

KINDS OF HEARTS GOD IS LOOKING FOR

- We're going to start with a little trivia today for our lesson.
 - What do you think is the largest muscle in your whole body? (Our hearts.)
 - Can anyone tell us what color our hearts are? (A brownish color)
 - Does anyone want to take a guess on when the first cell of the heart begins to beat? (As early as 4 weeks from conception in the womb)
 - Guess how many heartbeats you have a day? (approximately 100,000 a day, that's almost one million times a week)
 - Guess how many miles of blood your heart pumps through all your veins and organs in your body in the course of a day? (approximately 60,000 miles)
 - Are men's and women's hearts the same? (No. God created them different on the inside. An average man's heart weighs 10 ounces and a woman's heart weighs only 8 ounces. Women's hearts make up for their smaller size by beating faster. An average heart rate for a man is 70 beats per minute and a woman's is 78 beats per minute.)
 - Here is a strange fact, did you know that your heart has its own electrical system and as long as your heart continues to receive oxygen, it will continue to beat...even if it's separated from the rest of your body?
 - God made our hearts to bring us to life and to sustain our life.
 - We take good care of our hearts because it is what gets us through life.
 - God made our bodies with hearts. It is formed while we are in the womb. It pumps all on its own because the Father started it when He formed you and I.
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- Our hearts are a gift from the Lord and today we are going to take a look at what makes our hearts truly healthy.
 - We know from science that a happy heart makes a healthier body. Happiness, that is when you are happy and emotionally sound, actually lowers your risk of heart disease.
 - Health experts have scientifically proven that laughter is good medicine for the heart because it releases hormones called endorphins into the body. These endorphins are released within the brain and nervous system and help reduce the physical affects stress and sadness has on our hearts. They actually make our bodies healthier.
 - When we have a good belly laugh, it produces endorphins for our hearts as much as jogging does!
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- All of this is a reminder that God created our hearts knowing exactly what they need.
 - God also says He looks at our hearts. We tend to dress up our outside appearances and sometimes forget to take a good look at what is going on inside our hearts. But that is exactly what God is looking at.
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- Have you heard the saying "Invite Jesus into your heart"? (...)
 - What we are really saying is invite Him into the center of our wellbeing.
 - There's a story of little boy who once heard the pastor talking about "inviting Jesus into your heart". That evening he ran to his mother and said "Mommy, I invited

Jesus into my heart.” She replied, “That’s great Dear, but how do you know He is there?” He placed his hand over his heart and said, “When I put my hand here, I can feel Him walking around!”

-God wants us to give Him our hearts with the simple faith like a child.

-Today we are going to look at verses about our hearts and what God wants from them.

-The first one we are going to talk about is how He wants our whole heart. Not a piece here and there, but our whole heart to trust and believe in Him!

-Imagine if you got married and you decided on your wedding day not to give your whole heart to your mate but kept some pieces for some old boyfriends or girlfriends on the side? What kind of marriage would that be? (...)

-But that is the same when we have a relationship with God. We need to give Him all of our heart and not just pieces here and there.

-Sometimes it is hard to give our whole heart to Him because we take Him and His love for us for granted.

-How do you think we take God and His love for us for granted sometimes? (We expect Him to give us our daily food and don’t thank Him for it, the same with our clothes, homes, families, etc. Sometimes we may go to church and sing but our hearts aren’t really singing to Him but thinking about what we are going to have for lunch that day or our problems we are facing, etc.)

-So today, let’s learn *how* to give God our whole heart by learning what He is looking for when He is looking at our hearts.

-Let’s read our first saying on our Verse Sheet to see what God is looking for in our hearts, it is #1 on our Verse Sheet: (“God is looking for a BELIEVING heart.”)

-Let’s read our verse that goes with this, #2 on our Verse Sheet: (Romans 10:8-10 “But what does it say? ‘*The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,*’ that is, the message concerning faith that we proclaim: If you declare with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ *and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.*”)

-What do you think it means “the word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart”? (The word of faith, that is the gospel of Jesus Christ, is always near us and easily accessible and it is proclaimed through our mouths and in our hearts.)

-As these verses continue, they reconfirm the first part of what we just talked about. What does the end of the verses say about what our hearts should *believe* in? (That Jesus died and rose again to save us from our sins, our salvation.)

-Let’s read together our next verse on our Verse Sheet, #3, to see the warning we are given concerning belief in our hearts. (Hebrews 3:12 “See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.”)

-Another way to say it is “Be careful then, dear brothers and sisters. Make sure that your own hearts are not evil and unbelieving, turning you away from the living God.

-We have to guard our hearts against unbelief in the Lord! The enemy tries to do that through hard situations, having us question God's goodness, but the Lord is reminding us to believe in Him no matter what!

-What are some specific things we can do today that can help us guard our hearts against unbelief in God? (Reading His Word, Praying, counting our blessings He has given us, listening to worship music and biblical messages, praising Him for Who He is, trusting in His promises, etc.)

-The Bible shares with us that God is our Creator. He molds our hearts. And He does that by His love and His Word. His Word is like water to our hearts. It washes over us and encourages us, heals us and nourishes our soul. It teaches us we can believe in Him and His promises. It reveals Who He is to us!

-Let's read our next statement on our Verse Sheet to see what God is looking for in our hearts, #4: ("God is looking for a SOFT heart!")

-What happens to something that is hard, like a hard rubberband? (It's not flexible, it doesn't bend, it's dried out and usually just breaks.)

-God wants our hearts soft and pliable for Him to work, so it doesn't dry out and break in the wrong direction.

-Have you heard the song "Change My Heart Oh God, Make it ever true. Change my heart Oh God, May I be like You"? (...)

-There is a verse in the Bible that this comes from and was written by King David. This is the same man that God called "a man after His own heart".

-Let's read it together, to discover how David went to God, asking for His help, to become this kind of man to God. #5 on our Verse Sheet: (Psalm 51:10 "Create in me a *clean* heart, O God, and renew a *right spirit* within me.")

-What kind of heart did David desire? (Clean)

-Who did he acknowledge would be the only One Who could create this kind of heart in him? (God)

-And what kind of spirit did David ask for? (A right spirit.)

-David recognized that God was the only One Who could give Him the right heart with the right spirit to govern a nation.

-That is the same for us. God is the only One Who can give us the right heart and the right spirit to govern our mouths and attitudes to bring glory to His name.

-If we want to be a man or woman after God's own heart, then we too have to have a soft heart that is willing to yield to God and let Him create a clean heart in us and renew a right spirit in us as well, just like David did.

-Let's read our next statement on our Verse Sheet to see what else God is looking for in our hearts, #6: ("God is looking for a FORGIVING heart!")

-Let's read our two verses that tell us about this, #7: (Ephesians 4:32 and Matthew 6:14-15 "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, *forgiving* one another, as God in Christ forgave you. For if you *forgive* others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also *forgive* you, but if you do not *forgive* others their trespasses, neither will your Father *forgive* your trespasses.") (ESV)

-Is it hard to forgive sometimes? (Yes!)

- Is there anyone you are mad at today? (...)
- Is there anyone you are having a hard time forgiving? (...)
- They have said that unforgiveness is like drinking the poison of bitterness into our souls.
- Who is really hurting the most when we have unforgiveness? (We are.)
- I know this can be hard if you have gone through something really bad, but God promises us that if we will do what He asks us to do, to forgive others, He will heal our hearts in time and give us His peace and joy that isn't dependent on what others do or have done to us. This is real joy and real peace!
- Our greatest example was Jesus Himself. Does anyone remember what He said on the cross for all those who crucified Him? (Luke 23:24 "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.")
- Can you say this for those who have hurt you, just as Christ did? (...) Remember, Christ also offered this to us before we knew Him and still does when we sin.
- It is also important for us to ask for forgiveness from Him when we wrong others.
- We should offer to others what God so freely gave to us.
- A *forgiving* heart is very important to God.

-Let's read our next statement on our Verse Sheet to see what else God is looking for in our hearts, #8: ("God is looking for a MERRY heart!")

-It comes from two verses which are #9 on our Verse Sheet. Let's read it together: (Proverbs 17:22a and Proverbs 15:15b "A *merry* heart is good medicine...but he that is of a *merry* heart has a continual feast.")

-There was a preacher who used to say "You better notify your face that you are saved!"

-When you get saved the fruit of the Spirit is joy! Love, peace and Joy!

-I know you can't walk around all the time with a smile on your face, but sometimes, even when you don't feel like, if you go ahead and force a smile, it actually lifts something up inside of you and can make you feel better.

-Does anyone know the one thing the whole world understands that has no language barrier? (It is a smile! God created a smile to cross language barriers to lift our own hearts and other hearts who may need it even more than you do today.)

-Instead of getting mad at something, just start smiling at someone and see what a difference it will make!

-Having a merry heart truly is medicine for the soul.

-Let's read our next statement on our heart, #10: ("God wants us to have a *PEACEFUL* heart!")

-Who is called the Prince of Peace in the Bible? (Jesus Christ)

-When we know Christ, He gives us His Spirit of Peace.

-Let's read our next verse to see what His Word says about His peace and what we are to do with it, #11 on our Verse Sheet: (Colossians 3:15 "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to *peace*. And be thankful.")

-How do you let peace "rule" in your heart daily? (By prayer, being thankful and trusting in God)

-Our soul represents the heart of our emotions, feelings and personality, and if we let bad attitudes and feelings take control in our thought life, they begin to rule our hearts instead of Christ.

-Let's read our next verse to tell us how we can overcome this, #12 on our Verse Sheet: (Philippians 4:8 "Finally, brethren, whatever *things are true*, whatever things are *honest*, whatever things are *just*, whatever things are *pure*, whatever things are *lovely*, whatever things are of *good report*; if there be any *virtue*, and if there be any *praise*, **THINK** on these things.")

-According to this verse, what are we suppose to THINK on? (Things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous and praises.)

-Where do all these things come from? (God)

-There is a verse, James 1:17 that says "Whatever is good and perfect comes down to us from God our Father, Who created all the lights in the heavens. He never changes or casts a shifting shadow." (NLT)

-God has given us many things that we can dwell on that are good. Can anyone share some with us right now? (...)

-God is giving us a formula in His Word on how to have daily peace in our hearts. Dwelling on His Word and on these things keeps our minds ruled by peace and Him.

-Let's end with the last and most precious heart God is looking for, #13 on our Verse Sheet: ("God is looking for a PURE heart!")

-Let's read our verse that goes with this, #14: (I John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and *purify* us from all unrighteousness.")

-What is this telling us? (When we confess our sins and acknowledge Jesus as our Savior and Lord, God forgives us our sins, cleanses us from all of them and purifies our hearts. Making us right with Him.)

-If we say, "God, I have sinned, I am so sorry, I accept Jesus as my atonement for my sins," He is so faithful in His love for us that He forgives us and purifies us from all of our sin; past, present and future.

-Isn't that comforting to know that God forgives us if we ask Him? (...)

-He not only forgives us but He gives us a pure heart! Our hearts become white as snow in His eyes.

-That is the greatest heart God is looking for, a pure heart, and it is the One He does for us! It is a gift to all the world if they would but ask Him for it. If you haven't, please do so today as we close in prayer, for He loves you beyond measure!

-Let us pray: "Dear Father, we know our hearts are good for nothing when they are without You. We know they are full of sin and need your saving grace through Jesus, Your Son. Lord, we ask for forgiveness for our sins and accept Jesus' death, burial and resurrection as the covering for our sins and give you Lordship in our lives. Create in us a clean heart so we may live lives honoring to Your Holy Name. In Your precious Son's name, Jesus, we pray, Amen."

“KINDS OF HEARTS GOD IS LOOKING FOR” VERSE SHEET

1. “GOD IS LOOKING FOR A *BELIEVING* HEART!”
2. Romans 10:8-10 “But what does it say? ‘*The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,*’ that is, the message concerning faith that we proclaim: If you declare with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ *and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.*”
3. Hebrews 3:12 “See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.”
4. “GOD IS LOOKING FOR A *SOFT* HEART!”
5. Psalm 51:10 “Create in me a *clean* heart, O God, and renew a *right spirit* within me.”
6. “GOD IS LOOKING FOR A *FORGIVING* HEART!”
7. Ephesians 4:32 and Matthew 6:14-15 “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, *forgiving* one another, as God in Christ forgave you. For if you *forgive* others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also *forgive* you, but if you do not *forgive* others their trespasses, neither will your Father *forgive* your trespasses.”
8. “GOD IS LOOKING FOR A *MERRY* HEART!”
9. Proverbs 17:22a and Proverbs 15:15b “A *merry* heart is good medicine...but he that is of a *merry* heart has a continual feast.”
10. “GOD WANTS US TO HAVE A *PEACEFUL* HEART!”
11. Colossians 3:15 “*Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,* since as members of one body you were called to *peace*. And be thankful.”
12. Philippians 4:8 “Finally, brethren, whatever *things are true*, whatever things are *honest*, whatever things are *just*, whatever things are *pure*, whatever things are *lovely*, whatever things are of *good report*; if there be any *virtue*, and if there be any *praise*, *THINK* on these things.”
13. “GOD IS LOOKING FOR A *PURE* HEART!”
14. I John 1:9 “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and *purify* us from all unrighteousness.”