

A photograph of a man and a woman sitting on a wooden bench. The man, on the left, is wearing a light blue button-down shirt and jeans. The woman, on the right, is wearing a bright green ribbed sweater and blue jeans. They are both looking down at their hands, which are clasped together in the center. Behind them is a large, cylindrical lamp with a beige shade. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

THE HEART OF PAUL

STUDIES DESIGNED TO PROMOTE DISCUSSION

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DISCUSSING
THE WORD
SERIES

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THE BIBLE HEART

We use a number of phrases in the English language that make reference to the heart: "You've gotta' have heart," "recite by heart," "a heartless individual," "heartsick," "heartache," "a heart to heart." All of these are accurate phrases, but they do not all discuss the same aspect of our being. The Bible also refers to different aspects of our being by using the word "heart." We are about to embark on a study of the heart of Paul and we need to understand exactly what is meant by "heart."

Chambers of the Heart

The Bible heart is comprised of four chambers which work together to make us who we are. The *emotions* are one chamber of the heart. Webster defines this as a "strong feeling." The man who "has no heart" has no emotions about the subject. So it is that we read about two men on the road to Emmaus who spoke with Christ and said of Him, "Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was explaining the Scriptures to us?" (Luke 24:32). The Bible attributes many different emotions to the heart: love (1 Tim. 1:5; 1 Pet. 1:22), joy (Is. 65:14; John 16:22), pain (John 16:6), and hatred (Lev. 19:17). The Bible clearly indicates that emotions are part of our heart and play an important part in our obedience to God, but emotions are not the only means by which we gauge religious conviction. Feeling right is not the same as being right!

The *will* is a second chamber of the heart. Webster defines this as "determination." We sometimes say of a man, "his heart is not in it." 1 Corinthians 7:37 is in the context of Paul's explanations about marriage and why a father should keep his daughter from marrying. But in this context, please notice the use of the word "heart." "He who stands firm in his heart, being under no constraint, but has authority over his own will, and decided in his heart, to keep his virgin daughter, he will do well." We must see that the heart is the seat of decisions. We also know from Scripture that the heart purposes (2 Cor. 9:7), is stubborn (Ps. 81:12), and can prompt obedience (Rom. 6:17-18). A determination to do right is a function of the heart, but it is not all that is involved in religious conviction. If it were, then sincerity would be the deciding factor of salvation and that simply is not supported from Scripture.

The *intellect* is a third chamber of the heart. Webster defines this as "the ability

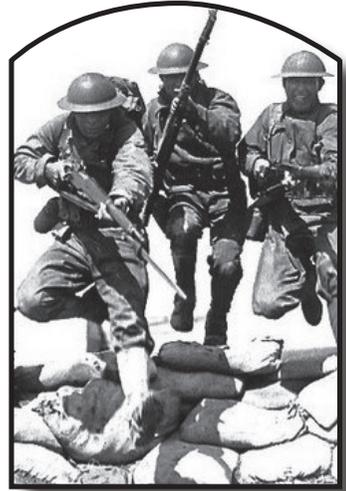
to reason or understand." It is the reservoir of knowledge. Intelligence is based on what one has learned and knows. "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). Our knowledge is learned from God's word and that is the basis of our intelligence. The intellect is also pointed out in Scripture as reasoning (Mark 2:8), pondering (Luke 2:19), belief (Rom. 10:9-10), thinking (Matt. 9:4), and understanding (Matt. 13:15). The intellect must be seen as part of the Bible heart. With logic, we contemplate the things God has revealed to us regarding salvation. With purpose of mind, we rationalize and logically think through what He has commanded of us. We make a determination of our *will* based on the *intelligence* that we have gleaned as to whether or not we are right in God's sight. But, intelligence and logical thinking are not the only aspects of the Bible heart that should be considered. Otherwise, we end up like the Pharisees who observed the Law but had no love for God in what they did. The intellect allows us to worship God in truth, but "God is a spirit" and must be worshiped in "spirit and in truth" (John 4:24).

The fourth chamber of the Bible heart is the *conscience*. Webster defines this as "an awareness of right and wrong with a compulsion to do right." This is the faculty of our minds that tells us if we have done right or wrong. It is understood that what we think is right and wrong can be trained or learned; therefore, we cannot depend on our *conscience* as the only thing on which the *will* operates. *Intelligence* must be included. We are told in Scripture that our hearts can be troubled (John 14:1), condemn us (1 John 3:21), and prick us (Acts 2:36-37). So we must understand that the conscience is a vital part of the Bible heart, but it alone should not be the basis for our religious conviction. Our hearts can be clean, but they can be wrong. The Pharisees in 1 Timothy 4:2 are said to have had their "conscience seared with a hot iron" so that they were not functioning as they should (see also Tit. 1:5 and 1 Cor. 8:7). These passages demonstrate that our conscience cannot be the only guide, though some are allowing that to be the case in their lives.

All four aspects of our heart must be included in any discussion of the heart: the *emotions*, the *will*, the *intellect*, and the *conscience*. All of these will be examined in detail in this study of Paul's heart. It is hoped that through this study, we can learn better what our heart should be like so that we can serve God with all our heart, mind, and soul.

Lesson 11

A STRONG HEART



We are impressed with the faith of Paul. When situations presented themselves in his life where most men would have backed away, Paul demonstrates a strength of heart to which we relate with great difficulty. No matter what his circumstances, his zeal and confidence remained with him to continue preaching to others. When he was in prison, he wrote Timothy to encourage him and said, "For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline. Do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, or of me His prisoner but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God" (2 Tim. 1:7-8). Twice in this passage, he writes of the power of God, which is tells where he placed his confidence.

1. Paul told the Philippians, "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13).
 - A. Please cite two or three things Paul was able to do because of his confidence in God.

 - B. What kind of things are we able to do?

2. Paul has remarked several times about the strength he has in God.
 - A. Read Ephesians 6:10. How can we be strong in the Lord? What is meant?

 - B. Read 2 Timothy 4:16-18. In what way did God strengthen him?

 - C. Read 2 Corinthians 3:1-12. What words or phrases are used to indicate this strength in God?

 - D. Read 2 Corinthians 5:6-8. What caused the courage he had?

3. Paul gets more specific in the following passages. For each reference describe why we are able to be strong through Christ.
 - A. 2 Timothy 2:1

 - B. 2 Timothy 1:12

 - C. 2 Corinthians 4:1-2

 - D. 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

4. Paul taught that we could and should have this same strength of heart. Read Colossians 1:10-11 and Romans 8:31. Is this strength of heart something only the mature in Christ are able to possess? Why or why not?

5. As a man, we know Paul was discouraged by events in his life, but he never lost his "courage" or strength of faith. What causes us to not have the strength of faith, courage, and zeal that we should?

6. From 2 Corinthians 4:16-18, what do we need to do in order not to lose heart? How is this accomplished?

As believers we should have the same strength of faith as Paul because we have also become the children of God. Confidence and zeal are a result of the real hope we have in Christ Jesus. We can say with Paul, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Nothing can separate us from the love of God (Rom. 8:35-39), and that simple fact generates great assurance and strength to our faith.