

Our Heart is Revealed
by Our Walk

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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INTRODUCTION

God wants to give us new hearts that reveal genuine love for people. Think of Jesus Christ's life and how His heart was always revealed toward the lost. His identity wasn't in His greatness, His power, or His glory. Instead, He allowed Himself to be associated with transgressors and to be called the friend of publicans and sinners. No one needs friends more than sinners! And the One who did not sin now stands as our greatest friend.

Job 41:24 says that Satan's heart is as firm as a stone, as hard as a piece of millstone hewn from the lowest places, hidden deep in the earth in the place of Sheol. He knows he will spend eternity in hell and that his time is short. Satan's only concern is to take as many down with him as he can.

Amaziah served God and did everything well. He followed the Lord, but not with a perfect heart (2 Chronicles 25:2). He didn't lie or

cheat and he was faithful as a leader. He did everything he was supposed to, but he didn't serve God with a mature heart that identifies in compassion.

God is after perfect hearts. One of the saddest things that can happen is that a person can serve God, seeming to do everything that is right, but not with a perfect heart.

Every believer needs to examine his heart. Is it toward the lost? Does he identify with the down-and-outer, the up-and-outer, and those who are in harm's way because of weakness? This booklet will show that when we walk with God, He will give us a new heart where the Holy Spirit will shed His love abroad. This love enables us to identify, encourage, and win those who are wounded, defeated, and lost.

Chapter One

PREPARATIONS OF THE HEART

“Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchmen waketh but in vain” (Psalm 127:1).

In 2 Chronicles 20:33, the Word of God says that the people had not prepared their hearts to serve the God of their fathers. What does it mean to have a prepared heart? The perfect life of the Lord Jesus Christ is our example. He said, “I do nothing of myself” in John 5:19. Jesus also said, “I receive not honour of men” (John 5:41) and “I did not come to do my own will” (John 6:38). “The teaching that you receive is not mine, but my Father’s” (see John 7:16).

These are amazing statements by the one perfect Man. He was God, who came to earth in His hypostatic union. Here is the most unique personality in the universe, because though He was God, yet He was man. He was man, and yet

He was God. Still, even He had to say, “The teaching that you receive from me is not mine. The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself” (see John 14:10). In John 8:28, Jesus said “I do nothing of myself.”

Jesus Christ Promotes the Humble

In studying the humility of Jesus Christ, it is easy to see why He never sinned. He wasn't seeking glory, and He derived His entire human existence from the life of the Father. If we would refuse to seek our own glory by living a derived life, even as sinners saved by grace, we would cut sinful behavior down to a minimum.

The Lord Jesus Christ, who came not to be ministered unto but to minister (Matthew 20:27-28), magnificently taught this principle: “Let him that is chief among you be your servant” (Luke 22:26). Do you know who really gets promoted, from God's viewpoint? Those who are humble. Understanding the great humility of Jesus Christ, we realize that He will *always* promote the humble. Many Christians go through tremendous trials in life and do not get promoted because in certain areas they exalt themselves above the will of God.

Again, in John 14:24, Jesus said that the

words He spoke were not His but His Father's. The Lord Jesus Christ—the perfect God-Man, Creator of the universe—only spoke as He heard from the Father.

Can you imagine a life where the Christian can have preciseness with power, without subjectivity or hyperspirituality? As we grow in meekness through grace and in humility through love, we will prosper in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ to the extent that we do not seek a single thing for ourselves. There is no need for sublimation because we are not after anything to satisfy our flesh. There is no vanity, no self-glory, no demanding. Instead, we only enjoy the privilege of being a servant.

Identify with the Author of Love

I was told this story of a man who had written a book. He later met a woman and asked her out on a date, just as a friend. At the end of the evening, he gave her the book to read. Two weeks later, he asked how she liked it. She said, “Frankly, I didn’t like it at all.”

They went out on another date. She read the book again, and this time she said, “It’s okay, but this kind of book is a dime a dozen. It was nice, but there was nothing special about it.”

The relationship grew and he asked her to marry him. She read the book again and fell in love with it. On their honeymoon, the woman read the book a fourth time. Now, because her husband was the author, she loved it more than ever. What made that book special to the woman was its author. As she got to know the author and grew in her love for him, she was able to appreciate the expression of his heart.

It is the same with the Bible. The thing that makes this Book priceless is the Author. When we know the Author, we will love the Book. Every word will be fresh, every category will have its rightful place as a wall of doctrine is established in our souls. Thank God for that.

Chapter Two

TRUE IDENTIFICATION: A HEART OF COMPASSION

As our love for God grows deeper, we begin to understand what identification is all about. I received a letter from a twenty-year-old girl who married at sixteen and was divorced three years later. At eighteen, she found out that she was an adopted child, given up by her mother who was a prostitute. Then she discovered that her husband was a drug addict. They had a baby who died at just eighteen months old. Now she lives in fear because of her ex-husband's deep problem with drugs and his large debts the creditors are trying to collect from her, even though she is no longer married to the man. In the letter she asked, "What can you do to help?"

Of course we can pray and send someone to help her and minister to her. But after I read a letter like that, all I can do is get on my knees in identification. Identification is a precious thing

because it is so rare today. People find it easy to identify when things are going well, but to identify with someone when things aren't going well is another matter. Have you ever identified with someone who has fallen, with someone who can't seem to make it through the trial? Is your heart broken to the point where you can weep when another weeps and rejoice when he rejoices (Romans 12:15; 1 Corinthians 12:26)? To condescend to men of low estate (Romans 12:16)—*that* is identification.

I read Isaiah 53:12 during my private devotions recently, and I was so broken. "He was numbered with the transgressors." Jesus identified with sinners though He never sinned.

We can identify through prayer and through doing what we can to help those in need. If we ask him, Jesus will give us a heart to identify. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away your stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a [new heart]" (Ezekiel 36:26). The new heart is the heart of God given through the human spirit.

Identification means not being occupied with self, circumstances, or people. It is to be occupied with being a vessel that can be used as

an instrument of the Holy Spirit's love to glorify Jesus Christ on earth.

Caring for Souls

Another letter I received recently related this desperate situation. "I've been a Christian in a Bible-believing church for years. Three years ago, my wife left me to live with another man. I started drinking. Then I started using stronger and stronger drugs. Now I have no desire to live. Can you please help me?"

God raises up people who can identify with cases such as these.

The Psalmist cried out, "No man cared for my soul." He said, "There was no man that would know me: *refuge failed me*" (Psalm 142:4). But God raises up people who will minister, men and women who can do nothing of themselves, who don't seek their own glory, and who don't make any demands. They are people who simply follow Jesus Christ by walking in the Holy Spirit and agreeing with God. They walk in love (Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 5:2). They walk worthy of the Lord in wisdom toward them that are without wisdom (Colossians 1:10; 4:5-6). They walk circumspectly (Ephesians 5:15), wise as serpents but harmless as doves,

before God in their fellowship with Him (Genesis 17:1).

As so many others, the people who wrote those letters have a tremendous need for someone to identify with them. They need to be around someone who will identify without compromise—someone who will walk with God.

Chapter Three
**CALLED TO WALK WITH THEM
AS WE WALK IN HIM**

If I am seeking something for myself in this life, I am not walking with God. If I want a promotion, if I want to be noticed, I am not walking with God. Jesus didn't seek glory from men; He refused to even teach from His own perfect mind because He walked with the Father.

The Lord Jesus Christ wants His people to bear one another's burdens by entering into true identification (Galatians 6:2). For example, through the principle of transactional analysis, it is possible to counsel a woman who is arrogant and hateful toward people because of a father who hurt her and caused her to build walls of resentment. By role playing, asking her to put herself in the place of her father, the counselor can deal with her by describing things that her father might have had to go through, and then asking her to identify.

I might address the role of her father like this: “You were brought up with a screaming father. Your mother was an alcoholic and you had to do everything for yourself around the house. You didn’t have any money. You never had nice things.” I would then ask the woman to consider, from her own viewpoint, what was happening: She had “become” the person she hated.

From that place of identification, we would have a time of prayer. Usually, a problem like this could be taken care of in two or three sessions. I have seen people come through beautifully and no longer resent the other parties. The reason: They can now identify because they became the other person. Because of identification, this woman developed a heart of compassion for her father. She sat where he sat.

Christ, Our Example

Jesus Christ actually lived out this principle when He, who knew no sin, *became* sin for us. Everything He ever did revealed His compassion and love. Wherever He went, whenever people needed Him, Jesus Christ demonstrated all that He is.

In Luke 7:37-50, Jesus identified with the outcast prostitute when she fell at His feet in the

house of Simon the Pharisee. He let her minister to Him as a rebuke to those who were judging her. That was amazing identification.

Before a large crowd, Jesus saw Zaccheus, a crooked publican, up in the tree and said to him, "I'm coming to your house today" (Luke 19:5), and salvation came to Zaccheus' home. That was true identification.

Jesus stood still for the blind man whom the disciples tried to discourage as he cried for mercy from the Son of David (Mark 10:46-52). The disciples told Bartimaeus to shut up. "Leave Jesus alone!" they said. "Stop your crying for mercy!" But Jesus said, "Bring him to me" and said to the blind man, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith has made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way."

There wasn't a case that Jesus would not identify with. The prostitute, the filthy beggar, and even Nicodemus the Pharisee. Jesus sat with every one of them. Yet, it is so unusual today to find Christians willing to identify as Jesus did.

God Goes Where We Go

“I am with thee, and I will keep thee in all places whither thou goest” (Genesis 28:15). This is a verse that I claim every time I go in an airplane—I think I should claim it when I get into a car, too. It has worked every time so far, and I’m never going to stop using it.

The Lord Jesus Christ wants to teach us how He keeps us. We are kept by the power of His Word. We are kept in every situation because of His identification with us. Even when a person falls seven times a day, Jesus identifies with that one and stands as his advocate with the Father. The prophet Micah said, “Yes, I have sinned, and yes, I am guilty.” Then he made that beautiful statement in chapter 7, verses 8 and 9:

“Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me. I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me: he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness.”

It was as if Micah said, “Jesus Christ is down here with me.” In other words, though Micah had sinned, the One who *never* sinned stayed

right with him. Though he was flat on his back, Micah could declare to his enemies “God is with me. You are mocking me, but God is going to pick me up shortly. I am going to get up.” That is a picture of Jesus Christ forgiving us through identification.

In 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12, a ministry is built on identification. Instead of reacting, instead of building up cases against others, we identify with every part, knowing that we are all sinners saved by grace and that each one has great value in God’s sight.

CONCLUSION

God will give us a new heart and a new spirit as we begin to walk with Him, identifying as He identified. When we walk in the Spirit, we will enter into people's lives through identification. We do not go simply to minister—even though that is true—but because we actually have God's own love for them.

A man I know holds down two jobs and is busy raising a beautiful family, yet his heart compels him to go soul winning in his neighborhood at different times during the week. It is not unusual to find him weeping with a neighbor, and it is all because of a heart filled with godly compassion and love. As a result, thirty-five people come out to a Bible study in that area. That man's heart is making a difference.

Just think of what the love of God will constrain us to do. As His love constrains us to serve in identification, it will not seem to be a "duty" to us, even though it is required that we

be found faithful. The love of God develops our potential. We can do nothing of ourselves and we cannot seek our own glory. When the words a man preaches are God's words, his teaching is not his own. That kind of walk develops a capacity for us to lay down our lives and to manifest the nature of God. Best of all, we will not be conscious of what is happening. We simply fall deeper in love with Christ and people as it happens.