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Episode 206 - The Heart of Hypocrisy
How can the heart protect against hypocrisy?
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Jerry Green:

Welcome, friends, to this March 8th season of Faith Made Simple with our pastor and teacher, Todd Smith. I'm Jerry Greene, and for the past seven seasons, I've had the privilege of serving as host of the podcast, and we're so grateful the Lord has afforded us the opportunity to meet with you each week and share his infallible word. Our teacher, Pastor Todd, has a passion for explaining Scripture because, as we've said all along. Understanding and obeying God's Word is key in the Christian's life. James 1:25 tells us that God blesses those who are obedient. So let's listen now as Todd shares his thoughts for today.

Todd Smith:

Proverbs 27:19 says, as in water, face reflects, face of the heart of man reflects the man. We're talking about the heart. And today on this podcast, I want you to do something crazy. And that is, let's do some heart surgery. Let's do some heart surgery. There's a doctor by the name of Doctor Evan O'Neill Kane.

He was the chief surgeon at Kane Summit Hospital in New York City. He was 60 years old and had been practicing surgery for some 37 years. He was especially interested in anesthetics. You see, he had practice back in the early part of the 20th century, when the only kind of anesthetic that was used was general in nature.

And general anesthetics had its own complications. So patients were sometimes either left paralyzed and on occasions even died from the anesthetic. And Doctor Kane wanted to somehow prove his point by finding a guinea pig and trying to use a local anesthetic for the first time. Finally, he discovered a person who was willing to help him with his experiment.

The patient needed his appendix removed, so he was scheduled for surgery. It was on February 15th, 1921, a Tuesday morning, that the patient was prepped and rolled into the operating room. And Doctor Kane had performed over 4,000 appendectomies and techniques. And so he was very good at what he was going to do. Doctor Kane performed the initial cut.

He clamped the blood vessels on the way in while he located the appendix, and then he skillfully removed it, as he had done so many times before. Interestingly enough, through it all, the patient experienced minor pain, recuperated quickly and was released from the hospital two days later. Doctor Kane had proved his point.

It was a milestone in medical history that a person could be operated on under local anesthetic while still awake. Oh, by the way, did I tell you that the surgeon and the patient were one and the same? Doctor Kane actually operated on himself. In 1932, he performed an even more risky self-operation of repairing his hernia at the age of 70.

In the next few minutes here on this podcast, I want us to go under the knife, go under the anesthetic, and perform some heart surgery on ourselves, because we're in this chapter of Matthew 15 where Jesus is confronting the Pharisees about heart issues. He basically tells them that they are hypocrites from their heart. In the day of Jesus, in the day of Isaiah, hypocrisy is a disease of the heart.

In Matthew 15 verse seven he says to the Pharisees, "You hypocrites." Did Isaiah prophesy of you when he said, "This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me"? In other words, you have a major heart problem. So much so that you've become a hypocrite. On the outside you honor me with your lips. You give me lip service. But your heart is infested and infected with sin.

You may end up doing the right thing, but you're doing it with the wrong motives. My wife's love language is mocha Frappuccinos. I can love her by buying her a mocha Frappuccino. I can also manipulate her by buying her a mocha Frappuccino. The difference comes down to my heart. The same with the Lord—the difference comes down to our heart and why we do what we do. Do we honor the Lord with our lips, or is our heart pulsating and beating with the things of the Lord?

He goes on in verse ten and calls the people to him and says, "I want you to hear this and understand this." Jesus says, "It is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth; this defiles a person." The disciples came and said to him, "Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?" He answered, "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up."

Take note. Then he says in verse 14, "Let them alone. They are blind guides, and the blind lead the blind; both will fall into a pit." He says these people's hearts are so far from me that they're blind. There's a blind leading the blind, and that leads to grave danger. That's why Proverbs 4:23 says we have to guard our hearts. If we don't guard our heart, we can lead ourselves into a pit. We can come into a very dark cul-de-sac because we've listened to the wrong things of our heart.

Our heart is desperately wicked and sick. This heart issue can produce blindness in our life, and we become so blind that we can actually become hypocrites—saying one thing and doing another. We often come into a relationship with Jesus based on neediness but try to live the Christian life based on our strengths. We must instead live out of the strength Christ gives. Take your heart and attune it to the Word of God by the Spirit of God so that you live for God. John 15:5 tells us that apart from Christ we can do nothing.

When we live apart from Christ, we live with a broken heart, a diseased heart, and that disease can lead to blindness and then to sin. It all comes back to guarding our heart—

checking our heart not just for what we do but for the motives behind why we do it. Ask yourself today, why am I doing what I'm doing? Let the Lord Jesus Christ check your heart.

Jerry Green:

Thanks, Todd. Before we go to a couple of questions, let me take a moment and remind our friends that Faith Made Simple is a free ministry, and you can participate with us by subscribing and sharing on social media. It also helps if you leave a comment and a rating. Well, Todd, this whole month has just been very convicting.

If our heart is desperately wicked, like you said, how can the heart protect us against hypocrisy?

Todd Smith:

I think it comes down to training the heart and learning to check motives. Are we doing something for show, or are we doing something out of conviction? I'm guilty many times of doing the right thing for the wrong reason—maybe to manipulate. We must be brutally honest with ourselves: do the right thing, and then check the motive. Those two checkpoints help reveal where your heart is at.

Jerry Green:

And because Scripture says our hearts are deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, it's easy to deceive ourselves, isn't it?

Todd Smith:

It is. That's the scary part—when checking your heart, you can deceive yourself. We're often the greatest deceivers in our own lives. We have to double- and triple-check. We'll talk in a few weeks on the podcast about practical ways to guard and check our heart. For now, it's about brutal honesty with yourself.

Jerry Green:

That's tough to do. And that, my friend, brings us to the end of this episode of season eight. Lord willing, we'll be back next week with another podcast. And of course, we wouldn't sign off without inviting you to visit us at Crossroads Community Church in Valencia, California, where God's Word is taught verse by verse. If you would like more information about the podcast or the church, visit our website at Faith Made Simple Dot net. So, on behalf of Todd and the team here at Faith Made Simple, we look forward to our next visit. Until then, live blessed by being a doer of God's Word.