


Don't Follow Your Heart - Week 2

Follow Your Heart?

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Part of Don't Follow Your Heart Bolding Breaking the 10 Commandments of Self-Worship

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DON'T *follow your heart*

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Follow Your Heart?

“Follow your heart” is another version of the serpent’s temptation and lie to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3 - that each of us can be our own god, deciding for ourselves what is good and bad, right and wrong.

But what happens when you stop and really consider some of the things your heart may tell you?

Jesus: 21For from within, out of a person’s heart, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, 22adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, lustful desires, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. 23All these vile things come from within; they are what defile you.

—Mark 7:21-23 (NLT)

The LORD detests those whose hearts are perverse...

—Proverbs 11:20 (NIV11)

... The hearts of people, moreover, are full of evil and there is madness in their hearts while they live, and afterward they join the dead.

—Ecclesiastes 9:3 (NIV11)

... Whoever has a haughty look and an arrogant heart I [the LORD] will not endure.

—Psalms 101:5 (ESV)

One who trusts in his own heart is a fool...

—Proverbs 28:26 (NASB)

The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?

—Jeremiah 17:9 (ESV)

What the Bible wants us to see is that even as the heart is capable of good, it is also capable of doing bad things.

If only there were evil people somewhere insidiously committing evil deeds, and it were necessary only to separate them from the rest of us and destroy them. But the line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being. And who is willing to destroy a piece of his own heart?

—Alexander Solzhenitsyn

Jeremiah tells us that the heart can never be a reliable guide for living God's best for our lives because...

1. the heart is "deceitful."

The heart can put our wants and desires ahead of what's best for us.

2. the heart is "desperately sick."

We have all been infected with what Christianity has called original sin.

Jesus teaches us that there is something far more fundamental to our sinfulness than the actual sins we commit. Our sins do not make us sinful. Rather, we commit sins because, at the very center of our lives, we are sinful. Sin has invaded the inner recesses of our personalities.

—Billy Graham

Deeper than breaking God’s commandment, Adam and Eve communicated that they no longer trusted God to be the ultimate source of right and wrong, the ultimate God of their lives - they made themselves their own gods who could ok whatever they wanted, for they followed their deceitful heart above all else.

For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard.

—Romans 3:23 (NLT)

A part of the reality of this sin, of this sickness, is that we don’t simply try to deceive others, but we also deceive ourselves.

Every person’s way is right in his own eyes...

—Proverbs 21:2 (ESV)

Our own self-delusion and self-deception is part of the sickness of sin in each of us.

I think Christianity is spot on about original sin. How could one think otherwise, when the world’s most civilized and advanced people (the people of Beethoven, Goethe, Kant) embraced that slime-ball Hitler and participated in the Holocaust? I think Saint Paul and the great Christian philosophers had real insights into sin and freedom and responsibility, and I want to build on this rather than turn from it.

—Atheist Michael Ruse

If the heart itself is “deceitful” and “desperately sick,” then the answer isn’t trying to fix the heart but replacing it.

The Sovereign LORD: *26And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart. 27And I will put my Spirit in you so that you will follow my decrees and be careful to obey my regulations.*

—Ezekiel 36:26-27 (NLT)

*Therefore if anyone is in Christ, **this person** is a new creation; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.*

—2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)

9If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10For 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.

—Romans 10:9-10 (NLT)

What we see the Bible saying is not “Follow your heart,” but, instead, “Follow Jesus.”

5Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. 6Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.

—Proverbs 3:5-6 (NLT)

Our heart must be checked against an unchanging standard, who is God.

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

—Hebrews 13:8 (NLT)

Jesus: *24Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. 25Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it is built on bedrock.*

—Matthew 7:24-25 (NLT)

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

—Hebrews 4:12 (ESV)

One reason God has given us the Bible is to use it as a measuring rod against our hearts, to help us see and know how to rightly live our lives.

Don't follow your heart; follow Jesus, and as you do, he will redefine the longings of your heart.

📖 Next Week: *Relative Truth (Mother's Day)*

Don't Follow Your Heart by Thaddeus J. Williams

Available on [Amazon](#) and [Christianbook.com](#)

Activities

Do three or four of these this week to sharpen your skills in not following your heart. These are taken from the book *Don't Follow Your Heart* by Thaddeus J. Williams, pp. 53-54.

1. Identify at least three feelings you had today that were false, misguided, or likely to change tomorrow. Think of one example of a feeling you had today that was way off. Have a chuckle at yourself.
2. Think of a recurring lie your heart tells you about yourself that may often feel true but know is false. Search the Scriptures, using a search engine or concordance if helpful, and find at least three Spirit-inspired passages that contradict that lie.
3. Take five minutes to write out a meaningful message to someone you know who could use some encouragement, especially if you don't want to. Send it.
4. Have a conversation with someone in which you ask them meaningful questions about their life and listen. Do not turn the conversation back to yourself at any point.

5. Ask the Holy Spirit to fill your heart with his fruits. Prayerfully request love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control.