

What Can Change a Heart?

Christianity involves a change of heart. While we understand the importance of keeping our heart pure, sometimes we wonder how we can change the hearts of others. What does the Bible say about the human heart? If you're looking for a quick fix when it comes to changing a heart, you may find that things appear irreversible after awhile of trying. Scripture teaches that unchangeable things can be changed when God gets involved.

I. God Calls on us to Surrender our Heart

- A. Gentiles Contrasted to Christians - Ephesians 4.18-24
 1. 4:18 — Many Gentiles refused God because of the **hardness** of their hearts.
 2. 4:19 — They *became callous*....
- B. What does the gospel teach?
 1. 4.22 — **Take off** your former way of life ... as you would a soiled garment.
 2. 4.23 — *Be renewed in the spirit of your minds ...*
 3. 4.24 — **Put on** the new self ... “to be wrapped in a covering”...
 4. 4.24b — You are being **created** according to God's likeness .. in righteousness and purity of the truth.
- C. The imperative in 4.24 is conform your heart to your new identity.
- D. Proverbs 4.23 — **guard** your heart above all else.

II. Three Things That Prevent Us From Changing Our Heart

- A. Defending weaknesses/faults. *That's just the way I am.*
 1. 2 Corinthians 10:5 — **every** thought captive to obey Christ.
- B. Justifying problems
 1. “They did this to me.” Play the blame game.
 2. 2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14.12 - each one of us accountable.
- C. Ignoring problems
 1. If we won't confess — if we won't admit a problem — no chance of change.
 2. 1 John 1:8-10 — no confession — no forgiveness.
 3. 3 John 9 — Diotrephes: NASB — *does not accept what we say.*

III. Six Things That Can Change a Heart

- A. Courage — 2 Corinthians 13:5 — Will I have the courage necessary for self-evaluation?
- B. Humility — Like David: Psalm 51.10: *create a **clean heart** for me and renew a steadfast spirit within me*
- C. A Cleansing of Heart — an ongoing process. 1 Peter 2:2 - **desire** for the word.
- D. Prayer & Meditation — Philippians 4:8-9 — doesn't always have to be the Bible.
- E. Give of yourself — Luke 6.35-36 — *Love your enemies. **Do what is good.** Lend, expecting nothing in return.*
- F. Continually guard your heart — Mark 14.38 — *The spirit is willing, but the flesh is **weak.***

IV. Conclusion

- A. How is your heart? Are you allowing God to work.
- B. If religion is a sore spot in your life, it is a sign that something is wrong. Don't ignore it!