

## Serving God from the Heart

- I. Our worship of God must come from both the head and the heart.
  1. It's important for our faith and practice to be "by the book" (**Mat 28:19-20; 1Co 11:2**).
  2. But for our service to be acceptable to God, it must also come from the heart, and not merely be the dutiful keeping of the letter.
  
- II. The heart is the seat of the will and the emotions.
  1. **Heart** *n.* - 1. a. The hollow muscular or otherwise contractile organ which, by its dilatation and contraction, keeps up the circulation of the blood in the vascular system of an animal. 6. a. The seat of one's inmost thoughts and secret feelings; one's inmost being; the depths of the soul; the soul, the spirit. 7. Intent, will, purpose, inclination, desire. *Obs. exc.* in phr. *after one's own heart*. 9. a. The seat of the emotions generally; the emotional nature, as distinguished from the intellectual nature placed in the *head*.
  2. God discerns the *thoughts* and *intents* of the heart (**Heb 4:12**).
  3. God searches and tries the heart (**Jer 17:10; Rev 2:23**).
  4. God searches our hearts (**Rom 8:27**).
    - A. We should ask God to search our hearts and prove us (**Psa 26:2; Psa 139:23-24**).
    - B. We should search our own hearts as well (**2Co 13:5**).
  
- III. Our faith and service to God must come from the heart.
  1. We should have each other in our hearts (**Php 1:7**).
    - A. We need to be in each other's *hearts*, not just in our *phones*.
    - B. Do you think about your brethren during the week?
    - C. Do you pray for your brethren daily?
  2. We should praise God with all of our hearts (**Psa 86:12**).
    - A. Is that what you do when we sing hymns in church?
    - B. Are you lifting up your voice, or quietly mumbling to yourself?
    - C. Do you mean the words you are singing from the heart, or are you just trying to stay in tune?
  3. We can't hide our ways from God (**Psa 94:7-11; Isa 40:27**).
    - A. If we are not serving God from the heart, the Lord will bring it out.
    - B. God will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and the secret counsels of the heart (**1Co 4:5**).
    - C. A form of godliness without the substance is worthless (**2Ti 3:5**).
    - D. Talk is cheap (**Tit 1:16**).
      - i. If we are faking it, God knows.
      - ii. If we are just going through the motions of religion, God knows.
    - E. If worshiping God is a weariness to us and we are only doing the bare minimum, God is not pleased with it (**Mal 1:6-14**).
  4. What we think about most reveals who we are (**Pro 23:7**).
    - A. What do you think about most?
    - B. How often do you think about God, Jesus Christ, the Bible, doctrine, or the church?
  5. What we speak of most reveals the thoughts of our heart (**Mat 12:34-37**).
    - A. Do you speak of the things of God at home with your family?
    - B. What topics do your conversations gravitate towards with your brethren?
  6. What we value most reveals what's in our heart (**Mat 6:21**).

- A. What do you value most?
  - i. Is it your family, friends, career, house, money, toys, leisure time, travel, pleasures, or entertainment?
  - ii. Or is it God, His word, His truth, His church, and His people.
  - iii. Is the word of God more valuable to you than wealth? (**Psa 19:7-10; Psa 119:72, 127**)
    - a. If so, how much time do you spend reading it each day?
    - b. We should ask God to incline our hearts to Him and His word (**Psa 119:36, 80**).
    - c. God's word should rejoice our hearts when we read it (**Psa 119:111**).
    - d. If it doesn't, then we should ask God to let it do so.
  - iv. Is the understanding, knowledge, and wisdom of God more valuable to you than riches? (**Pro 2:1-6; Pro 3:13-15; Pro 8:11, 19; Pro 16:16**)
  - v. If so, how much time do you spend searching for wisdom in God's word and asking Him for it in prayer?
  - vi. Is your faith more precious than gold? (**1Pe 1:7**)
  - vii. If so, how much do you think and talk about it during your day?
  - viii. Is the church worth more to you than family, money, houses, and lands? (**Mat 13:44-46; Mar 10:29-30; Luk 18:29-30; Psa 84:10**)
    - a. If so, do you choose it over them?
    - b. Would you rather be in church than at your favorite place on earth?
- B. How do you know what you value most?
  - i. It's very simple to determine what it is.
  - ii. Just look at what you spend your time and your money on, and you will see what you value most and where your heart is.

IV. Serving God from the heart *because we want to*, not *because we have to* is what separates the sheep from the goats.

1. God's true servants obey His doctrine *from the heart* because they *want to* (**Rom 6:17**).
  - A. They do the will of God *from the heart* because they *want to* (**Eph 6:6**).
  - B. Why do we do the things we do?
  - C. Why do we not do the things we don't do?
  - D. The answer is simple: *because we want to*.
2. Any old reprobate can follow orders if compelled to do so, and plenty of reprobates do.
3. Our *affection* should be set on the house of God as was David's (**1Ch 29:3**).
  - A. Affection *n.* - II. Of the mind. 2. a. An affecting or moving of the mind in any way; a mental state brought about by any influence; an emotion or feeling.
  - B. Our worship of God should not be *merely* emotional, but it should not be void either.
  - C. Our soul should long for the house of God and our heart should cry out for God (**Psa 84:2**).
4. We should draw near to God with a *true heart* (**Heb 10:22**).
  - A. True *adj.* - 1. a. Of persons: Steadfast in adherence to a commander or friend, to a principle or cause, to one's promises, faith, etc.; firm in allegiance; faithful, loyal, constant, trusty. Somewhat arch. 2. In more general sense: Honest, honourable,

upright, virtuous, trustworthy (*arch.*); free from deceit, sincere, truthful (cf. 3d); of actions, feelings, etc., sincere, unfeigned

B. We should draw near to God with a sincere and unfeigned heart when we assemble together to worship Him in His church (**Heb 10:22-25**).

5. Our faith should be *unfeigned* (**2Ti 1:5**).

A. Unfeigned *adj.* - 1. Not feigned, pretended, or simulated; sincere, genuine, true, real.

B. Pretended faith is hypocrisy.

C. We may fool others, but not God.

6. *True worshippers* worship God *in spirit* and in truth (**Joh 4:23-24**).

A. Spirit - III. 11. a. The immaterial intelligent or sentient element or part of a person, freq. in implied or expressed contrast to the body. c. Without article; freq. in phr. *in spirit*. Also (with reference to John iv. 23), in spirit and in truth, spiritually and sincerely.

B. In other words, true worshippers worship God *sincerely* (**Jos 24:14**).

i. Sincerely *adv.* - In a sincere manner. 1. Without falsification or perversion; in a proper or correct manner. *Obs.* 2. Without dissimulation or pretence; honestly, straightforwardly.

ii. Sincere *adj.* - 1. Not falsified or perverted in any way: a. Of doctrine, etc.: Genuine, pure.

C. The way that Christians give to God proves the sincerity of their love towards Him and others (**2Co 8:8, 24**).

D. For our giving to God to be acceptable to Him, it must be done from the heart, not grudgingly or of necessity (**2Co 9:7**).

E. God will be gracious to them that love our Lord Jesus Christ *in sincerity* (**Eph 6:24**).

7. We should serve our God with a *perfect* heart and a *willing* mind (**1Ch 28:9; 1Ch 29:9, 17**).

A. Perfect *adj.* - 1. Thoroughly made, formed, done, performed, carried out, accomplished.

B. Willing *adj.* - 1. Wishing, wishful, desirous; inclined, disposed. *Obs.* 2. Having a ready will; disposed to consent or comply; ready to do (what is specified or implied) without reluctance, having no objection, 'not disposed to refuse' (J.); *spec.* disposed to do what is required, ready to be of use or service.

C. Serving God with a *perfect heart* is serving him with *all your heart* (**Mat 22:37-38**).

D. Our hearts should stir us up and make us willing to give to the Lord's work (**Exo 35:21-22, 29**).

8. If God's people who are under judgment will search for Him with all their hearts they shall find Him, and He will deliver them (**Jer 29:12-14**).

V. There is only one person on this earth that truly knows if your faith and religion is sincere, and that's you.

1. God knows (**Psa 44:21**).

2. Others can observe your fruit and speculate.

3. But only you know for sure, and only you will have to give an account of your life to God on judgment day.