



Lesson Six

“A Leader in the Making – Conditions of the Heart”

Objective: *To teach and equip leaders with a heart that pleases God.*

I. It's a Matter of the Heart

a. One of the most important things to God is the _____ of a leader, what the Bible actually calls the hidden person of the heart.

1 Peter 3:3-4 NKJV *Do not let your adornment be merely outward — arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel — 4 rather let it be the **hidden person of the heart**, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God*

I believe God is more concerned about our hearts than He is about our performance because if our heart is right, our performance will eventually catch up with that. If we go around doing the right things with a wrong heart, what we do won't have any meaning to God. (**1 Corinthians 13:1-8; Matthew 6:1-6**)

2 Chron 25:1-2 NKJV *Amaziah was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem... 2 And **he did what was right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a loyal heart.***

One of the most life transforming things we can experience in leadership is when God shows us something about our inner life, the hidden person of our hearts. What goes on in us? What kind of heart do we have? What are we really like inside? What is our thought life like? What kind of attitude do we have? What goes on behind closed doors? If we want to be great leaders, “giant killers” in our generation, we have to look deeper into those things that nobody knows about but God and us.

b. Man looks at the outward appearance, but _____ looks at the heart.

1 Sam 16:7 NKJV *But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."*

c. God warns us to keep and _____ our hearts above all else that we guard because it determines the course of our lives.

Prov 4:23 NKJV *Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.*

NLT *Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.*

It's important as leaders to keep our hearts because often others are looking to us to see how to respond in difficult situations. When the disciples were in a ship crossing the Sea of Galilee, the disciples became fearful and upset, but Jesus calmly rebuked the storm speaking peace to it and it calmed down. **Jesus was able to stay cool and speak peace to the storm because He did not allow the storm to get on the inside of Him.** He kept and guarded His heart against fear and doubt.

The heart attitude is the major issue of a leader. It is not the lack of ability or potential that prevents most people from making progress and enjoying fulfillment in life; I believe it's wrong heart attitudes. That's why we are going to look at them first.

II. Negative Conditions of the Heart

1. An _____ heart.

Gen 6:5-8 MSG *God saw that human evil (wickedness) was out of control. People thought evil, imagined evil — evil, evil, evil from morning to night. 6 God was sorry that he had made the human race in the first place; it broke his heart. 7 God said, "I'll get rid of my ruined creation, make a clean sweep: people, animals, snakes and bugs, birds — the works. I'm sorry I made them." 8 But Noah was different. God liked what he saw **in** Noah.*

There are three things about people that displeased God ... wickedness, evil thinking and evil imaginations. The lesson we take from this story is that many people today are being destroyed because their hearts are wrong. We have to be careful with our thoughts and imaginations because they become the content of our hearts. Our hearts are like a computer... garbage in, garbage out. We cannot take in garbage and produce glory. There was something different about Noah that pleased God. He pleased God with his thoughts, imaginations and actions, thereby escaping destruction.

- **We can keep our hearts pure by carefully guarding what we _____ into our minds through our eye and ear gates and by _____ our thoughts and imaginations.**

2. A _____ heart

Hebrews 3:7-8 AMP *Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: Today, if you will hear His voice, ⁸ **Do not harden your hearts**, as [happened] in the rebellion [of Israel] and their provocation and embitterment [of Me] in the day of **testing** in the wilderness...*

The children of Israel hardened their hearts towards God and could not position themselves to receive from God in that condition. A hard heart causes rebellion. Notice that it says they hardened their hearts, became bitter and rebelled against God in the "**day of testing?**" People who have been abused or hurt usually develop a hardness about them as a defense mechanism. They don't allow people or God to touch them. We can develop a hard heart when we allow offense to penetrate our hearts. Maybe you feel like you should be farther along or should have been promoted before

someone else was... it can cause you to harden your heart towards God which prevents God from blessing you. A person with a hard heart usually has difficulty showing people mercy when they fail. They tend to be demanding and legalistic. They have a hard time submitting to leadership or anyone for that matter.

- **Jesus wants to restore your soul (Psalm 23). He wants to take out the heart of stone and give you a new heart.(Ezekiel 36:26) This requires that we submit our hearts to Him and allow Him to heal us.**

3. An _____ heart

Hebrews 3:12 AMP *[Therefore beware] brethren, take care, lest there be in any one of you a **wicked, unbelieving heart** [which refuses to cleave to, trust in, and rely on Him], leading you to turn away and desert or stand aloof from the living God.*

We call ourselves believers and followers of Christ, but the truth is, there are a lot of “unbelieving believers.” Thomas, the disciple of Jesus, had an unbelieving heart. He was double minded. He set the criteria for his belief to involve sense realm evidence. In other words, if he could not see, feel, hear, taste or touch it... he would not believe. When he heard about Jesus’ resurrection, he said, “Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe. He “willed” himself to only believe if he saw. Faith is believing without seeing. (Hebrews 11:1)

John 20:27 NKJV *Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. **Do not be unbelieving, but believing.**"*

- **Choose to set your will to believe at a non-sense realm level. Believe that God’s word is more true than what you see or feel in the natural realm. As a child of God, I have the right to SET my heart to believe.**

John 14:28 NKJV *Let not your heart be troubled, **neither let it be afraid.***

4. A _____ heart

Deut 11:16-17 NKJV *Take heed to yourselves, lest **your heart be deceived**, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them, 17 lest the Lord's anger be aroused against you, and He shut up the heavens so that there be no rain, and the land yield no produce, and you perish quickly from the good land which the Lord is giving you.*

There are many things that become a god to us. Even a ministry can become a god in our lives. Having a ministry and seeing it grow can become more important to us than God, Himself. We must never forget that it is the Lord who places ministry in our hearts. He is the one who calls us and gives us the desire to serve Him. HE must always maintain the first and most prominent place in our lives. We can get so busy working for God that we don’t have time for God. If we put the thing He gives us to do before Him, it

offends Him and as we see in the same scripture, a deceived heart keeps us from receiving the blessings of God. In the very next passage of Scripture God gives us the answer to a deceived heart. If we are living in His word (man shall not live by bread alone), deception cannot grip our hearts!

- **Deut 11:18-21** MSG *Place these words on your hearts. Get them deep inside you. Tie them on your hands and foreheads as a reminder. 19 Teach them to your children. Talk about them wherever you are, sitting at home or walking in the street; talk about them from the time you get up in the morning until you fall into bed at night. 20 Inscribe them on the doorposts and gates of your cities 21 so that you'll live a long time, and your children with you, on the soil that God promised to give your ancestors for as long as there is a sky over the Earth.*

John 15:

5. A _____ heart

Ps 101:5 NKJV *The one who has a haughty look and a proud heart, him I will not endure.*

The problem with a person who has a problem with pride, is that it is very difficult for them to admit they have a problem with pride or anything for that matter. Many people have enormous amounts of potential but difficulty being used by God because they will not humble themselves. Serving in the Kingdom of God means submitting to one another.

1 Peter 5:5 NKJV *Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you **be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."***

How can you tell if you have a problem with pride? Examine yourself:

- Do I have an opinion about everything that I believe is more right than others?
- Do I feel the need to persuade others to change to my point of view?
- Am I judgmental of others?
- Can I be corrected without getting an attitude or mumbling under my breath?
- Do I rebel against authority?
- Do I enjoy taking the credit and glory for myself even when others helped?
- Do I say "I" too often?
- Do I listen carefully to others?
- Am I always... "Me first?"

If you answered yes to any of these questions or maybe others who love, live with or work with you have told you any of the above... God may be dealing with you on pride. It's a very simple fix! **Flip the script!**

- **1 Peter 5:6** NKJV *Therefore **humble yourselves** under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time...*