

HEART MOTIVES - PART 4

A SEARCHING HEART!

The "heart motive" I want to talk to you about this month is that of keeping a "searching heart". Now what is a searching heart? Simply stated . . . it is a heart that stays hungry for more of God!

Deuteronomy 4:29 explains if "you will seek the LORD your God . . . you will find Him *if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul.*

Curiously, I have found that if most Christians were to map out all of the important "God experiences" in their lives onto a "life timeline", and it were to show where and when each "felt" the closest to God, *but also included the times when God seemed distant . . .* then what they would end up with is a chart that would, YES reveal times when God's presence seemed overwhelming - touchable and tangible! **But these would be the exception!**

And the times of distress and trouble? Times when God seemed no where to be found - where His presence only seemed to be a thought, or long held conviction within their religious belief system? For most Christians it would be these sorts of experiences that would fill the majority of the time marked on their own chart! And yet the truth is **God wants to have a tangible relationship with each of us - WITH YOU - 24/7!**

Despite what others often seem to think is true, God is not playing some heavenly game of hide and seek with us, - now you see Me, now you don't! That would be cruel and ridiculous! **GOD LOVES YOU MUCH MORE THAN THAT!**

Please, know and believe *it is only the condition of our hearts* that can ever create this sense of God playing with us like some cat would with a mouse that it has just caught! Never forget . . . **GOD NEVER CLOSES A DOOR TO YOU HAVING AN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM! ONLY YOU AND I CAN CLOSE THAT DOOR!**

And most often . . . it is the complacency in yours and my heart, and the lost of a "searching heart", that causes what seems to be this "disappearing act" by God. Now ask yourself, what is it that could cause me to lose a "searching heart"? Or whatever would cause me to become complacent in my relationship with God?

If at this point, you are thinking that you have already lost having a "searching heart", then you should know you are not alone in that reality! In fact, in Revelation 3 we are told of an entire church of Christians who had lost this "searching heart"! Listen to Jesus' words to them!

In Revelation 3:14-22 He says, "I know what you do, that you are not hot or cold But you say, 'I am rich, and I have become wealthy and do not need anything.' But you do not know that you are really miserable, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked. . . . (But) here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If you (can) hear my voice and open the door, I will come into you, and dine with you, and you will dine with me."

Now what caused these Christians to lose their "searching hearts"? We are given that answer in verse 15, where Jesus tells them, "But you say, 'I am rich, and I have become wealthy and do not need anything.'" Did you catch it? Jesus has just told them, and us, that all of the emotional needs that most of us have come to believe *money* can provide is a deception. And that's because wealth and all it can buy will never be able to fill the emotional emptiness inside of any person. But to think otherwise is to allow money to become a "God substitute" in our lives! This is exactly what the Laodicean Christians had done!

Now don't misunderstand me, there is nothing wrong with you having money, or buying things . . . but your motivation behind what you do with money cannot be an effort to somehow fill the empty void of emotional needs inside of your heart.

Money is not the only thing that we tend to begin to expect to meet our emotional needs other than God. For many of us it is the excessive emotional expectations that we have placed upon a husband or wife, a parent, our children, or our friends. Or maybe the emotional needs that we have come to believe our careers and jobs, and the things we own will provide.

But whenever we begin to expect *ANYTHING* to fill this empty "God void" within our lives, then we must accept whatever that is - it has now become a "God substitute" to us. . . . The thing that we most often are expecting to meet the majority of our emotional needs - other than God!

Now understanding this, ask yourself, "Is there something that is keeping me from having a *searching heart*? And as a result, has now caused me to become complacent in my relationship with God?" . . . For most of us it is the fact that we have begun to place our trust for emotional fulfillment in some "God substitute".

Now this is important. Scripture tells us that "as a person thinks in their heart, so they will become!" Ask yourself these questions. What do you think about most often? What causes you more worry, more depression, more concern than anything else? Have something in mind?

. . . Or what is it that you think will make you really happy? Is there a goal, vision, or dream that permeates your ever-waking thoughts? What comes at the end of the "If only . . ." sentence in your mind? *Now listen to me.*

If there is something that consumes your thoughts more often than your desire to be close to God, than being in love with Him, *when you find what that is . . . you will have also found your "God substitute"!*

Now really catch a hold of what I am about to say. Any source (person, goal, or possession) *ONLY* has the ability to emotionally hurt you . . . to the degree or level that you have begun to expect emotional fulfillment from that source! Think about that. Isn't it true?

If I were to tell you that someone you don't know, in China, really doesn't like you, how would that make you feel? You probably could care less.

On the other hand, if I were to tell you that someone you love, someone you really feel close to doesn't love you, aah . . . **NOW how would you feel?** Are you beginning to see what I mean?

And why is this true for most of us? Because the more you emotionally "need" something from someone . . . the more vulnerable you are now to the possibility that they might hurt you. And again, why is this true? Because most of us have come to associate "need" and "love" together. In other words, the more I love you . . . *then the more I need you.* And vice-versa, the more I need you . . . *the more I feel I love you.*

But the descriptions of "true love" given to us in I Corinthians 13:5 is that it "does not seek it's own (way)". Or in other words, it gives "expecting nothing in return"!

Yet there is only one source that can *always* love you this way! - **GOD!**

A person with a "searching heart" is someone who no longer is deceived by the ability of this world, or others to meet their emotional needs! And, as a result, they now have become desperate to be as close to God as possible! Their heart has released all of its "God substitutes". Released every person in their life from the responsibility to always make them "feel" happy, secure, wanted, needed, cared for and loved. And their heart has also moved away from any thought that implies or thinks that money or possessions, or a goal or career could ever completely fill the empty void of emotional need within their life.

A searching heart is one that knows above all that only God's presence can ever fill the empty void of emotional need within their life each and every day. And now as a result, day after day, minute after minute, inwardly their heart cries out, "No God that's

not enough! I want more of you! In fact, I never want to stop deepening this relationship! Never! Never!"

So what do you do if you find you are struggling with not having a "searching heart"? And as a result, that somehow you have begun to expect some "God substitute" within your life to fill the void created by your unmet emotional needs? What do you do?

First, run to God, with a *desperate dependent heart*, and admit you need Him! And then, ***stay in prayer*** until He -through the Holy Spirit - has given you the power to release all of your "God substitutes".

And if you will ***stay in prayer***, I promise you can trust Him to send the Holy Spirit with the power needed to meet all of your emotional needs! Look to Him! And remember, ***stay in prayer!*** No five-minute list of needs and request to work down this time! Just stay there in His presence! And as you are still before Him, waiting upon Him . . . you will find His touchable and tangible presence begin to fill every empty emotional pain and void within your heart!

If you want to, right now, stop and pray this prayer. "Father I ask you to create in me a new heart. A dependent heart. A heart that is surrendered to you! That is totally lost in love with you! God become my first love again! The first source I look to each moment of every day to fill all of my emotional needs!"

"And Father, I confess that nothing has ever filled the emptiness inside. No person has ever taken away all of the loneliness. And no job or career or the possessions I own have ever permanently made me feel of value."

"Now, I ask You God to become my first love once again, the source I look to fill all of my emotional expectations! Forgive me for the God substitutes that I have expected to meet those needs. Other sources that I have expected to fill the emotional void within me that only your presence can ever fill!"

"And now please help me to release my `God substitutes'. I am dependent upon you Holy Spirit for this help!"

"And finally Father restore within me a `searching heart'. A heart that forever runs to your presence! I ask and believe all of this because of Jesus.

. . . Amen."