

The Lord Searches the Heart  
(Jeremiah 17:10)

Introduction:

1. We learn from Jeremiah 17:10 that God is very concerned about the hearts of His people -- He "searches" them, and He judges accordingly.
2. To further illustrate how God is concerned about the hearts of His people,:
  - a. He looks on the heart and not the outward appearance (1 Samuel 16:7)
  - b. He knows the secrets of the heart (Psalm 44:21).
3. We certainly want to have hearts that meet God's approval.
4. In our lesson we are examining a number of passages that will help us.

Discussion:

- I. FIRST, GOD'S WORD IS DESIGNED TO AFFECT THE HEART
  - A. This point is clearly made in Hebrews 4:12-13.
    1. According to vs.12, God's Word is alive and powerful, it pierces and divides, and it is "*a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*"
    2. Vs.13 shows why we must allow God's Word to affect our hearts -- God knows, and He sees all.
  - B. In order for God's Word to affect our hearts it must be heard correctly.
    1. The people in Jerusalem on Pentecost are a positive example -- they heard Peter's message correctly, and they were affected by it (Acts 2:37-38, 41).
    2. Felix is a negative example -- he did not hear Paul's message correctly, and the condition of his heart was not changed (Acts 24:24-26).
    3. Jesus illustrated how God's Word can be heard differently in His parable of the sower (Luke 8).
      - a. Jesus presented the parable in vs.4-8.
      - b. Jesus explained the parable in vs.11-15.
        - 1) God's Word will have no lasting effect upon 3 types of hearers.
        - 2) The proper way to hear is explained in vs.15.
        - 3) Let us heed the Lord's warning in vs.18a.
    4. God's Word is designed to affect the heart, but it must be heard correctly to be effective.
  - C. Let us turn our attention to several . . .
- II. SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS THAT RELATE TO THE HEART
  - A. David's writings teach us to allow God to examine our hearts so they will please Him.
    1. Psalm 139:23-24
    2. Psalm 19:14
  - B. Solomon's writings teach us to "*keep*" our hearts (Proverbs 4:23).
    1. We are to do this "*with all diligence.*"
    2. We are to do this because "*the issues of life*" come forth from the heart.
    3. Keeping the heart is a lifelong responsibility.
      - a. Solomon allowed his heart to be turned away from the Lord (1 Kings 11:3).
      - b. David showed how the heart can be turned back to God (Psalm 51:10).
  - C. Jesus emphasized the importance of having a pure heart when He gave the 6<sup>th</sup> Beatitude (Matthew 5:8).
  - D. These passages teach us that God is concerned about our hearts, and He wants us to be concerned about our hearts.

Conclusion:

1. Have you asked the Lord to search your heart lately?
2. If you have, what did He find?
3. Let us remember that we will be judged accordingly (Jeremiah 17:10).