

Growth Group Discussion Questions—March 7-13

1. Let's keep the Bible at the center of our growth group experience. Since we're talking about the heart today, let's tune our hearts to God by reading Prov. 4 out loud. Break it up into the following four sections: 4:1-7; 4:8-14; 4:15-20; 4:21-27. Then have a volunteer invite Jesus, the Great Physician, to make a house call at your growth group.

2. Have you ever guarded something valuable? What was it? How'd you do it?

First follow-up: Speaking of protecting valuables, Dave said that since our heart (i.e., the inner core of our being and the deepest part of our soul) is the most precious thing we own, we'd better do what with it? Read Prov. 4:23.

Read 1 John 2:16. What are the three enemies mentioned in this passage that attack the hearts of people trying to live faithfully for Jesus?

(1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____.

Second follow-up: Have you noticed that these enemies attack people's hearts differently based on their time of life? Which enemy of the three is most likely to attack someone at your stage of life?

Third follow-up: Pick one of these three heart-seeking enemies discussed above. Share something practical that you've learned about "heart defense."

3. We're all going to give in to sin many times in life (James 3:2). The question is whether we confess it or cover it up. The writer of Ps. 32 talks in glowing terms about coming clean with God by telling Him when we've blown it. Read Ps. 32:3-4 and discuss what happens to the psalmist when he tries to hide his sin?

Finally, the psalmist breaks down and bares his soul to God. Read Ps. 32:5. How and why does this situation end happily for the psalmist? What's the important life lesson for us?

4. Dave painted a Biblical portrait of a believer with a true heart for God. He or she loves the Bible, loves to pray, loves to worship, and loves people. However, just striving for this kind of heart doesn't work. Developing a true heart for God requires letting God strengthen the new core that He gave us at the moment of salvation. Read Ez. 36:26. What spiritual exercises should we practice regularly in order to cultivate a faithful, brave heart?

I. A Heart Check-up With The Great Physician.

Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.

Proverbs 4:23

A. The Importance Of Guarding Your Heart.

Heart = more than just your emotions or feelings, the inner core of your being and the deepest part of your soul_____.

Guard = to watch over, to keep safe and to safeguard with vigilance and diligence_____.

Wellspring = source of water that comes from a spring_____.

B. What The Great Physician Will Do During Your Heart Exam.

1. God the Great Physician will evaluate your heart_____.

All a man's ways seem right to him, but the LORD weighs the heart.

Proverbs 21:2

The Lord weighs the heart = to evaluate it, to measure it and test it to make sure it is working the way it is supposed to_____.

2. God the Great Physician will search your heart_____.

Search me, O God, and know my heart . . .

Psalms 139:23

Search = explore_____

3. God the Great Physician will *discover the secrets of your heart*_____.

If we had forgotten the name of our God or spread out our hands to a foreign god, would not God have discovered it, since he knows the secrets of the heart?

Psalms 44:20-21

"Do you really think anyone can hide himself where I cannot see him?" the LORD asks. "Do you not know that I am everywhere?" the LORD asks.

Jeremiah 23:24 NET

II. One day God Will Judge Our Hearts And Give His Report On What He Found.

But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath.

Romans 2:5

The Top Ten Heart Conditions That Can Lead To Heart Failure.

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|-------------------------|------------------|
| 1. A Stubborn Heart | (Jeremiah 5:23) |
| 2. A Rebellious Heart | (Jeremiah 5:23) |
| 3. A Cold Heart | (2 Samuel 12:6) |
| 4. An Evil Heart | (Proverbs 26:23) |
| 5. A Heart of Stone | (Ezekiel 36:26) |
| 6. A Deceitful Heart | (Proverbs 12:20) |
| 7. An Unrepentant Heart | (Romans 2:5) |
| 8. A Sinful Heart | (Psalm 66:18) |
| 9. A Hard Heart | (Mark 3:5) |
| 10. A Proud Heart | (Ezekiel 28:2) |

III. A True Heart For God Is Demonstrated In Five Ways.

A. A Person With A True Heart For God *loves the bible*_____.

For I delight in your commands because I love them.

Psalms 119:47

B. A Person With A True Heart For God *loves to do what God wants*.

"You have acted foolishly," Samuel said, "You have not kept the command the LORD your God gave you; if you had, he would have established your kingdom over Israel for all time. But now your kingdom will not endure; the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people . . ."

1 Samuel 13:13-14

After removing Saul, he made David their king. He testified concerning him: 'I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.'

Acts 13:22

"If you love me, you will obey my commands."

John 14:15

C. A Person With A True Heart For God *loves to pray*_____.

I love the LORD, for he heard my voice; he heard my cry for mercy. Because he turned his ear to me, I will call on him as long as I live.

Psalms 116:1-2

D. A Person With A True Heart For God *loves to worship*_____.

I will sing to the LORD all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.

Psalms 104:33

E. A Person With A True Heart For God *loves people*_____.

After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself.

1 Samuel 18:1

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

Ezekiel 36:26