

Have you given your heart to Jesus? Many think you must do this to be saved. Have you given your heart to Jesus? Your response should be, why would Jesus want that filthy thing. How can the clay offer anything to the Potter? It's a bit arrogant, since He made it to think that I can somehow give it its Creator.

**Out of the heart, come evil thoughts,** (He gives a list). **All these evil things come from within, defile a person.** Jesus teaches the Pharisees, his disciples, and you. He simply repeats what prophets like Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel said before Him. You have a fatal heart condition, set on evil.

The Pharisees, people even in our world, fail to see in the Scriptures, Holiness is received, not achieved. Cleansing, righteousness before God are given, not earned. That people are not saved, no one goes to heaven because they're good. Only forgiven sinners have eternal life.

One of the genius of the Reformation, making clear what had been clouded by the Church, your justification (saved by grace alone in Christ alone) and for that to be understood and taught rightly, the doctrine of original sin must be taught clearly. Not that there's not a spark in you to ignite, you don't have potential to do good in the sight of God, no amount of good works, good behavior, avoiding sin can address your condition, your heart. Sin is not just a behavioral problem. Dead! in trespasses apart from Christ.

Of course we should desire, work to improve, sin less, be good people. That is our faith lived out. Because of what Jesus teaches us today along with so much more, that is what this place, the Church is not about a place for bad people to become good or good people to become better. You are here to die. For dead people to have life. You are dead in your sins. Die to yourself. You are here to die that the works of Christ continually bring new life in you.

And you not be evil and fall so easily into temptation. But God is never impressed with the works of men. It really doesn't matter how good you've been or how hard you try, or any great things you've done: it's not good enough. You are condemn by what lies in your heart.

**Out the heart, evil, defiled.** Jesus says. you and I are guilty. You've murdered with hatred in your heart. Committed adultery with lustful heart. Guilty of all that Jesus lists there. Every one of them. Many times.

So, too, Christ knows your complicated life, what dwells in your secret heart He knows the evil, the good in your heart. He knows your struggle to believe, to do good, to tell the truth, to walk away from temptation, how it hurts when you don't. He knows what keeps you awake at night; what you hope no one ever finds out. He knows how weak you are, how hard your struggle and failures. Your sins sent Him to His death. But that was the death He came to die. His death was not caused by your sin but by His love. Despite your filth, evil heart, He still loves you, desires to constantly cleanse you; stop at nothing to care for you. For His glory, to forgive you

Parents are to be good examples to their children. Take King Solomon. He inherits the throne of his father, David. The Lord tells him to reign over Israel following the example of David. The Lord promised David: **You shall not lack a man to sit before me on the throne, if only your sons walk before me as you have walked before me**. What! To walk as David walked! He commits murder, adultery, much evil. **To walk before the Lord** can't refer to his moral life or good behavior.

So why does God set before the eyes of Solomon the example of David? Because of that window. Repentance. Confronted by faithful proclaimers of the Word of God, like Nathan, he confessed: **Wash me! Cleanse me from my sin! Against you, have I sinned, done evil in your sight.**

Just as with you, for the Lord to turn a compassionate heart to your desperate need as a sinner. **I will confess my transgressions to the LORD, and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.** David's only hope, only help -the grace and forgiveness of a merciful God -to bring a new creation in him because of Christ, **Create in me a clean heart, renew a right spirit within me.** Create in me, a new, clean heart.

This is how we live. **The sacrifices of God – the only thing that pleases Him in men – is a broken spirit, a broken, contrite heart.** A life of repentance.

Here is the worse advice in the history of the world, yes the history of the world, perhaps someone's said this to you or your children, the worse advice ever, "*Follow your heart.*" Sure, heartfelt decisions can be godly, of good character but how often its against God's Word, hurts people. Jesus says, **out of the heart, evil, defile...** To follow your heart, is a selfish endeavor; to think I deserve to be happy, that I've got a better idea for my life; to pursue what you determine is best.

To *follow your heart* -will lead to much misery, brokenness, as people abandon their duty, their vows, their vocations, to abandon God's Word. *Follow your heart*, that's what Eve did; what we so often do. God have mercy. Do not trust your heart as Jesus says.

Here is the best advice in the history of the world, Repent. Because your heart is soiled with sin. You're helpless. You cannot make yourself clean for all the filth. You're dead without Him, for He is your life. **Create in me a clean heart to God, renew a right spirit within. ...**

Your Lord died, rose, reigns for you. A new heart, a new creation, baptized into Your Lord. He will not leave you alone to fight in this warfare against your heart and this world. He earns the victory over sin and death for you. For your heart is pure, holy, alone by His blood, His work in you. **Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me, cast me not away, restore to me the joy of your salvation and uphold me.** And your prayer is answer far greater than you realize.