water fever. Everybody came along, gave me another 10 something or other. I had 70 units or whatever they call grams, grains of quinine in one day.

Everybody came, either shot me with a hypodermic or made me take three tablets. And it ended up with more than, well, I said to my wife, mine's getting dark early, isn't it? She said, well, no, it's still quite bright. It's only three o'clock.

I said, no, you're wrong, it's getting dark. And something had already begun to affect my optic nerve. Well, at any rate, during this time of delirium from the fever, I told her that I was sure that God was giving me insights into spiritual truth that no one ever had before.

I said, I want you to bring a pad and a pencil, and I am on the verge of one of the greatest spiritual discoveries that anyone's ever made. You know, I wrote it down, put it there, and it was this treasure. Well, in a few days, I was over my sickness.

Fever was broken. And I said, dear, where's that pad? She said, you won't want to see it. Oh, I said, bring it to me, will you? And there she brought me this pad.

And of all the inane trivialities that anyone had ever penciled, there were those that I had scribbled on that pad. This is the deceitfulness of the human heart. That you begin to think that you have arrived in truth.

Instead of that, blind and ignorant, know nothing as you ought to know. Down in Greenville, South Carolina, in a meeting, and after a service, the janitor came to see me. He said, Brother Eadhead, you remember today when you were talking about the Trinity? I said, yes.

He said, can you define and explain the Trinity? I said, no, I can't. I said, I don't know anybody that can. He said, I can.

Oh, I said, fine. Well, would you say on for me? Tell me what it is. So he began.

And here was this janitor that was just cheated by accident from being one of the great preachers of the age. And unfortunately wasn't recognized, and had to stay the janitor in the Southern Baptist Church down in Greenville. And I listened to him.

And you know, he'd been there thinking and pondering and putting it together. And his heart had deceived him into thinking that he'd found the secret. And all he had was the old Aryan heresy.

That's all. Just a heresy that had been condemned at the Council of Nicaea. The deceitfulness of the heart.

You can't trust your heart in respect to sin. You can't trust it in respect to pleasure. You can't trust it in respect to profit.

You can't trust your heart in respect to honor and position. You can't trust your heart in respect to knowledge. And certainly you can't trust your heart in respect to religion, to Christianity.

It persuades a person to believe that he's very holy and righteous on a fair way to heaven, when actually he's naked, and poor, and wretched, and blind, and worthy of death. You go out on the street and talk to the first ten people you meet, and you ask them, do you think that you, if you were to die, and there is a heaven, and there is a God, do you think that you're bad enough to go to hell, or good enough to go to

heaven? If one of them says, well look friend, if there's a God and a heaven, I shouldn't be there. If you get one that's honest enough to say that, I'll be surprised.

Every time I've done this, I have found that with almost without exception, their heart has deceived them into thinking that, well of course they steal, and of course they swear, and lie, and who's moral, and who doesn't cheat on his income, who isn't this, and who else. But I'm a good man at heart, good man at heart. I remember up in Little Falls, Minnesota, I stayed in a home, and this man had one of the foulest imaginations, though he was an intelligent man, had his own business, one of the foulest imaginations, and most subtly evil tongues, and one of the the slipperiest fellows that I'd ever met.

His wife said to me, you know, my husband dies, he'll go straight to heaven, why there's never been such a good man as my husband. Now she was wrong in regard to herself, and she was equally wrong in regard to her husband, but the unfortunate part, he thought the same way about himself that she did. And you can't trust the human heart.

It's deceitful. It's deceitful in everything. It's deceitful, we read, above all things, to a very great degree, superlatively deceitful.

It's the most deceitful thing in all creation, is the human heart. It's deceitful in everything, it's deceitful about everything, it's deceitful concerning everything. There's not a single thing, single area, in which the human heart can be trusted.

Luther understood this. He said, I am more afraid of my own heart than of the Pope and all of his cardinals. I have within me the great Pope self, and I fear it.

Do you have this understanding of your heart? No, it's deceitful, but that isn't all that the text says. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Everything in the heart is wicked.

Webster defines wicked in this way, morally bad, evil in character, evil in conduct, evil in principle, evil in purpose and influence. It is being or acting contrary to divine and moral law. Synonyms for wicked and wickedness are sinful, criminal, guilty, unjust, unrighteous, unholy, irreligious, ungodly, profane, vicious, atrocious, nefarious, heinous, and flagrant.

That's some of what you have in this Hebrew word, wicked. And he says the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. David understood it in Psalm the fifth, fifth Psalm and the ninth verse.

He said their inward part is very wickedness. That's you, that's me. It is wickedness itself.

No faithfulness in their mouth, their throat is an open sepulcher. They flatter with their tongues, the poison of ass is under their lips. Want to go home? Am I wrong? Do you have any inward testimony in agreement? Oh, you're overdrawing the case.

This is not my heart. Well, you're the one, if that's your attitude, you're the one we're praying for. The one that's seen it agrees with it.

The one that knows himself says, yes, it's me you're talking about. It's me you're talking about. I think of the time down south in the colored community when they had the funeral and the preacher was eulogizing the deceased.

And after a little while, the widow said to her oldest boy, would you please go up and look in the coffin and see if that's your daddy they're talking about. And I'd like to have you look into your heart and see if this is your heart I'm talking about. Whether or not it's somebody else.

Is this your heart that we're talking about? Everything in the personality, everything in the life is corrupted because of this wickedness. Let me illustrate it. The thoughts of the heart are wicked.

The motives are selfish. Did you believe that? In other words, the human heart and its natural state is committed to selfishness. I, me, mine, us, and ours.

My happiness is the highest good. My well-being is the end of all being. My satisfaction is the reason the world exists.

This is wickedness because it puts health in the place of God. And thus, the thoughts of the heart are wicked. The imaginations of the heart are evil.

In Genesis the sixth chapter, we find that God brought a flood upon that generation because their imaginations were only evil continually. The affections and the emotions are all selfish. You think this is true? The affections, the emotions, are selfish.

I do. I believe the Spirit of God has absolutely found me out. He's found you out when he is saying that your emotional center is yourself.

You've heard it said there's no town in the world that isn't the center of the universe to its local inhabitants. And that is exactly true. Go into the smallest little community anywhere, and they're sure that the North Pole isn't up where they say it is, but the center around which the whole world revolves is this community.

Now this is just a reflection of something else which makes the heart the center of the social universe. The affections and the emotions are all selfish. The judgment is perverted.

They call evil good, call good evil. It's certainly the case. How many times we've gotten excited about something of no consequence, and things of great consequence, great importance, are completely overlooked.

Gentleman came down from Radio City, one of the studios. He got on the elevator, young girl about 16, standing over in the corner sobbing, just sobbing her sore heart would break. He knew that such sorrow could only come from someone that is at news of the loss of loved ones.

Not knowing exactly the girl's age, he thought perhaps she was an employee that was going home in the middle of the day because of a great tragedy in the family. So he stepped over to her, solicitous and kindly, and he said, Miss, I do not know what the sorrow is. I do not know what the tragedy is, or what the suffering is, but this I know, that you need help.

And if there's anything I can do to comfort or console you, I'll be glad to do it. For, he said, sorrow and tragedy strike us all. Oh, she said through her tears, but nothing ever happened to anyone like this.

Well, what do you mean, what is it? She said, I just lost the amateur contest that I'd been counting on for so many months. And the preacher made this observation, in America there is more first-class emotion lost on more second-class causes than any other place in the face of the earth. The heart is deceitful in respect to judgment, in respect to affections and emotions.

The heart is deceitful in respect to the conscience. Through much abuse, the conscience is seared with a hot iron. Its warnings are unheard, its testimony ignored.

What a picture. What a picture. The very essence of this heart, wickedness, is exposed when we see it as selfishness, self-love, self-gratification, self-pleasing.

That's the wickedness. The policy of life, the purpose of life, the government of life, to please self. This is where the wickedness resides.

This is where it rests. The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know it? May I say this, that those who do not know that what we have said is true are not to be blamed.

You might challenge everything I've said. There might be someone here that if you were given an opportunity would say, you're entirely misrepresenting the human heart. It isn't that way at all.

I know my heart. I know how honest and fair and upright and sincere and sacrificial it is. I'm not blaming you for your attitude if this is it.

I'm simply pointing out that even in this appraisal, the deception and the wickedness is revealed. Those of us that have seen God and in the light of what God is have seen ourselves know that our hearts are wicked. But we couldn't have known it apart from him.

Angels don't know the wickedness of the human heart. They have not known sin. And so, for as I know it and God knows it, angels don't know it.

Demons, even Satan, cannot know the wickedness of the human heart, nor the wickedness of their own, but not ours. You and I as sinners, blinded by the God of this world, and drugged by lust and pride, did not know our own hearts. God knows it.

He said, I know it, I searched the heart. And when God reveals it by the light of what he is to you, you'll know it. It's imperative that a man know his own heart if he's ever to be converted.

Unless God can some way bring you to see yourself, he never will, you'll never be able to see Christ, all right? The only value that people place on the death of Christ is in proportion to the discovery of their own heart. Did you know that? That's why it's such folly to preach the gospel before we preach the law. You heard this, but have you gotten it? Do you see it? Do you realize that by the law is the knowledge of sin, that the Ten Commandments are God's sharp saw that go through the conceit and the arrogance and the pride of the human heart, and open it up for the light to enter.

Before any man will ever be truly converted, born of God, he must know his heart. And the only way that God has ever armed himself to cause a man to know his heart is through the word administered by the Holy Spirit. You have unsaved loved ones.

Do you know why they haven't come to Christ? Largely at least, or most of them? Because they've never seen themselves. You've been trying to get them to see the beauty of Christ before they've seen the heinousness of their own hearts. It won't work.

I'm afraid that too many people that come, we think would come to Christ these days, come because they're in a human dilemma. Did you hear that? Too many people that are apparently converts have come to Christ because they're in a human dilemma. Their home is breaking up, they're unable to control a

habit, they have a sickness, they have some problem in their human dilemma, which they're not able to handle.

Then they're candidates, it seems, for grace. But actually, they're not coming to God because of what they've seen themselves to be, they've come to God because of what they've seen they need from God. And the question in my mind is, when such a person comes with such motivation, a human need, a human dilemma, can he be saved at that time? Is it not imperative that he should see himself? It seems to me it is.

It seems to me obvious and clear that we are facing ground now where we've got to agree that a man must see his own heart if he is to be truly saved. Now if salvation is from a problem, then all he needs to do is see a problem. If salvation is from a dilemma, all he needs is to see his dilemma.

If salvation is from sickness, all he needs to do is see his sickness. If salvation is from hell, all he needs to do is discover there's a hell. But if salvation is from sin, then he must see what sin is, and he can only see it when the cover is taken off the lid of his eyes, and he gets a glimpse of what he is.

This is the reason why we have so many ungrateful professing Christians in the church, because all they have done is come to Christ in answer of a particular problem at a particular time. Believed, told they were saved, and gone on their way rejoicing in what? Well, that their problem was solved and they won't go to heaven, they won't go to hell. But they've never seen themselves, never had the discovery of what they are.

Repentance can never be complete until the work of conviction is complete. God the Spirit must show a man the nature of his crime before he can truly repent of it. It's the uncovering of the human heart and its selfishness, its arrogance and its pride, its treason and its rebellion, that causes one to realize that the whole of the crime is that he's put himself in the place of God and ruled as God.

Now, before he has seen this, and seen that out of this one act of treason and rebellion, all the other acts of sin and uncleanness have come. He can't, he can't do it. It would be like someone trying to destroy the liquor traffic by standing, by just going into the saloon and breaking the bottles that will be on the shelves.

Be a foolish way to deal with it, you never finish. If you want to stop the liquor traffic, the place to do it is to peddle out the factory. And consequently, a great many people have seen that they lied or have stolen, they've been caught in some dilemma of circumstance and they've wanted to be saved from the consequence of this circumstance.

And they have come to Christ simply as the means of alleviating their problem. I'm sure this is true on the mission field. In fact it was Mrs. Timian who mentioned just this Friday past, that everyone with whom she had ever prayed in their station in the Ivory Coast, had on the initial occasion of praying, simply wanted to use God to help them in a situation.

And that the word had to come in loving ministry by the Holy Ghost to cause them to see themselves the sinners that they are. Do you know it? Have you seen your heart? Has God ever taken the cover off, the lid off and let you peer down into it? This world of iniquity, this universe of uncleanness in your bosom? Have you seen yourself? I am sure that God answers prayer on the level of people's response. I'm sure that the man who comes in perplexity will have God answer his prayer, but the tragedy of it is, when he interprets that, meaning that he's saved, I'm confident that many people were healed by the Lord Jesus

that had never been saved from their sins.

I am satisfied that many a boy whose airplane had been struck by the shrapnel and was plunging to the ground cried out in the name of his mother's God, and the plane was steadied and he was brought to a landing. But I am sure that many a boy who had foxhole religion was delivered from the terror that affrighted him at the moment, but he wasn't saved. God is gracious and shows his graciousness, he's loving and shows his love.

But if you were to say today, well I must be saved because I know God answered prayer, I'd have to say no, that's not the reason at all. No grounds of satisfaction or peace in man. But you turn around and say, listen, God has opened my heart.

God has shown me the world of iniquity that's there. God has shown me the deceitfulness of it. God let me see that the seed of every sin was residing in my bosom, and that the serpents of all the ages had made their holes in my heart.

And God showed me that there wasn't a sin or crime that anyone has ever committed in which I was not capable. And he broke me and brought me to the foot of the cross, a world of iniquity that didn't put nothing to offer but my uncleanness. Have you seen yourself? Who can know it? My dear, you've got to know it.

You're only going to be saved from what you've seen. You've got to see it. You've got to see it.

Who can know it? I, the Lord, search the heart. I try the reins. Jehovah alone, ultimately, in that final sense, he alone is qualified to search and try the heart.

I can't do it. Far be it from me to come to you and say, now look, I've searched your heart, and I've tried your reins, and I know. Oh no.

How many times I've had people come and say, now listen, it's this, and it's this, and it's this. Am I saved or am I not? I can't try your heart. I don't know how.

I have to stand on the outside. Jehovah can do it. He knows your heart.

You say, well, I don't know it. I haven't seen it this way. Well, you know there's someone to go to, don't you? You know there is a prayer you can offer.

You can go to him and say, Lord, your word says that this is what the human heart is, but I have never seen it that way. Set in motion now the chain of spiritual events that are going to bring me to see myself as I am in your eyes. Would you dare to pray that prayer? You must.

You've got to know it. You've got to know it. Show me what I am.

God alone has the knowledge for such a task. He brings to it his omniscience. He knows everything perfectly, eternally.

Everything which is an object of knowledge, whether past, present, whether actual or possible. Everything God knows. Listen to these scriptures.

Acts 15.8, God which knows the heart. Psalm 139.2, thou understandest my thought afar off. Job 7.20, O thou watcher of men.

Psalm 56.8, thou numberest my wonderings. Hebrews 4.13, neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Genesis 16.13, thou God seest me.

God knows your heart. This is what the Lord Jesus said about it. For from within, out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornication, murderous thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness and evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness.

All these evil things come from within and defile the man. Thus the Lord declares the heart to be known to him in the source of all evil. All of its intentions are selfish.

All of its motives and actions are wicked. All of its designs and contrivances are simply to implement its wickedness and selfishness. God says, I try the reins.

Literally, I judge the kidneys. I judge the inner part of you, the seat of your motives. Motives are what make men act, makes an act sinful.

You know that the car that runs over the man in the street is booked for manslaughter until they can prove that he sat at the corner knowing that the man crossed the street every time, every day at the same time, and that he drove as fast as he could. And then when they have signed motive, it's no longer manslaughter, it's murder. Manslaughter is just an accident.

Murder carries with it capital punishment. And God says, I try the reins. And I find the reason that people do such a thing is because their motives are wrong.

Their purpose is to please themselves. God says, I try the reins, even to give to every man according to his ways and according to the fruit of his doings. All judgment that will ever be given by God in that future day will be in justice and knowledge.

When the wicked dead stand before the great white throne, the books will be open, and they will be judged every man according to his ways. God knows the heart. In the future revelation of the righteous judgment of God, every secret motive and every action will be recorded.

The counsels of the heart will be made manifest. The spurnings of conscience and truth will be revealed. The ignoring of the entreaties to repent will also be unveiled.

Think of it. All you can possibly do for yourself is to ask God to show you your heart and bring yourself to the word where he speaks and tells you what he's seen there, and believe what he says. It's a revelation.

But listen, you never as long as you live will ever know why anybody else does what they do. Did you know that? Now this is what happens. Most of the time we give ourselves the benefit of the doubt, and most of the time we construe the other man's action to be as vile as it can be, and our judgment is utterly perverted.

You cannot trust your own heart's discernment in another's action. You do not know why anybody does what they do. All you can possibly know this side of the veil is what they do.

And there's been more heartache come, more grief come, because mortal men and women have usurped the prerogatives of sovereign wisdom and justice by judging motives of others that they can never know. You'll never know why your husband did this, why your wife did that, why she said, why he didn't say. You'll never know why until that day when God shall give a righteous judgment and the motives shall be revealed that relate to the act.

But until that time, not a thing you can do about. But you can know your own heart, and you go to him. Listen, not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name? Did we not cast out devils in your name? Have we not done many wonderful works in your name? Then will I profess unto them, I never knew you. Depart from me, ye that work iniquity. They didn't even know their own heart in respect to their church activities.

Their motive was wrong. What is yours? Have you seen your heart? Do you know it? Do you understand it? Has God shown it to you? Have you been willing to face it with all of its deceitfulness and desperate wickedness and come to him with that heart just as foul as he sees it and break before him as that one said as he came, Lord, you've surely got something on your hands now when you take me. Every one of us that rightly understand ourselves come just that way.

We've seen our hearts and put no confidence in the flesh. You see, God provided grace and cleansing and power for what he saw. You will never have what he provided until you see what he saw.

Face the worst about yourself, openly, honestly, freely and bring that wretched, deceived, deceitful, wicked heart and take from God the grace and love that he's provided to make you what you ought to be. Hear the word. The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.

Who can know it? I, the Lord, who searched the heart. Let us pray. I want you to think for just a moment.

You're soon going to be on your way. We're not going to have a prolonged invitation. Simply saying that if you are here and God has spoken to you and we trust he has, and you have need, when others go to the street, you go into Wilson Chapel and I'll come and we'll talk and pray together there.

A quiet place to meet. This is the invitation. So in just a moment, you're going to be on your way.

I don't know what's happened to you as I've been speaking. I know what I've been praying, that God would open the eyes of your mind and intellect and your spirit and cause you to come into agreement with him, if you haven't already done so, and that you would bring what you see to him for cleansing, for purging, for deliverance. Have you seen your own heart? Have you? If you have, you know what we've been saying is true.

If you haven't, why don't you just now cry out, Oh God, take the veil off my eyes, the veil that the enemy put, lest the light of the glorious gospel should shine in upon me. Open my eyes, show me what I am. Help me to see myself as you see me.

I know that your grace is sufficient for the worst in me. Show me what I am, so that I will want everything that the Lord Jesus died to make mine. Will you pray that prayer? I wonder while we wait for just a moment, if there are any that would say pray for me.

God has shown me my heart. He's been speaking to me in the days past and brought it to focus tonight. I need prayer, pray for me.

Would you put your hand up? Yes, God bless you, I see it. Anyone else? Yes, God bless you, I see it. Yes, I see your hand.

Still another? Yes, I see it, God bless you. Now I'm going to ask you that raise your hands if you wish and will, when we stand for prayer in just a moment to slip out quietly to the rear of the room and to the right into Wilson Chapel and I can come and talk with you and we can talk further about this. And we'll remember you in prayer, even as you go.

Shall we stand? Father, it's not a pleasant thing to see ourselves. We've had such illusions about ourselves. We put on pink glasses when it came to ourselves.

We've been able to see the mote in our brother's eye, but we haven't seen the beam in our own. Now, Lord, we're asking that the eyes of our hearts may be open to see ourselves. There have been these hands raised of individuals that have said, oh, I need prayer.

We do pray for them. We pray that they may not let go what they felt, but that they may move on and march on with thee. Might it even be that tonight, instead of going to the street or to their home, they'll come to thee in a place of prayer? Others with them that didn't raise their hands? Father, for every one of us, we continue to pray.

Oh, God, we must, if we are to be united before thee, be people that have seen ourselves all in the same way. Open the eyes of any among us that haven't seen themselves. And may this truth lay hold upon us.

And may it do its work. We pray that salvation may come to every weary, burdened heart. That a revelation may come to every blind heart.

Go with us as we part. May the Holy Ghost continue to work, even in the night hours and on the days to come. And bind this truth between our eyes, upon our foreheads, as a frontlet that shall never depart from us.

May it be before us constantly, as thy revelation of what we are by nature. May thy grace and mercy and peace continue and abide with us.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/24/SID24411.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/paris-reidhead/the-deceitfulness-of-the-heart/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net