



**Grow. Pray. Serve.**

February 12, 2017

### *Matters of the Heart*

1. Out of whack. To be out of sorts, not functioning right.
2. Our hearts can be out of whack because of the plight of others or as a signal we need to hit pause, reset, and get back on track.
3. Scripture and the heart
  - a. Place of reason, will and emotion. Place God works to change us.
  - b. Heart causes us to do, say, and act the way we do.
  - c. Hearts can deceive us (Jeremiah 17:9), God knows our hearts (Romans 8:27), our hearts determine what we treasure (Matthew 6:21), sometimes our words don't reflect our hearts (Matthew 15:8).
  - d. Heart changes are difficult and an ongoing process.
4. Chapter 5 Matthew – Matters of the Heart
  - a. Anger
    - i. God given. Can be righteous. Jesus was righteously angry.
    - ii. Anger is not to be an end state. Anger and sin are related.
    - iii. Do something about the unjust situation and leave anger behind.
    - iv. Reactive, hard, judgmental states of anger are a problem.
    - v. Reach out; seek to reconcile.
    - vi. Check your heart: "What is this anger telling me about my heart? Is the anger just or not and what will I do about the situation? Is my heart out of whack?"
  - b. Adultery and Divorce
    - i. Can be a faithful thing to do. No black and white statements.
    - ii. Can be caused by sin, selfishness, and self-serving motives.
    - iii. Lust can lead to adultery. Acting on lust is sinful, selfish.
    - iv. Important to do an honest heart check and ask tough questions.
  - c. Vows.
    - i. When we say we will do something, we should just do it.
    - ii. Yes means yes and no means no.
    - iii. None of this is complicated, neither is honesty and truth. When vows and truth become nuanced, Jesus says coming from evil.
5. Signs of healthy heart
  - a. Peace, Teflon, humility, listens more than speaks, focus on trust not fear, vulnerable, open, tender, compassionate, pure with right motives, connected to God, non-judgmental and not always focused on what is fair, full of love for God and people.
  - b. Reflect on Ezekiel 36:26). "God will give me a new heart, a tender responsive heart, filled with his spirit."

## Today's Scripture Reading

### Matthew 5:21-37 (The Message)

**21-22** "You're familiar with the command to the ancients, 'Do not murder.' I'm telling you that anyone who is so much as angry with a brother or sister is guilty of murder. Carelessly call a brother 'idiot!' and you just might find yourself hauled into court. Thoughtlessly yell 'stupid!' at a sister and you are on the brink of hellfire. The simple moral fact is that words kill.

**23-24** "This is how I want you to conduct yourself in these matters. If you enter your place of worship and, about to make an offering, you suddenly remember a grudge a friend has against you, abandon your offering, leave immediately, go to this friend and make things right. Then and only then, come back and work things out with God.

**25-26** "Or say you're out on the street and an old enemy accosts you. Don't lose a minute. Make the first move; make things right with him. After all, if you leave the first move to him, knowing his track record, you're likely to end up in court, maybe even jail. If that happens, you won't get out without a stiff fine.

**27-28** "You know the next commandment pretty well, too: 'Don't go to bed with another's spouse.' But don't think you've preserved your virtue simply by staying out of bed. Your *heart* can be corrupted by lust even quicker than your *body*. Those leering looks you think nobody notices—they also corrupt.

**29-30** "Let's not pretend this is easier than it really is. If you want to live a morally pure life, here's what you have to do: You have to blind your right eye the moment you catch it in a lustful leer. You have to choose to live one-eyed or else be dumped on a moral trash pile. And you have to chop off your right hand the moment you notice it raised threateningly. Better a bloody stump than your entire being discarded for good in the dump.

**31-32** "Remember the Scripture that says, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him do it legally, giving her divorce papers and her legal rights'? Too many of you are using that as a cover for selfishness and whim, pretending to be righteous just because you are 'legal.' Please, no more pretending. If you divorce your wife, you're responsible for making her an adulteress (unless she has already made herself that by sexual promiscuity). And if you marry such a divorced adulteress, you're automatically an adulterer yourself. You can't use legal cover to mask a moral failure.

**33-37** "And don't say anything you don't mean. This counsel is embedded deep in our traditions. You only make things worse when you lay down a smoke screen of pious talk, saying, 'I'll pray for you,' and never doing it, or saying, 'God be with you,' and not meaning it. You don't make your words true by embellishing them with religious lace. In making your speech sound more religious, it becomes less true. Just say 'yes' and 'no.' When you manipulate words to get your own way, you go wrong.



Snowmass Chapel

5307 Owl Creek Road , PO Box 17169, Snowmass Village, CO 81615  
[www.snowmasschapel.org](http://www.snowmasschapel.org)