Jesus is the Heart of the Matter

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[0:00] The title of my message, I'm getting a... Can y'all wake me up? All good? There we go. Jesus is the heart of the matter.

Jesus is the heart of the matter. I was in an interesting... I had a number of interesting conversations while we were away. For me, much of what we were exposed to in our sessions and all is stuff I've been learning for some time.
It's a good refresher. But most of the stuff I've learned over the years in my degree program, I got this fire hose concentration of it.
So for me, the highlight of our trip was renewing friendships, seeing people we had not seen in many, many, many years, having conversations with different people about serving the Lord, talking with other pastors and church leaders in that way.
One of those conversations we had with the executive director of a counseling organization that we belong to. It's a counseling slash mission organization.
[1:07] You guys have heard me mention it before. BCMW. It's Biblical Counselors or Biblical Counseling Ministries Worldwide. So we've been a part of that for some time.

And Suzanne and I are country coordinators in that organization for Poland, Norway, and Austria. We sat down with the executive director and their administrator for a couple of hours at a coffee shop, talking through some very important matters.
And one of the things that he said to me, guys, Tuesday morning men who are coming, he said, we are strongly considering gathering together some type of teaching requirement for those who are coming on board with us in some capacity to deal with the issue of hermeneutics.
All right, now, guys in the Tuesday morning group, what are hermeneutics? What's the easiest way to define hermeneutics?
Rules, thank you. They are rules for what? Interpreting communication. It doesn't have to be just the Bible, but they are rules that we use for interpreting the meaning of any given communication.
[2:29] You do it all the time without realizing it. When someone's talking to you, hopefully you're listening in a way where you're trying to make meaning of what they're saying. Now, the important rule to remember when someone is communicating with you, rather through speech or writing or whatever it is, is you want to gain the meaning of what the writer or the speaker is trying to convey.

I told the men in our group that the first time we met, I grew up hearing the saying, it's not important what you say.
What's important is what I hear you say. Well, that's wrong. What's important as the hearer is that you take the responsibility to try and understand the meaning that is being conveyed to you by the writer or the speaker.
They're the one that gets to assign the authority of meaning to their communication. You wouldn't like it if you were communicating with someone and you said a certain thing and you meant a certain thing and then they came back and said, well, what I hear you saying is this and it was completely off from what you meant.
And they just said, well, that's what I'm going to believe you meant. Well, how offensive. We need to take that same attitude into the scriptures. What the executive director was saying to us was we have noticed a problem in many of the people who are providing counseling through ACBC or through our organization, the BCMW, and it's this.
[3:59] They're taking a scripture passage and trying to use that passage for a certain problem and then make application from that passage and it's the wrong passage. There's another passage they should be using, not that one.

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And what that betrays is a lack of understanding of hermeneutics, the rules of interpretation that will let them match the issue with what God speaks to the issue.
And then being careful in what the author is writing in this particular passage, being careful with the author's meaning that's being put forward.
I don't have a right to make the passage say what I want it to say or what I think it should say or what I think it does say. My responsibility is to gain the authorial meaning, the authorial intent.
Right, guys? You're going to hear more about this on Tuesday when we gather. Now, I say all of that to say you can't expect your pastor to go to a conference like this where it's all counseling, counseling, counseling.
[5:01] And every session that we go to is a workshop on how to use the scripture correctly in counseling or some aspect like that or the plenary sessions where we're getting preaching that talks to us about the value and importance of using God's word carefully to minister to God's people and then expect me to walk into the pulpit and not say something about this.

So as I was on the airplane flying back, contemplating what I would do with this just in my heart, I turned to a certain place in scripture just to rehearse for myself and I thought, yeah, this is what I want to do.
Now, I'm going to try to cover this in one swoop. It's Mark 7. It's Mark 7. Now, you've heard me preach on this in the distant past.
Here's the thing, though. When I preached Mark 7 to you in the distant past, I took five sermons to do it. I'm going to do half the passage in one. We'll see.
Let's read the passage down to where I'm going to stop, start and stop, and then we'll jump into what's going on. Jesus now has come to a place where he is going to have to confront people who are trying to confront him, the religious elite of Israel.
[6:17] And so right in chapter 7, verse 1, it starts. The Pharisees and some of the scribes gathered around Jesus when they had come from Jerusalem.

So there's this delegation of the religious elite. I'll explain more just a little bit. But this special delegation has formed and been sent out to confront and discredit Jesus.
And in verse 2, and had seen that some of Jesus' disciples were eating their bread with impure hands. Now, for our understanding as Gentiles, what are they talking about?
That is, that is, unwashed. For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat, they don't take a meal, unless they carefully wash their hands, thus observing the traditions of the elders.
And when they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they cleanse themselves. And there are many other things which they have received in order to observe.
[7:28] Now, we're talking about religious ritual here, folks. Such as the washing of cups in a certain way, the washing of pitchers in a certain ritualistic way, and copper pots.

The Pharisees and the scribes asked Jesus then, Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with impure hands? Now, notice Jesus' response.
And Jesus said to them, Rightly did Isaiah, the prophet, prophesy of you hypocrites. As it is written, This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far away from me.
But in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men, neglecting the commandment of God. You hold to the tradition of men.
Jesus was also saying to them, You are experts at setting aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition. For Moses said, Honor your father and your mother.
[8:38] And he who speaks evil of father or mother is to be put to death. But you say, If a man says to his father or his mother, whatever I have that would help you is Corbin.

And again, for the Gentiles in the audience, that is to say, given to God. Corbin was the idea that I can take what I own, dedicate it to God, and so for you it's hands off.
You no longer then, in verse 12, permit him to do anything for his father or his mother. Thus, here's the result of this man-made, man-centered, doctrine of men focused, thus, invalidating the word of God by your tradition, which you have handed down, and you do many things such as that.
Now, verse 14, After Jesus called the crowd to him again, he began saying to them, listen to me, all of you, and understand, there is nothing outside the man which can defile him if it goes into him.
But, the things which proceed out of the man are what defile the man. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear. Now, when Jesus had left the crowd and entered the house, so we move from one venue to another, he left the crowd and he's in the house, his disciples now question him about that

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parable.
[10:18] And he said to them, are you so lacking in understanding also? Do you not understand that whatever goes into the man from outside cannot defile him?

Because, it does not go into his what, church? Heart. But into his stomach, and then is eliminated. Thus, Jesus declared all foods clean.
Now, in verse 20, And Jesus was then saying, that which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man.
For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting, that is, greediness.
That coveting is the idea of wanting what God doesn't want for you or wanting what your neighbor has. Wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, fear, pride, and foolishness.
[11:33] And now, verse 23 caps it off for us. All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man or the woman, the person.

So, the issue that Jesus is countering here and explaining here, confronting here, is that of impurity. heart impurity for every single human being.
What I want to do is take this apart in a way that feeds into what we're doing on our Tuesday morning study with our men and what we're doing in our Wednesday church gatherings.
I think it will also touch on what our ladies are doing because both Marivi and Melanie are very careful to help display to you or model for you a careful series of hermeneutics, rules, for how to interpret the Bible.
These ladies don't play fast and loose with the Scriptures. In fact, they're teaching you so that you can learn how to interpret the Scripture yourself, feed yourself on the good Word, the nourishing Word of God.
[12:45] We have that. Tara, I didn't mean to leave you out. I forgot you're tag-teaming with Marivi this time. So, and Tara's been doing this for quite some time. This is not news to her. She's been doing this as long as Marivi has.

So, folks, in all of this, Jesus is trying to help these people understand the impurity of their hearts because that's not where the scribes and Pharisees are and as they hand these doctrines that they're making up and teaching down to other people, it has this compounding, corrupting influence.
Men, this is something that we need to take to heart as we think about our families. Our sin is never done in private even when other people don't know about it. One of the most heinous things about our sin as men, as spiritual leaders, family leaders, husbands, fathers, is that our sin compounds in our lives, in our hearts.
It compounds. It builds on itself. And it will have an adverse, destructive effect on the people closest to us if we don't deal with it. We may think it's secret and it's put away and so if nobody knows about it, I'm good.
Mark, I think you wrote about this recently as he did our discussion board for our Tuesday morning men's group. It's sit down and take some minutes to read it because he did some expounding.
[14:11] But Mark even addressed this, this idea. What we're dealing with here first, and I'm going to try to bring this as I say, into the teaching that you've been sitting under here at our church now for, I don't know, Greg, what is it?

Been over a month now we're into Wednesday gatherings and all? And you've heard some of this before. This isn't brand new stuff, all right? But I want to reinforce it for you.
The first thing that I want to draw your attention to then is the incident that's taking place. You can also think about this as the situation. What is the circumstance?
What's going on? What is happening here in this interchange between Jesus and these people? What is the incident that is taking place? That's in verses 1-4.
Well, we have the Pharisees and scribes who have gathered around Jesus, kind of hemmed Jesus in, and they're making some interpretations and observations.
[15:08] They're seeing a certain thing going on, and they're making meaning of what they're seeing, just like you do. You do this all day long, and you don't even think about it. You're constantly interacting with other people, with your world, your spouse, your kids, you're an employee, your bosses, people on the highway, whatever it is.

You're constantly doing that and making meaning of what you're seeing. You're constantly interpreting life. You can't help it. This is what we do as people.

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Well, this is what they're doing. Now, the Pharisees and scribes, as I've mentioned, are the religious elite of Israel. The scribes themselves were experts in the law of Moses. So if you take the first five books of the Bible, and you read through the Pentateuch, these men knew it backwards and forwards.
And they then prescribed hundreds, they come up with hundreds, over 630, I think, of these laws and accompanying rules to help you make sure you keep the laws.
Can you imagine that kind of burden? Right. Well, that's what's going on. Now, the Pharisees were the leading religious sect who helped apply and enforce the various interpretations and religious rules that the scribes came up with.
[16:25] So they're in cahoots. Here's the thing about them. They hated Jesus Christ. They hated him. The mention of the Pharisees in their interactions with Jesus gives us some insight into the motives that they had toward the Lord.

Let's go to the last time they were mentioned in the Gospel of Mark. If you go back to chapter 3, now this will give you some insight into who you're dealing with here. You want to try to understand, what are these guys about?
Here's what they're about. There's an incident that took place on the Sabbath. Jesus is in the synagogue according to chapter 3, verse 1, and he's confronted there by a man with a hand that it says is withered.
So he's got this hand and it's deformed in a significant way. There's really not a hand there. It's all withered and dried up. Probably a birth defect of some kind.
And the religious leaders, perhaps some of them in our story in chapter 7, where some of the men mentioned here in chapter 3, they were watching Jesus to see if he would heal this man on the Sabbath.
[17:40] Because you know you're not supposed to do that. And why were they watching? So that they might accuse him. You see, they're not there to learn from Jesus. They're not there to bow to Jesus.

They don't believe Jesus has anything to offer them. And so Jesus, in a word here, he does heal him. And then he confronts the people because he knows their heart.
He confronts them and says, is it not lawful for me to do what is right on the Sabbath? Because the Sabbath was made for healing, hope, worship.
Not the other way around. And this is the Lord Jesus who invented all of this. Well, in verse 6, here's the result of Jesus doing that. the Pharisees went out and immediately began to do what? To conspire with the Herodians, their arch enemies, now they're all buddies, see, against Jesus to do what? As to how they might destroy him, murder him, murder him.
[18:42] They want to take him out. That's their motive. That's their heart. And so as they come to this incident in chapter 7, and they see Jesus' disciples doing something against their tradition that's been handed down many generations, they think they have their moment.

That's the incident that's going on here. The question is this, why are the Pharisees resurfacing now? Why does Mark include this event? Matthew has a parallel account about this, but Luke and John interestingly do not.
Well, here's the deal. As Jesus gains popularity among the people, these particular men find that their own agendas increasingly are threatened by this upstart rabbi.
Now get this, these men want something. They have desires in their hearts. Toward Jesus, toward the populace, toward each other, even toward other sects, S-E-C-T-S, that are in some ways aligned with them and in other ways are not.
But they all come together because they all hate Jesus so much. As Jesus gains popularity, they feel threatened. What they want is threatened. Jesus is getting in the way of what they want.
[20:04] Does that sound familiar to you? Somebody's in your way and conflict happens. Somebody's upset your agenda, your expectations let you down, they're not playing by your rules.

That's exactly what's going on here. Jesus teaches and lives the truth of God. That alone is enough to expose their hypocrisy and it's beginning to discredit them.
Jesus, because he teaches and lives the truth, I am the way, the truth, and the life, because he is who he is, he can't help it. He speaks and teaches and lives the truth and as he goes about doing that, it backs up against their lies and exposes them for what they are, which is why Jesus calls them hypocrites.

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He just brings it right out in the open. Now they are exposing their real motives, their true motives of their hearts as they try to then discredit Jesus.
They are casting dispersions on what Jesus as a rabbi is producing. Now they're attacking the disciples, but that's a ploy.
[21:11] What they're really after is to attack the disciples to get at Jesus. That's what they're doing. And they're looking at the disciples and saying, see what you produce? These men are like that because they're like you.

They are impure like you. You are producing what you are. This is their argument and they think it's a good one. They don't know who they're dealing with, do they?
When you sin, do you forget who you're dealing with? I think you do. I do. When I sin, I'm not standing there going, oh, I want this to be about Jesus.
That's the furthest thing from my mind or I wouldn't do it. I'll tell you something else about my sin. I don't know about you, but I can tell you about mine. I'm an expert on my sin. I like it.
God help me. or I wouldn't do it. And when I sin, I like my sin more than I like my Savior.
[22:21] I'm more loyal to and dedicated to my sin in that moment than I am my Savior. God help me. God help me. And God help you, right?

Well, this is where these men are. They are fault finders. This is what this does to your heart. It turns you into a high critic, a fault finder.
It's very different from the love of God. Can you imagine if Jesus went around constantly reminding you of your faults? Jesus' disciples are disregarding their religious purity in the sense that they interpret.
They say that the disciples of Jesus are impure men because washing their hands in a ritualistic way cleanses themselves from anything religiously impure that they might have touched.
And it sounds very spiritual on the surface of it. They're not being spiritual enough. They're not being religious enough. These guys aren't being serious about God. And it sounds very spiritual on the surface of it.
[23:32] But listen, folks, they are focused on the outward actions of others. Of others. If you read, if most of you have a MacArthur Study Bible around or maybe now, if you read in the MacArthur Study Bible in the notes for this particular section, you'll see that he outlines what's being talked about here.

It's well documented, the ritualistic way. I didn't want to read it. I don't want to take time. I'll just tell you real quickly. There was a certain way that these religious leaders understood that when you go to wash your hands because you've been defiled, you've been out in the marketplace, you've been around the pagans, you've been around the Gentiles, you've been around unbelievers and all this kind of thing.
So you're contaminated. Now, see, from the outside you've been contaminated. So you've got to wash your hands as if washing your hands. So they take it and I think they point the fingers up and he'd pour the water over and it would run down and as long as it ran off your wrists you're good.
So don't do this, you know, it can't drip this way. I'm serious. Then they would turn them down and they'd pour it over again so they could drip off. Then they'd take their fist and do this number and do this number, you know.
Alright, now we're ready. And so what do you do? Walk around like this, you know. I don't know.
This is what they're insisting on. They haven't cleansed themselves before they eat.
[24:58] And you think, wow. But you know what? As petty as that might sound to us in our day and time, aren't we guilty of the same kind of pettiness when we insist on something with someone else that keeps us in conflict and at loggerheads?

And have you ever never looked back after you've gotten into something with somebody and you've calmed down and you're driving or something and you're in the shower and you're thinking about it and you think, that was really pretty petty.
You ever done that? Alright. But in the moment it was the thing, wasn't it? Yeah. Isn't that the issue so often with us when we find ourselves in conflict with someone else?
They're not playing by the best rules, which just happen to be our rules. I can't help it. You're not playing at the highest and best. This isn't your A game because it's not corresponding to what I think is an A game.

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Performance. Let's get our act together, okay? Right. And we voice that on other people. They're not thinking and saying and they're not doing by my standards.
[26:20] They're not meeting my expectations in some way. Now, because of time, I'm not going to read it, but I want to give you a reference here.

I don't have a slide for it. It's James 3, 13 through 18, and that passage talks about, bitter jealousy and selfish ambition coming together in these conflicts with other people.
We have these wrong desires that are fueling the issue, and it is not the wisdom of God for us to live like this. And so then, later in the passage there, in chapter 3, James will talk about the wisdom of God.
It's a gentle wisdom. It's a gentle wisdom. It fosters peace and understanding. between people. It doesn't mean that people don't sin against you.
It means that you don't sin back in response to being sinned against. You maintain a gentle wisdom in that. Then, in James chapter 4, verses 1 through 2, again, I'm just giving you the brief overview.
[27:26] The question comes as this. What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? The literal Greek rendering there has to do with wars.

They're military terms that speak of people going into battle. Now, you've had this in your life, right? What is the source of these battles, wars, and conflicts that you have with other people?
Whether you hide that conflict in your heart or it manifests in the things that you say and do toward them. What's the source of all that? And here's what he says. It's the other person.
No, he doesn't say that. He does not say that. Here's what he says. Is it not your desires warring in your own heart? Your desires.
It doesn't mean, now listen, your pastor's not up here saying that people don't sin against you and that when you're sinned against, it doesn't matter. It does matter. It matters to God.
[28:27] What I'm saying is we are not given liberty to sin as a response to being sinned against. We cannot do that.

And so he says the problem with these conflicts that we have with other people in our relationships is this. We have certain wants, expectations, desires within us and they are warring in us to make sure that we get what we want in any given moment.
And when those desires that are already warring in us, slam up against what is warring in someone else, we're going to have sparks. And the Bible says deal with what is within you.
And this is exactly what Jesus is saying. Deal with what is, think of how different this story could read if those Pharisees and scribes would have heard this counsel and immediately came under conviction and dropped to the ground and said, Lord God forgive us.
Right? But they didn't. What was their solution? Look, I'm going to put it up here on the screen for you. Their solution is others focused because they see others as the problem.
[29:41] That's what you do. It's what I do. We become others focused so we got a lecture ready for you. I've got a point to make with you.

I've got an argument to settle with you. I've got something to set right with you because I see you as the problem. You need to make some changes and maybe they do, but who made you the Holy Spirit and God of the universe?
No. You're the problem we say. That's what we think. You're the problem, ergo, you need to do the changing and correcting.
What these men are doing is adulterating, weaponizing, and misapplying God's word while exalting their own sinful hearts. It's a both and. I'm going to tear you down while I build me up.
Most conflicts have something of that intention in there. So speaking of intention, let's go to it in verse 5. Here it is.
[30:45] The Pharisees and the scribes asked Jesus then, now they've come to it, they've made the observation, they've made their interpretation, we've already identified the motives of their heart according to scripture.

He says, why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders but eat their bread with impure hands? Ah, we got him. We got him. He can't get out of this one.
We've seen it. We've observed it. You do this. Oh, I saw you. Or, this is what you said. Listen to me quote you. This is what you said, and here's how you said it, and then it comes back.
I didn't say it like that. Oh, yes you did. You need to get your ears checked or something. We get into these petty things.

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This is the intention. If that was the incident, if that was the situation, here's the intention. They launch their attack in the form of a question, but it's still an attack.
[31:45] This is more actually a statement of self-righteousness. They're just looking for a way to assert themselves and what they think they're right. So, it's a veiled accusation against Jesus and His authority.

Here's what they're saying. Your disciples transgress because they have a teacher who himself transgresses. They are like you. These religious men, they can quote Scripture and they often do. They can talk at length about devotion to God and they often do. They even claim to follow God but they never do. Jesus is going to expose that in just a minute calling them hypocrites.
It's very important for our understanding of this dilemma to see that these men are sincere in their beliefs. If you were to ask me, Jeff, do you think these guys are sincere? I'd say, absolutely I think they're sincere. I think they're religiously devoted down to their toenails.
They're sincere in their beliefs. They're sincere in their interpretations. They're sincere in their perceptions. They think they've got it wired right. Look, when you get in conflict with people and you make your argument, you think you're right or you wouldn't do it.
[33:01] Right? That's exactly what they're doing. They are self-deceived. Why? Due to their sin-sick hearts.

In their case, they're blind guides leading the blind, which Jesus will eventually say that about them. Folks, they're sinners. They're sinners like you and I.
The big difference being this. They hate Jesus. Why do they hate Jesus? Because they hate His authority. He teaches His one with authority. They hate His authority. We want the authority.
We have the authority, not you. Where'd you come from? You just kind of came on the scene. Well, that's the intention. They're trying to trap Him. They want to murder Him eventually.
We saw that. Well, what does Jesus do? How does He answer this issue that they find themselves in now in this confrontation with these highly religious, very argumentative men who are super skilled at making spiritual arguments and cutting people down to the quick?
[34:06] How does Jesus handle it? Well, that's verses 6-13. And so Jesus said, rightly did Isaiah prophesy you about you, hypocrites. You honor me with your lips.

Yeah, you give me mouth service. But you know what? Your life shows that you are far, far, far away from me in your heart. In fact, your worship of me, he says in verse 7, is in vain.
You're doing all that in vain. It's emptiness. Godliness. Why? Because you are teaching as doctrines not the Word of God, not the goodness of God, not the character of God, not the truth of God.
You're teaching the traditions and precepts of men. This is it. You're experts at setting aside the commandment of God.
And then he gives the example and he ends it all with this. You invalidate the Word of God by your tradition. And you're handing all of that off to the next generation.
[35:06] You do a lot of stuff like that. A lot of stuff. Well, this is the indictment. Number three, this is the indictment. Look, folks, look, whenever you find yourself in conflict, you need to ask what the incident, what the circumstance, what the situation is revealing to you about what you think, say, and do.

Not the other person. You see, we know our tendency. We know what the human heart is capable of. We get into conflict and the first thing we want to do is find someone to blame. And even if we're trying to be sincere about it, we need to understand the deception that comes with our own heart, the blindness of our own heart.
We need the Holy Spirit to help us through this. I'm going to say more about that in just a moment. All right? So whenever you find yourself in conflict, you need to ask what this incident or situation is revealing to me about what I'm thinking.
What am I thinking in this situation? What's going through my mind? What am I saying? What words are coming out of my mouth? What's the tone of my voice? what am I doing?
And then what am I doing? And we need to start all of that asking those questions toward, look up on the screen, toward, what, the problem?
[36:30] The circumstance? The other person? No, God. What am I thinking about God in this moment? What am I saying that reflects the Lord in this moment?

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moment? What am I doing that shows the love of God in this moment? The gentle wisdom of God in this moment? The patience of God in the Spirit in this moment?
See? This is a question that I often ask in counseling because it gets me right to where I want to be as I deal with people. Where is Jesus in all this?
That's an arresting question, isn't it? It doesn't mean that people can't be in conflict. That's just part of being human. What I want to know when people bring their situations to me to act as an objective party in trying to bring truth to bear on it all, try to help them untangle it and love them well, where is Jesus in all this?
Have you considered him in these moments? You see, look, if I have two people in conflict and I can get each one of those people focused on their own hearts and dealing with where they are in the Lord, if I can get them to see the situation in context that God is using and creating in their life, which is squeezing them, they're in a circumstance, they're in a situation, they're involved in some incident, and all of that is serving to squeeze them, and then stuff's coming out in what they say and what they think and what they do.
[38:07] If they can look at their own life and look at those responses and ask themselves, now what does this reveal about my heart? See, if I can get him doing that, if I can get her, if I can get the two hims, the two hers, the friends, whatever, if I can get each one of them looking at that and asking, what does Jesus have to do with this?

Then they're going to go, okay. The whole perspective shifts. Now I've got two people who likely have sinned against each other, sitting before the Lord as his learners and saying, show me, Lord. Search my heart and try me and see if there be any wicked way in me. See? Changes the whole perspective. Now we're in position to do this. We're in position to ask these questions in terms of our responses toward the other person.
How is God using this person to show me my heart's responses? I'm in this situation with this person and it is a God ordained situation. Now what is it revealing to me as God uses this person in my life about my heart?
What is being shown? I can't even see my heart. I can't see my heart. You can't see yours. We can't see each other's. We begin to see the fruit.
[39:30] We hear the fruit. We see the fruit. And we look back from the fruit and say well what kind of bush grows grapes? An apple bush.

An apple tree. No. Grapes come from a grape vine. So see? We see this come out and whatever the fruit is, whatever the manifestation is of what's coming out, I can look behind it and go whoa. What did I want in that moment that I would say something like that? Because that was punishing. That was brutal. And even if it was somewhat accurate, I set it to hurt.
What does that say about me? Where am I in my heart? What I'm trying to help you do is focus on what's most important. Where is Jesus in all this for you? Your heart will deceive you.
The Pharisees and scribes were getting Jesus wrong. That's just what you and I do when we're sinning in some way. We're focused on, listen now, we're focused on the problem.
[40:33] We're focused on the other person. We're focused on some aspect of procedure. You know, they didn't do it right. They didn't do it my way. They're not handling it correctly.

We're procedure to them to death. They might not even know what the rules are. Why didn't you tell me that was a rule? We get into all kinds of mess like this. when we focus on the problem, when we focus on the other person, when we focus on some procedural violation that we've made as a standard or expectation on them.
It comes down to this. I want what I want when I want it. And I want it the way I want it. I want. It's prideful and it's self-centered. And what does the Bible say?
Love doesn't seek its own way. 1 Corinthians 13. Love doesn't seek its own way. The Pharisees and scribes are always looking at the externals.
See? Then they judge. Then they criticize. Then they assign bad motives to people. Oh, I know why you did that.
[41:39] No, you don't. Yeah, oh, yes, I do. I know you. I know why you did that. You don't know. You guess. They never allow for God to search out and reveal their own hearts to them.

So, what happens as a result of this? The same thing that happens to you and me when we're in a context like this. I'm going to put it up here on the screen. They live within their own minds. Oh, that's so dangerous.

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Another way to say this is this. Follow your heart. No, don't you dare do that. Don't you dare do that. You live within your own minds.
that's a prison. That's not freedom. I ask again. Here's, let me put it up here. What are they getting wrong?
What are these men missing? Well, listen, it's not so much a what they got wrong or missed. It's more important who they are getting wrong and missing.
[42:42] They are getting Jesus wrong. And this is why I say I often ask the question, where is Jesus in all this? I tell the story in counseling sometime.

I don't have time to elaborate it here. Just enough to let you know that your pastors are not immune to this. We understand we've been married for some time. We have a very close relationship with a soulmate in life.
You know, I remember when Suzanne and I were having our greatest difficulties very early in our marriage, two sinners marrying and not having a clue how to do it. I remember everything changed when God got a hold of my heart and said, Jeff, stop pointing fingers at her and start dealing with you.
Now, I didn't hear a voice. He used the word. There was a series of sermons from Ephesians that convicted me in that reality. But when I dropped to my knees and said, Lord, I'm going to start dealing with me, everything changed and we've been on an upward trajectory, since then, haven't we?
I mean, we have our bumps and we have our moments and all, but it's quickly remedied, quickly remedied. When before, they would go days or weeks or months. It was misery.
[43:58] But when we start letting God deal with our hearts, this is the emphasis Jesus is making here. I'm not making this up. I hope you see I'm not playing fast and loose with the scriptures.

All right, now here's the question that I want to ask you. It just came up. What does Jesus use to expose their pride and self-righteousness? Well, yes, he is using the incident.
He is using a certain circumstance to help reveal what's important to them and their mouths are saying it, right? That's true. That's absolutely true. But there's something I'm looking for here that's more specific to the context.
All right, the answer is this. Jesus uses God's word to expose and clarify the real problem in this conflict. The real problem.
I want you to notice what he does here in verses 6 and 7. We've already read it. Just look at it with me and notice this. What does he call them? Hypocrites. Now that's actually a Greek word.
[44:59] We get our word hypocrite from this Greek word. It's hypokrites. It means pretender, actor, stage player.

The idea here is falsehood. Falsehood. Jesus is using God's word to label the problem of their hearts. Their hearts are lying to them. And in sin, your heart lies to you.
When you sin, your heart is lying to you. Because it's telling you in your sin that you can replace Jesus with your own agenda. Your own program in that moment.
It doesn't mean you're not saved. It doesn't mean you lose your salvation. It means in that moment you've chosen to be disloyal to Christ and loyal to something else or someone else. And it all comes back to the root of your pride and your agenda.
Just like it does with me. This is what's happening. Notice what he says here. Teaching as doctrine the precepts of men.
[46:04] Boy, Jesus is driving right into, no pun intended, the heart of the issue. This is the integration of the wisdom of man with the wisdom of God. We call this integration.

I want to take a little bit of what the world says, and I want to take a little bit of what the Lord says, and bring those things together, and then I've got the best answer, and this is wrong. This is wrong. They believe the wrong while insisting on being in the right, and they dress it up in scriptural garb.
But you know, you can put a purple robe on a pig, and it's still a pig, right?
That's right. Mark, you know, a hog's a hog. They always are hogs. That's the way it is. No matter what you paint them up and do with them. So what we're talking about here is a very man-centered, a very man-focused view of what is good, of what is right, and even of what is needed.
Because the Pharisees and scribes have made an interpretation about what is needed in this moment. What's the corrective? Jesus, see, we're going to challenge you with the corrective.

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[47:13] You need to get these disciples in line. They need to get out there and do the hand wash thing, you know, and no, Jesus doesn't even go there. Folks, we are the product of what we allow ourselves to believe about God and His Word.

If you have a low view of God's Word, you're going to have a low view of God, you're going to live a low Christian life. False doctrine is so dangerous because it shapes how we see ourselves, others, and our world.
It shapes our perspective. It shapes how we make meaning of what comes at us every day because you're constantly making meaning of your life and relationships.
So, here's the question. You see it right there in bold. What is most informing your views and interpretations of others, the world, God, life? What is most informing your own heart?
what is shaping you, defining you most? Is it some pursuit, hobby, goal, person? Is it some competing desire, competing with loyalty to Christ and a desire to please the Lord?
[48:37] We can have even good things in our lives that we have elevated to that place and they have become inordinate or bad things because we've put them in a place they don't belong.

In our heart, the priority of our heart. All right, now let me ask you some questions to make applications as we go, all right? I don't want to get to the end and not have done that, so I'm going to try to do it with you now.
Look at this. In any given situation or relationship, so just reflect, back up, or just keep reading. In any given situation, relationship, circumstance that you currently have in your life where there's tension or that maybe you've recently had in your life where there's conflict or tension or disagreement or whatever, and guys, look, do the levels, okay?
This doesn't have to be some knock-down drag-out between you and someone else. It can just be there's tension there, there's conflict there, blah, blah, blah, that kind of thing, all right? Put yourself in that.
Think about that right now and now look at this one. In that situation in relationship, are you characteristically, characteristically angry? Are you impatient with the person, the situation?
[49:53] Are you irritated? Are you characteristically irritated? Just find yourself immediately irritated, frustrated, annoyed, argumentative, sullen.

You know what sullen is. Disengaged, you pull back in order to punish. Are you quick to assign motives for other people?
Do you become withdrawn and critical? And things like this, you know, that list could go on for slides, right? But here's the question, what thoughts or desires are behind these actions?
What are you thinking in those moments? What do you want? It's just not a hard question on the surface. Sometimes it's hard to root this stuff out.
It wants to hide. You remember me telling you on Wednesday night last time we were here together, our idols, the idols of our heart, the God replacements that we bring in and become loyal to in that moment rather than being loyal to Jesus.
[50:57] This is when our heart isn't saying, well, where's Jesus in all this? We're not doing that. We're doing something else. Those idols, those false gods, those God substitutes, they like to hide and masquerade.

They don't want to be known for what they are. And you can't root them out. You cannot do it. You cannot do it. God has to do it. And he uses his word to do it.
What are you like? What are you thinking? All right, look, next slide. This kind of behavior says more about your view of Jesus than anything else about you.
Where is Jesus in moments like this in your life? Look, pride is an ugly thing, folks, isn't it? Pride is an ugly thing. Now, I want you to notice what their pride and self-deception, because they are self-deceived.
They are looking into the face of the Lord of glory, the creator of the entire universe, the maker of their very souls. They're looking into his face.
[52:01] How would you like to do that? What would that be like for you to actually sit down and look into the face of Jesus and have a discussion? Would that change anything?

Well, they're doing that, and it's not changing them. Such is the pride and hatred of the human heart. Such is the power of sin.
Do you see where I'm coming from? It is a spiritual miracle for you to be born again and learn to love Jesus. It is a miracle of heaven. Don't ever forget it. And it only comes by the word of God.

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That's the power. All right? So what are we dealing with here? The pride and self-deception of their hearts is shown in this. I'm going to have to do this kind of quickly.
So watch. Now remember, these slides will be available online, God willing, once the guys do all their magic. I don't even know how to do all that. But anyway, here's what happens. Notice what the text tells us.
[53:06] The first thing is this, false speech. You honor me with your lips, but your heart's far from me. You say this and you say that.

You teach this and you teach that. False speech. Now look, this shouldn't surprise us. Luke 6.45 tells us that every single one of us speak from that which fills our hearts.
Our mouths often betray our true motives and desires that are within and unseen. You know, you just give people long enough and keep them talking and they're eventually going to tell you what it is that they want.
They're eventually going to talk out of what's most important to them. Do you not notice that? Have you ever been around someone that likes to talk about themselves? You know, we're all our favorite subject.
Just come and I'm my favorite subject, brother. Ask me some questions. I love to see. We do this. Just keep them talking long enough and their mouth is going to tell you what's most important to them in that moment.
[54:14] You get in a conflict with someone. Just listen to what they're telling you because they're telling you what's behind what they're telling you. What's most important to them. In counseling, you learn to become skilled in listening to things like that and you're constantly listening behind.

It's not magic. I don't have some special ability to see into your heart. I listen to your words. I ask you questions. I draw out and I just keep drawing out and drawing out until I hear things like this. Well, this should have been. Well, this ought to have happened this way. Well, what I wanted was me, me, me, me, me, me, me. I just listen for that. And you're helping me understand and identify and tag what's probably most likely going on in your heart.
And then what I want to do is come back and say, here's what the Lord says about this. Let's talk about this. Let's look at what this will look like if this becomes more important to you than those things. It's not magic, but it does take some skill.
And fortunately, all of us can learn to use God's word in that way. Now look at another one. False worship. In vain do you worship me. It's in vain.
[55:31] I'm not accepting that. This is all a spiritual issue, folks. It's a spiritual issue issuing from a hardened, far away heart in each one of these men.

And all of that is based in, and here it is, false doctrine. What's fueling all of this? Lies. False doctrine.
This is so dangerous. If you want to know where Pastor Greg and I will pounce like lions, it's false doctrine. Because it's gangrene.
It's cancer to you. God help us. It won't happen here. If anybody wants to know, what gets the hair up, what puts the bristles up on your pastor's false doctrine?
In any form. We don't want that. What is this wrong teaching? The teaching of men. This is what's producing false speech.
[56:32] They have bad teaching in their heart. And so it's not any surprise that their mouth is going to speak out of that bad teaching in their heart and they're going to say things that are wrong. Well, your disciples are doing all the rituals.

And they miss the point. Even when the Lord of glory teaches them the point. If you look at verse 8 with me, notice what he says here, neglecting.
They're teaching man's wisdom in verse 7. Not God's. But they're calling it God's. They're claiming that it's of the Lord.
Now notice in verse 8, neglecting the commandment of God. Verse 9, you are experts at setting aside the commandment of God.
Now go down to verse 13, thus invalidating the word of God. What's going on here? Well, look at this next slide. Neglecting, setting aside, invalidating, what?
[57:32] What's the answer? God's word. This is exactly what we do when we choose man's wisdom, when we choose me in the moment. I'm neglecting, setting aside, and invalidating the truth of the Lord.

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Because that's not what's defining me, driving me, and what I say, think, and do. These actions reveal their relationship to God's truth and to God himself.
That is, the true views, the accurate views, that God will bring to help them better understand the context. Now, real quickly, let me show you what this is.
I want you to see these words. Neglecting here in the Greek is afiame. Afiame. It means to dismiss, depart from, abandon. Would you like to be known as someone who's abandoned God's word? Right. The sense is to stop maintaining or insisting on. So you start living in that moment in a way that you're not insisting on the truth. You're not living, you're not telling your heart, I insist that my heart interpret this by the truth.
[58:40] You're not doing that for you. And it's creating this moment. Setting aside, atheteo, atheteo, to reject, render void, deprive of force and authority.

You see that? That's what we do when we have this attitude toward God's word. We just won't let it into our heart. We just won't surrender to it. We're depriving it of its force and authority in my heart. The sense is to take away the legal force of or render ineffective, to disesteem. That's good. We disesteem God's word in our own heart or we wouldn't sin.
And then finally, he uses the word invalidate down in verse 13. And this is an interesting word. Akuroo. Akuroo. It means to render void, deprive of force and authority.
It's very, very similar to the other words. So these words compound together. I wanted you to see these Greek words because they sound, they are very much alike.
[59:45] Afiimi, atuteo, akuroo. All of these are negative connotations on these men's relationship with God's word.

word. These are men who are not about the truth. This is the point. They do all of this, men from Tuesday morning, see if you recognize this, they do all this by replacing their voice for the voice of God.
By replacing their own views and desires and agendas for God's truth. So that the example that Jesus gives about dishonoring your father and your mother, that is intended to show them you are mixing God's wisdom with man's wisdom and guess who wins all the time?
Because of our hearts, man's wisdom. Whenever you try to mix man's wisdom and God's wisdom, people are going to gravitate toward man's wisdom. Why? Because man's wisdom is easier. Because man's wisdom doesn't focus on your heart. You hearing me? God's wisdom does that. God's wisdom drives into the motives and desires of your heart.
[60:55] It won't let you finger point. It won't let you do that. That finger pointing thing, that's up to God. You take that away. That is up to God.

Are there ways that Suzanne and I can sit down and work through an issue together? Yes, but it does not involve me finger pointing at my wife. Have I done that?
Yes, I've done that. God help me. God help me. God help me. If you believe a lie in your heart, you will speak, live, and worship by lies.
You can do that in a moment's, just a moment's notice. I'm not saying you're unsaved. I'm saying we're sinners and we need the Holy Spirit all the time. We need the gospel all the time.
Not just at the moment of our salvation. I need the gospel in five minutes. I'll need it in five hours. I'll need it in five days. And then there's this, the injunction in verse 14.
[61:55] He doesn't just leave them here. Now look what he says. Listen to me, all of you, and understand. That's beautiful to me. There are two verbs here.

Listen and understand. Both are in the imperative mood. Now here's what that means. They are voiced as a dual command from Jesus. Listen and understand.
Okay? Listen means to hear with intention. Do you hear what I'm saying now? You listen with intention. What does that mean?
Well, understand has the idea of to join together in the mind. So it means to know and comprehend the nature and the meaning of a thing. So you heed, obey, and apply, Jesus says, what I'm about to tell you.
It's very important for your life. You listen with the intention of gaining understanding so that you can take it into your heart and apply it in your life. You're not just listening.
[62:55] Oh, I heard what you said. Have you ever done that? Oh, I heard you. And it was like poop, poop, and hit the floor. You weren't listening to understand. This is one of the few places in the Bible that we can see very, very clearly that God says it's very important for us to wear the

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responsibility as listeners to understand the meaning of the speaker or the writer.

That is your responsibility. And so I teach this. I'm not going to make it through all this. I teach this in counseling oftentimes when I try to help people understand how do you listen to each other with some very basic things that you can do.
One of them is this. When you're talking with someone and you're communicating, particularly when things are tense, when things are stressed, when the tension is kind of high, and the person says something.
I'm going to use Alonza. You're right here. Alonza says something to me in the heat of that. All right. She says something to me. Now, my tendency would be to do this. Oh, yeah. OK, well, here's here's something you can think about.
Whammo. I'm going to make my point. Right now, look, we all do this. Instead, what I do, I back off. I'm what is Jesus have to do with this? Where is Jesus in this right now?
[64:10] And so the next thing that I do is I say, OK, all right, I heard you say and then I try to paraphrase what I heard. I heard you say this and this and this. I'm not interpreting.

You understand? I'm just trying to get what she said. Did I hear you correctly? Is that what you said? Now, I'm going to get an answer. It's going to be yes or it's going to be no.
Is that not true? She may say mostly. That's kind of a yes. All right. So if I get anything less than a yes, here's what I do next.
OK, go out and try it again. All right. Try it again. So she does it again. We will keep doing that until I get a yes. Telling you to yes.
Why? Because I'm working hard to understand. I want to hear her. That's honoring her. You can look it up later. Ephesians chapter four.
[65:09] Read the whole chapter. You're trying to honor the speaker or the writer, the one that's doing the communicating with you. When I get that yes, I'm ready to move on to the next thing.

I don't have time to tell you all that right now, but that'll get you started at least. What are we? Injunction. Oh my goodness. What I'm describing to you right now when Jesus says listen up and understand work to understand what I'm telling you.
This is life and death. Whenever Jesus speaks, it's life and death. You agree? He's the Lord of glory. Yeah. It's just what we need most.
We need Jesus to speak. It's just what we need most, but we are most unlikely to consider when we're in the heat of allegiance to our own views, our own agenda, making our own point, insisting on our own way.
And so that brings us to verse 15 where he defines the issue. There is nothing outside the man which can defile him if it goes into him, but the things which proceed out of the man are what defile him.
[66:27] That's the issue. Defile here means to profane or consider impure. I realize you don't walk around saying to people, you defiled me or you are a defiled person or you don't say things like that.

Defile just simply means impure. The point is impure. What makes you impure? This is the issue. The conflict with another person is reflective of the conflict in our own hearts toward the truth and the character of the Lord Jesus.
I'm going to say that again. I didn't make a slide for it. Listen, the conflict that you have with another person is reflective of the conflict in our own hearts toward whom?
What? Toward the truth and character of the Lord Jesus himself. How you handle that other person, how you manage, steward that conflict says a lot about your view of Jesus and the regard you have for the truth.
Again, folks, the caveat comes immediately. I don't want you to hear this as some cold legalistic thing. Do people sin against us? Yes, they do.
[67:37] Are those people wrong when they sin against you and me? Yes, they are. All I'm simply saying is if your response to being sinned against is to sin, now who's wrong?

And you don't have to yell back to sin. You can just do this. See?
Love does not insist on its own way. I'm sorry, folks, if this offends you, don't be like the scribes and the Pharisees and walk away from Jesus and say whatever.
Let it get into your heart. Inability, verse 17. When he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples questioned him about the parable. And here's how he responded.

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They're questioning about the parable because they don't understand. And Jesus is going to say that in verse 18. Again, from my Tuesday morning guys.
[68:45] What these men need is the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit to reveal to them, to illumine their minds. Remember that, guys? With the truth of the Lord.

So in verse 18, we see that spiritual dullness exposed by Jesus. Are you lacking in understanding also? I mean, do you not understand?
And Jesus is asking this to expose. He knows that their hearts aren't grasping it. He's exposing that reality. Now remember, I'll put it up here on the thing, on the screen.
Look at this. Spiritual things must be understood spiritually. What I mean by that is by the ministry of the Holy Spirit, making known to our minds the truths and insights of God's understanding, God's wisdom.
All right? You have some scripture here. For the Lord gives wisdom. From his mouth come knowledge and understanding. You see that? Lord gives. It's from his mouth. That's what we need. Open my eyes.
[69:49] Why do we pray that prayer? Because we need the Holy Spirit to do that. That's illumination. Open my eyes that I may behold wonderful things from your law. Look at this one. Give me understanding.

What a great prayer. Give me understanding that I may observe your law and keep it with all my what? Heart. Oh, if they had prayed that prayer before the Lord in that moment.
And then if I can't get to the rest of it, at least let me give you this, the interpretation in verses 18 through 20. This is where Jesus is setting the matter in a truthful framework.
So he's taking what he's been presented by these men and now he's going to box it in a truthful framework for them. And this is very interesting to me because in verse 14, it was listen to me all of you.
So he's addressing not just the disciples, but when they go into the house here in verse 17 and he begins to speak, he has a different audience, doesn't he? Who's the audience now?
[70:54] Disciples. So at one point he was talking to a crowd that might have included some believers, but now, but now, and unbelievers, now he's talking to believers. All right?

That is very important, folks. Very important. And so what does he do? He says this, what place, this is the interpretation and instruction, he is restating the concept of God's definition of heart impurity from what he told the Pharisees and scribes at the end of verse 15.
He's just repeating it in 18 through 20. And this is the reproof, the reproof. I think I've got a slide for that. Yeah. This is the answer of God's truth intended to expose and stop the lies.
Stop believing what's wrong and believe what is right. And so he moves to the corrective, he moves to the corrective, this will all be up on the thing, when he begins to instruct them in these final verses.
He asks this question, what place inside of you does Jesus locate the problem of impurity and defilement? What is Jesus? How is he answering that? Your heart. Your heart.
[72:13] Where does your sin come from? It comes from within your heart. Now let me ask this, where does the sin in the other person come from?

Does it come from you? Did you make them sin? Did they make you sin? Where's their sin coming from? Their heart. It's redundant, I know. But we forget this.
It's like we get amnesia in the heat of the moment. But Jesus is telling us, listen up and understand. This is life changing.
This is life giving. There isn't a person on the earth that can make you sin. And they don't. Not your parents, your spouse, your kids, your friends, other drivers on the road, your boss, your neighbors, even the devil can't make you sin.
Culture and society, your upbringing, do not make you sin. Nothing from outside of you makes you impure, sinful, prideful, angry, irritable, frustrated, annoyed.
[73:25] And Jesus debunks the false gods they are putting their faith in. Self-trust, self-reliance, self-favoring, all of this because behind every bit of it they want control.

They want the approval of men. If I could just, they come out in statements like this, if I could just get this, if I could just have that, if this could just stop.
Those are the statements that betray. Religious ritual is the means that they're using for all of this.

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Listen to me all of you. Why is it that as Jesus is saying all of this and he's offering it as a corrective, why is it that now he switches in teaching his followers and explaining and he doesn't teach unbelievers?
Look, again, real quickly, Jesus here is not teaching, in the moment that he comes into the house, he's not teaching unbelievers. What did he do with the unbelievers in the earlier part of the passage from verse 6 down?
[74:32] He confronted them. He indicted them. This was an indictment. Right? What does he do when he gets with believers? He teaches them. Why? Why the difference there?

See, look, you cannot teach an unbeliever to live by the scriptures. You can give them the principles, you can have them read verses, if they don't have the Holy Spirit, they're not going to live by the Holy Spirit.
Okay, here's the verse that I want to share with you about that. Jesus teaches us as his followers, he does not teach unbelievers, why not? But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God.
A natural man is an unbeliever, why not? Because they are foolishness to him. He cannot understand them, why not? Because they are spiritually, that is, by the Holy Spirit, appraised.
or examined. 1 Corinthians 2, 14. For believers, for those who are spiritual and under the Holy Spirit, we can have our hearts instructed in the truth, we can grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus, we can, we can, we should, we must.
[75:42] Look at what it says. All scripture is inspired, that means exhaled, breathed out. created by God.

It's profitable for, notice the first one, teaching. See? Not teaching the precepts of men, the tradition of men, not teaching you my own mind, teaching you God's mind in the Word of God.
And then that teaching helps us with what? Being reproved. Reproved is this, stop doing that. That's cancer to your soul, it's an offense to God, stop doing that.
And then the correction, instead do this. Stop doing that, correct, do this. That's the corrective, do this instead. Replace that with this.
And then training in righteousness. Now as you begin to learn to repent and replace, you begin to train yourself in what is right and good and pleasing in the sight of the Lord, what is truly needed.
[76:45] Because we can say a lot of things that we need, we don't need. We think we need them and we don't. For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing as the division of soul and spirit.

It goes right down into the joint marrow of your life. And what does it do? It judges your thoughts and intentions of the what? The heart. I'm almost done, folks.
Look at this. God loves us in His Son. We need to follow Jesus. Allow God's word to expose the areas of your life where you are discontent.
Put your finger right there. Allow God's word to help you in your life where you fail in faithfulness to Christ.
You sin repeatedly in this area or in this way. Or you're most often in conflict with another person or people. And then heed Jesus' instruction to use His truth to plunge into your heart.
[77:52] Search me, O God, and know my heart. Try me and know my anxious thoughts. See. You're not, I don't want to see. I need Him to see. And as He sees, He reveals.

And when He reveals it, I just simply say, this is what you see, Lord. You see that ugliness in me? Oh, God in heaven, forgive me. See? That's what you need.
And then what? Lead me in the everlasting way. The everlasting way is the way of heaven. What is everlasting? Heaven. The things and priorities of heaven. Lead me in that way.
Help me more and more to trade in my agendas for yours. I want yours in my life. Now the reason that I did all this again is just to try to bring you a passage of scripture that shows you.
I know I didn't take apart all of these words, murder, thefts, deeds of I know that. I did that in a sermon years ago. I went through every one of those. It took me five sermons to do it, but we did it.
[78:53] You have a good idea of those things and you have a good idea of your own sin. God. The point here is how do we deal with impurity in our hearts. We let Jesus deal with it as we listen to him and seek to understand based on what he's told us in his word.

Amen. That's what we need. Will you pray with me? Father God in heaven, we pray now by your marvelous grace that you would help us to take to heart what we have read, what we have seen,

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what we have come to know now in the way of your truth, just as a reminder to us that we have wicked hearts, we have hearts that are deceived, and so I pray for your people now.
I pray for me, for Suzanne, as we go through our marriage together, as we do one another's in our church family, we need to minister the word to each other with much grace and patience and kindness.
We need to believe the best. And Lord, I'm so hopeful, God. I'm so hopeful, Father. I know you are a master at taking messes and making them into something magnificent for your glory.
So take us as a mess and help us to live a magnificent testimony of the great exaltation of Jesus as the Lord of glory. We pray all of this in His name and for His honor.
[80:17] Amen.

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