

**Heart Check: The Revealing Questions of Jesus***"What do you seek?"*

John 1:38

**"What do you seek?" = "What's your \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_?"****1 Corinthians 4:5***Judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.***Pure motives are God's \_\_\_\_\_.****1 Samuel 16:7** *Yahweh does not look at what man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance; but Yahweh looks at the heart.***Proverbs 17:3** *The crucible is for silver and the furnace for gold, but the Yahweh tests the heart.***Jeremiah 20:12** *O Yahweh Almighty, you who examine the righteous and probe the heart and mind...***Jeremiah 17:10** *I, Yahweh, search the heart and examine the mind, to reward a man according to his conduct, according to what his deeds deserve.***Pure motives should be our \_\_\_\_\_.****1 Chronicles 28:9** *Acknowledge the God of your father, and serve him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for Yahweh searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts.***Matthew 5:8** *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.***Pure motives are essential to \_\_\_\_\_.****James 4:3** *When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.***Pure motives are essential to \_\_\_\_\_.****1 Thessalonians 2:3-4** *The appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts.***The Difficulty of Looking Inside****C.S. Lewis** *Humans are very seldom either totally sincere or totally hypocritical. Their moods change, their motives are mixed, and they are often themselves quite mistaken as to what their motives are. (Letters to an American Lady, p. 97)***Proverbs 20:5** *The purposes of a man's heart are deep waters.***Proverbs 16:2** *All a man's ways seem innocent to him, but motives are weighed by Yahweh.***Psalms 19:12** *Who can discern his errors? God forgive my hidden faults.***Jeremiah 17:9** *The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?*

God's Word reveals that...

...sin is more than wrong \_\_\_\_\_. First and foremost, it's a matter of the \_\_\_\_\_.

...to understand sin, we must look carefully at the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ behind our behavior.

...much of why we do (our motives) what we do is \_\_\_\_\_.

...the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ work of God's Spirit is necessary, if we are to understand the depth of our sinfulness.

**Proverbs 20:5** *The purposes of a man's heart are deep waters, but a man of understanding draws them out.***Psalms 26:2** *Test me, O Yahweh, and try me, examine my heart and my mind.***Proverbs 4:23** *Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.***Psalms 139:23-24** *Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

## The Dangers of Not Looking Inside

Jesus' command "to deny self" has often been misunderstood to mean that reflection about oneself is \_\_\_\_\_, that an introspective focus on self is \_\_\_\_\_. This sort of thinking is wrong on at least four counts:

1. It blatantly contradicts \_\_\_\_\_.
2. It promotes \_\_\_\_\_.
3. It contributes to the idea that the solution to a problem is to go around it, not \_\_\_\_\_ it.
4. God has given us the ability to discern our \_\_\_\_\_.

**Proverbs 20:27** *The lamp of the Yahweh searches the spirit of a man; it searches out his inmost being.*

**Psalm 51:6** *Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place.*

Although our hearts are deceitful and naturally unknowable, God sees everything clearly, and he grants to his people whatever knowledge we should have about our motives through:

- **His \_\_\_\_\_:** **Hebrews 4:12-13** *The word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*
- **His \_\_\_\_\_:** **Jeremiah 17:10** *I, Yahweh, search the heart and examine the mind. Psalm 25:8-9* *Yahweh is good and upright; he instructs sinners in his ways. He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way. John 16:13* *When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth. Galatians 5:16* *Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.*
- **His \_\_\_\_\_:** **Hebrews 3:13** *But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. Proverbs 20:5* *The purposes of a man's heart are deep waters, but a man of understanding draws them out.*
- **His \_\_\_\_\_:** **Ephesians 4:22-24** *As the truth is in Jesus, put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. (our strongest longings vs. our deepest longings)*

## The Dangers of Excessive Introspection

Introspection can become a means of \_\_\_\_\_ rather than \_\_\_\_\_ responsibility.

A deep look inside can \_\_\_\_\_ our sense of personal sin and \_\_\_\_\_ our deceptive tendencies.

To avoid this trap, we must remember that the essence of holiness is \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_, a worshipful love for God and a love for others that motivates sacrificial care for them. Godly self-examination has an \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ look.

## Hidden Motives and Compulsive Behavior

In dozens of areas of life we can experience ourselves not as free, but as \_\_\_\_\_.

The loss of \_\_\_\_\_ choice does not mean loss of \_\_\_\_\_ choice.

The key to dealing with the problem of loss of felt choice is the recognition that every action has a \_\_\_\_\_. Beneath every behavior there is a goal/motive toward which the behavior is moving. Both the behavior and the goal are chosen.

Behavior will feel like a choice to the degree that the \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ of the behavior is recognized. Behavior in pursuit of an \_\_\_\_\_ goal does not feel like a choice.

By drawing out the purpose of our heart as we invite God to search us (**Psalm 139:23-24**), and by actively opening ourselves up to having deceitfulness exposed by God's Word (**Hebrews 4:12-13**) and Christian friends (**Hebrews 3:13**), and by praying for the Holy Spirit to enlighten our new heart (**Ephesians 1:17-18**), teaching us to follow its deepest longings (**Ephesians 4:22-24**) as we keep in step with the Spirit (**Galatians 5:16**), we will eventually come to a profoundly convicting awareness of our commitment to \_\_\_\_\_.

Restoring the feeling of \_\_\_\_\_ depends on exposing the fundamental \_\_\_\_\_ in our hearts.

## Heart Check: *The Revealing Questions of Jesus*

"What do you seek?"

John 1:38

"What do you seek?" = "What's your purpose / motive?"

### 1 Corinthians 4:5

*Judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.*

#### Pure motives are God's chief concern.

**1 Samuel 16:7** *Yahweh does not look at what man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance; but Yahweh looks at the heart.*

**Proverbs 17:3** *The crucible is for silver and the furnace for gold, but the Yahweh tests the heart.*

**Jeremiah 20:12** *O Yahweh Almighty, you who examine the righteous and probe the heart and mind...*

**Jeremiah 17:10** *I, Yahweh, search the heart and examine the mind, to reward a man according to his conduct, according to what his deeds deserve.*

#### Pure motives should be our top priority.

**1 Chronicles 28:9** *Acknowledge the God of your father, and serve him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for Yahweh searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts.*

**Matthew 5:8** *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.*

#### Pure motives are essential to answered prayer.

**James 4:3** *When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.*

#### Pure motives are essential to Christian leadership.

**1 Thessalonians 2:3-4** *The appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts.*

### The Difficulty of Looking Inside

**C.S. Lewis** *Humans are very seldom either totally sincere or totally hypocritical. Their moods change, their motives are mixed, and they are often themselves quite mistaken as to what their motives are. (Letters to an American Lady, p. 97)*

**Proverbs 20:5** *The purposes of a man's heart are deep waters.*

**Proverbs 16:2** *All a man's ways seem innocent to him, but motives are weighed by Yahweh.*

**Psalms 19:12** *Who can discern his errors? God forgive my hidden faults.*

**Jeremiah 17:9** *The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?*

God's Word reveals that...

...sin is more than wrong behavior. First and foremost, it's a matter of the heart.

...to understand sin, we must look carefully at the beliefs and motives behind our behavior.

...much of why we do (our motives) what we do is unconscious.

...the enlightening and renewing work of the Holy Spirit is necessary, if we are to understand the depth of our sinfulness.

**Proverbs 20:5** *The purposes of a man's heart are deep waters, but a man of understanding draws them out.*

**Psalms 26:2** *Test me, O Yahweh, and try me, examine my heart and my mind.*

**Proverbs 4:23** *Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.*

**Psalms 139:23-24** *Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

## The Dangers of Not Looking Inside

Jesus' command "to deny self" has often been misunderstood to mean that reflection about oneself is **unhealthy**, that an introspective focus on self is **unbiblical**. This sort of thinking is wrong on at least four counts:

1. It blatantly contradicts **God's Word**.
2. It promotes **externalism**.
3. It contributes to the idea that the solution to a problem is to go around it, not **through** it.
4. God has given us the ability to discern our **deepest parts**.

**Proverbs 20:27** *The lamp of the Yahweh searches the spirit of a man; it searches out his inmost being.*

**Psalms 51:6** *Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place.*

Although our hearts are deceitful and naturally unknowable, God sees everything clearly, and he grants to his people whatever knowledge we should have about our motives through:

- **His Word:** **Hebrews 4:12-13** *For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*
- **His Spirit:** **Jeremiah 17:10** *I, Yahweh, search the heart and examine the mind.* **Psalms 25:8-9** *Yahweh is good and upright; he instructs sinners in his ways. He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way.* **John 16:13** *When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth.* **Galatians 5:16** *Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.*
- **His People:** **Hebrews 3:13** *But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.* **Proverbs 20:5** *The purposes of a man's heart are deep waters, but a man of understanding draws them out.*
- **His New Covenant:** **Ephesians 4:22-24** *As the truth is in Jesus, put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. (our strongest longings vs. our deepest longings)*

## The Dangers of Excessive Introspection

Introspection can become a means of **avoiding** rather than **assuming** responsibility.

A deep look inside can **weaken** our sense of personal sin and **feed** our deceptive tendencies.

To avoid this trap, we must remember that the essence of holiness is **other-centered**, a worshipful love for God and a love for others that motivates sacrificial care for them. Godly self-examination has an **outward** and **forward** look.

## Hidden Motives and Compulsive Behavior

In dozens of areas of life we can experience ourselves not as free, but as **compulsively trapped**.

The loss of **felt** choice does not mean loss of **actual** choice.

The key to dealing with the problem of loss of felt choice is the recognition that every action has a **purpose**. Beneath every behavior there is a goal/motive toward which the behavior is moving. Both the behavior and the goal are chosen.

Behavior will feel like a choice to the degree that the **goal / motive** of the behavior is recognized. Behavior in pursuit of an **unrecognized** goal does not feel like a choice.

By drawing out the purpose of our heart as we invite God to search us (**Psalms 139:23-24**) and by actively opening ourselves up to having deceitfulness exposed by God's Word (**Hebrews 4:12-13**) and Christian friends (**Hebrews 3:13**), and by praying for the Holy Spirit to enlighten our new heart (**Ephesians 1:17-18**), teaching us to follow its deepest longings (**Ephesians 4:22-24**) as we keep in step with the Spirit (**Galatians 5:16**), we will eventually come to a profoundly convicting awareness of our commitment to **self-protection**.

Restoring the feeling of **choice** depends on exposing the fundamental **motives** in our hearts.