



August 2, 2026 | Dr. Jimmy Stewart

Jesus Changes Everything

Hardened Hearts → Open Hearts

Billy Graham . . . gave a beautiful answer to the question, "What is the most important event in human history?" Once you hear his answer, you could say, This is How Jesus Changes Everything!

First, because of Him we can know what God is like. He came to reveal God's true nature to us—His power, His holiness, His justice, His love. Do you want to know what God is like? Look at Jesus Christ, for He was God in human flesh. The Bible says, "No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known" **(John 1:18)**.

Second, Jesus' coming was of supreme importance because only through Him can we be saved. Only one thing separates us from God, and that is our sin. But Christ came to cleanse us from our sins, and He did this by becoming the final and complete sacrifice for our sins through His death for us.

Finally, Christ is important because He gives us hope—hope of God's presence with us now, and hope of eternal life in heaven. Do you have this hope? You can, and it can begin today. Make this the best Christmas you've ever had by turning to Christ through a simple prayer of faith and giving your life to Him. <https://billygraham.org/answers/christs-coming-changed-the-world-forever>

We live in a loud world.

Smart TVs, mobile phones, tablets, and other media devices blare frightening news, twenty-four-seven. The news isn't even news anymore. It's cleverly worded headline phrases with trigger words and slanted spin phrasing. Stories are announced by talking heads, capable of discussing a

single media event for upwards of six or seven hours without once pausing to reapply hairspray.

And the News People don't just make a lot of noise, they directly tell you what your opinions should be about "the issues." They tell you, subconsciously, how you should feel. They urge you to wallow in negative emotions about nearly everything. With each broadcast, they TEACH you to feel, think, and react negatively.

Often, news channels even format their shows as round-table discussions where several negative people discuss multiple negative topics wearing negative expressions on their made-up faces, and they argue for 60 minutes—except for the 2,348,197 pharmaceutical ad interruptions. <https://seandietrich.substack.com/p/why-i-stopped-writing>

- The Lord admonishes us to guard our hearts.

Proverbs 4:23

Above all else, **guard** your **heart**, for everything you do flows from it.

- The Lord promises to guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, with His peace.

Philippians 4:7

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will **guard** your **hearts** and your minds in Christ Jesus.

The heart at greatest risk is not the broken heart, but the hardened heart that sees the truth and still refuses to believe Jesus.

Jesus Can Change Any Heart . . . But He Will Not Force the Heart That Refuses Him

Guard your heart! Worship is about opening your heart before God! "Open the Eyes of My Heart Lord!"

"Open the Eyes of My Heart" is a contemporary Christian song by Paul Baloché. The lyrics are based on Ephesians 1:18. In 2000, Baloché released his own recording on his album Open the Eyes of My Heart. The song has also been recorded by Michael W. Smith, Phillips, Craig, and Dean, and by Randy Travis. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_the_Eyes_of_My_Heart

Matthew 9:1-8

1 Jesus stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to his own town.

2 Some men brought to him a paralyzed man, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the man, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven."

3 At this, some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, "This fellow is blaspheming!"

4 Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, "Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts? 5 Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? 6 But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the paralyzed man, "Get up, take your mat and go home." 7 Then the man got up and went home. 8 When the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God, who had given such authority to man.

Jesus knew what they were thinking, so he asked them, "Why do you have such evil thoughts in your hearts? **Matthew 9:4**

Every person has a heart. A *spiritual* heart. Love the Lord your God with *all your heart!*

According to the Bible, the heart is the center not only of spiritual activity, but of all the operations of human life. The heart is also the seat of the conscience (Rom. 2:15). It is naturally wicked (Gen. 8:21), and hence it contaminates the whole life and character (Matt. 12:34; 15:18; comp. Eccl. 8:11; Ps. 73:7). Hence the heart must be changed, regenerated (Ezek. 36:26; 11:19; Ps. 51:10–14), before a man can willingly obey God.

The process of salvation begins in the heart by the believing reception of the testimony of God, while the rejection of that testimony (The Scriptures, The Spirit, A Preacher, A Teacher, A Witness, A Miracle, All of Creation) hardens the heart (Ps. 95:8; Prov. 28:14; 2 Chr. 36:13). "Hardness of heart evidences itself by light views of sin; partial acknowledgment and confession of it; pride and conceit; ingratitude; unconcern about the word and ordinances of God; inattention to divine providences; stifling convictions of conscience; shunning reproof; presumption, and general ignorance of divine things."

Easton, M. G. (1893). In *Illustrated Bible Dictionary and Treasury of Biblical History, Biography, Geography, Doctrine, and Literature* (pp. 316–317). Harper & Brothers.

Some hearts are: broken, wounded, fearful, guilty, ashamed, rebellious but ultimately each heart is either changed by God through Jesus or they become callous, hardened and destined for destruction. *What is the state of your heart today?*

The Truth of the Ages - God knows what is in your heart.

I. God Knows Your Heart

Solomons prayer of dedication - Give your people what their actions deserve, for you alone know each human **heart**. **2 Chronicles 6:30**

2 Chronicles 16:9

The eyes of the Lord search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose **hearts** are fully committed to him.

John 14:1

"Don't let your **hearts** be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me."

Romans 10:9

If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your **heart** that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

2 Corinthians 4:6

For God, who said, "Let there be light in the darkness," has made this light shine in our **hearts** so we could know the glory of God that is seen in the face of Jesus Christ.

Philippians 4:7

God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand, will guard your **hearts** and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

II. God Wants to Change Your Heart

And he sent Jesus to do just that!

1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

May the Lord make your love for one another and for all people grow and overflow, just as our love for you overflows. May he, as a result, make your **hearts** strong, blameless, and holy as you stand before God our Father when our Lord Jesus comes again with all his holy people. Amen.

God promised through Ezekiel (11:19; 36:26) "I will remove your **heart** of stone and give you a new **heart** of flesh."

Deuteronomy 30:6

"The Lord your God will change your **heart** and the **hearts** of all your descendants, so that you will love him with all your **heart** and soul and so you may live!

2 Timothy 2:25

Gently instruct those who oppose the truth. Perhaps God will change those people's **hearts**, and they will learn the truth.

The good news of the Gospel is that **Jesus changes hearts**.

Yet in Scripture we discover one frightening reality:

God changes willing hearts, but He does not force unwilling ones.

The Bible never portrays God dragging someone into His kingdom against their will.

Instead He reveals Himself...calling...convicting...warning...inviting... and waiting for a response.

The issue of a non-believing heart is rarely a lack of evidence. It is usually the condition of the heart.

III. A Hardened Heart Can Witness Miracles and Still Reject Jesus

Exodus 14:4-8

4 And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, and the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord." And they did so.

5 When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, the mind of Pharaoh and his servants was changed toward the people, and they said, "What is this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us?" 6 So he made ready his chariot and took his army with him, 7 and took six hundred chosen chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them. 8 And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the people of Israel while the people of Israel were going out defiantly.

Pharaoh is one of Scripture's clearest examples of a hardened heart. Again and again God displayed His power through miraculous signs and opportunities to repent. Yet each warning was met with greater resistance.

Eventually, Pharaoh became so determined to oppose God that he pursued Israel into the Red Sea, leading to his own destruction.

The Pharisees don't deny the miracles of Jesus. Instead they invent another explanation. "He casts out demons by Beelzebul." (Matthew 12) They don't reject the evidence. They reinterpret the evidence because their **hearts** refuse the conclusion.

A hard heart doesn't always deny truth. Sometimes it explains truth away. People still do this. They explain away:

- creation
- answered prayer
- transformed lives
- Scripture
- the resurrection
- conviction of the Holy Spirit

Or they question God on perceived injustices against others. The issue isn't intellectual. It's spiritual. It's a condition of their heart!

Pharaoh's story reminds us that every person has a choice. We can humble ourselves before God, or we can stubbornly cling to our own will. The Lord never forces anyone into a relationship with Him. He lovingly calls, convicts, and invites—but He also honors the decisions people make. Pharaoh kept rejecting God until God hardened his heart.

Matthew 9:4

Jesus knew what they were thinking, so he asked them, "Why do you have such evil thoughts in your **hearts**?"

Luke 5:22

"Why do you question this in your **hearts**?"

Matthew 19:8

Jesus replied, "Moses permitted divorce only as a concession to your **hard hearts**, but it was not what God had originally intended.

Mark 7:6

Jesus replied, "These people honor me with their lips, but their **hearts** are far from me."

Mark 8:17

Jesus knew what they were saying, so he said, "Why are you arguing about having no bread? Don't you know or understand even yet? Are your **hearts too hard** to take it in?"

The Heart becomes hardened one decision at a time.
The Hardened Heart can be changed in an instant. But the longer the heart remains hard, the thicker the resistance to truth becomes.

How is your heart? Do you need the Lord to do open heart surgery on you? Why not today. Much like a person who has signs of heart disease will put off going to the doctor, you and I can do the same and the end comes like a thief!!! The only way to prepare is to live like it may be today!

The gospel is both an invitation and a warning. Jesus stands ready to forgive every sinner who repents. No life is beyond His grace. Yet no one should presume upon tomorrow.

Every day you delay repentance is another moment of the hardening of your heart. The more you know the truth and the more you reject believing, the harder your heart becomes!

IV. Jesus Can Change Your Heart Today

Throughout Scripture **Jesus transformed impossible hearts:**

- Saul - A persecutor became an apostle.
- Zacchaeus - A greedy tax collector became generous.
- Mary Magdalene - A life in bondage became one of joyful devotion.
- The Demoniac - Chaos became peace.
- Peter - Failure became fearless leadership.
- The Thief on the Cross - Minutes before death...grace.

Notice something. None were forced. Every one responded with an open willing heart.

God's Invitation Is Always "Today"

Every invitation carries urgency because hearts never remain neutral.
Every response moves us either toward Jesus or away from Him.

You may think, "My heart is too far gone. I've said no too many times."
And no you cannot change your past but the Lord can change your future and your eternity!!!

The very conviction you feel is evidence of God's desire to show you mercy.
The danger isn't that you've sinned too much.
The danger is refusing the One who alone can save you.

As long as you sense the Lord leading you to trust Him, there is hope. But what is available today for you, may not be tomorrow.

The hardest heart in the room is not the one with the deepest scars. It is not the one carrying the greatest guilt. It is not the one asking the hardest questions. The hardest heart is the one that has seen the light of Jesus Christ, sensed the voice of God, felt conviction of the Holy Spirit—and continues to say, "No."

But the most beautiful miracle is this: the moment that heart says, "Yes," Jesus can do what no man can fully explain, what no person can do, no philosophy can describe, and no religion can fulfill—He can make your heart and your whole life new.

If the Lord is prompting you today, do not wait. Open your heart, open the eyes of your heart. Repent of your sin, and trust Jesus as Savior and Lord.

Romans 10:10-13

10 For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. 11 As the Scriptures tell us, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced." 13 For "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."