

A Pastor's Heart

Encouragement from Pastor McGill

Keeping a clean heart

Psalm 51:10 *Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me.*

This is a prayer that I pray everyday. If you are a member of Antioch Christian Church you hear me say these words often. God has always reminded His children to guard their hearts. Just as the heart is critical to our natural body's survival and health, so it is even more critical for our spiritual life. I realize that success with God lies in the condition of our hearts. Healthy hearts function and produce a life of peace, productivity and prosperity. Unhealthy hearts require immediate attention and cause other vital functions of the body to shut down.

In our text David is crying out to God for a clean heart. Something has happened to the heart he had when God called him a man after His own heart. This Psalm is written by David after being confronted by the prophet Nathan. Nathan delivers the Word of God to David after David committed adultery with Bathsheba and had her husband Uriah murdered. Somewhere in this progression of sin, David's heart had become contaminated. He found himself doing things that he knew were against the will of God. God will always send us a word to correct our hearts and ultimately correct our course. This caused David to pen this great Psalm. I encourage you to read and study it in its entirety. I will discuss a couple of key points today.

A correct examination of the text reveals exactly what David is asking God to do. First, David is asking God to create in him a clean heart. He wants a changed heart, the one that he has now is not right. The Hebrew word clean is *tahowr* it means to be without contaminates, to be pure both morally and ethically. David knows that the only way he could carry out such things against God is that he has allowed his heart to be contaminated by lust. He is asking God to do open heart surgery and take out all contaminates.

Secondly, David asks God to renew a right spirit within him. The Hebrew word renew is *chadash*, it means to repair. David's wrong spirit needed to be repaired by the One who made him fearfully and wonderfully. David was asking God for an extreme makeover. What he had was broken and certainly not healthy. David knew that the only One who could help him was God.

Thirdly, the Hebrew word for right is *Kuwn*; it means to be fixed, steadfast and unchanging. David wanted a spirit that would not waver. David did not want to repeat this ever again. If we are going to succeed with God and bear fruit on a consistent basis for years to come, we must have clean hearts.

How do we keep our hearts clean?

1. Abide in Truth (stay in the presence of the Lord). It is difficult to leave God's presence with an unclean heart.
2. Take a bath everyday. We bathe in the word of God. How would we smell if we went a week without bathing? It would be difficult for people to stay around us.

- When the heart is not clean we smell bad in the spirit and no one can stay around us long.
3. Count the costs before you make the choice. What is this decision going to do to my heart and my relationship with God? Will it be strengthened or weakened?
 4. Resist Temptation. Submit to God, resist the devil and he **WILL** flee from you. David got into trouble because he did not first submit then resist.
 5. Stay focused on your assignment. Distractions are not from God. Distractions are well thought out, well conceived plans designed to draw you out and steal your heart from God.
 6. Guard your heart as if your life depended on it because it does because out of your heart flow the issues of life.
 7. Give. Giving is a test of your heart. The rich young ruler's heart was tested in Mark 10:17. He could not follow Jesus because his heart had been corrupted by what he possessed. He chose his possessions over Jesus. Our heart will always follow our treasure. Giving keeps a clean heart rejoicing.

Let's keep our heart rights and expand the Kingdom of God. We have all been chosen for such a time as this. Make it a great day.

Blessings and Peace

Pastor McGill