

God Weighs the Heart

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[0 : 00] We are in Genesis, beloved. Yes. Yes, we are tracking. Poor Noah, he is still on hold.

It's going to take me a few more messages to get to him getting into the ark and getting safe. But we'll get there, Lord willing. What I'll be dealing with this morning then is it still waking up?

Will you just... Oh, good, there it is. Thank you. You know, we just have to wait on the stuff.

Sometimes it wants to do its thing. God weighs the heart and while we'll be zeroing in on chapter 6, verse 5, I'm going to read chapter 6, verses 1 through 8 to give us the context and then we'll jump in together.

Genesis 6, beginning in verse 1. Now it came about when men began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful and they took wives for themselves whomever they chose.

Then the Lord said, My spirit shall not strive with man forever because he also is flesh.

Nevertheless, his days shall be 120 years.

[1 : 23] The Nephilim were on the earth in those days and also afterward when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.

Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

The Lord was sorry that he had made man on the earth and he was grieved in his heart. The Lord said, I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things to birds of the sky, for I am sorry that I have made them.

But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. Now I want to ask you as we look into this together because I want to keep you thinking carefully about Old Testament truth.

And I want to remind you what we read in the Old Testament in the way of God's truth is not lesser truth than what we read in the New Testament, is it?

[2 : 42] Alright, it's all God's truth from cover to cover. So let me ask you then, why is the teaching, this particular teaching that we're looking at this morning, why is this particular teaching relevant to your time and to how you live your life day to day?

What does this have to do with your day to day life? Why is it important for you as a Christian, as a follower of Jesus Christ, to study and heed the wisdom of this particular passage?

How come we can't just come today, find out we're in the Old Testament, kick back, and kind of just cruise, just put it in mental neutral. Then we can tick off our box that we were here.

We're good little Christians. Why is that not a good thing for us to do today? What is the relevance of this passage? Well, here are just a few of the many important truths that this passage informs your heart about.

Now look at this with me. First of all, God hates sin. This passage is going to teach us that God hates sin.

[3 : 50] God punishes it without prejudice. No one escapes the punishment of God for sin, save one particular way that God Himself has made, and that is through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

A second thing that we can take away as a truth from this passage, our evil is our enemy. Our evil is our enemy. God teaches us to hate and to put off sin.

So we are in a learning process as Christians where we are learning to hate what is our enemy.

When we sin, we don't treat sin like it's our enemy.

Think about that. When you sin and when I sin, we sin because we want to. We can't say the devil made me do it. I can't blame it on someone else because they're not sinning out of my heart.

I am. That's what we're going to look at today. That's what this verse is all about we're going to study today. God hates sin. Sin is our enemy. We need to see it as our enemy and we need to understand that God has called us as Christians to put sin off.

[5 : 07] That is, if you picture this like clothing, if I was to take this sweater and pull it off, that's us taking off the sinful desires that motivate us to sinful actions.

And God has told us we need to put those off. There's a way for us to do that. He's made that way for us. Number three, evil is pervasively corrosive.

What do I mean? I mean that sin is an active force. It never rests. The bad in you and the bad in me that God labels sin is not something that is passive.

It is an active force of badness and it is pervasively attacking you on a constant, continual level.

One moment, it may be crouching and pausing and watching you with laser focus, as it were.

And then the next moment, it pounces. And this is the way that Scripture speaks about sin, isn't it, in several places. It is an active, pervasive, acidic, corrosive, cancerous force.

[6 : 19] It lives. It lives in you and it lives in me. Now we need to take stock of that. We need to let that sober us about what this evil is.

And then finally, this passage shows us that God judges the heart. The heart. The only hope for change is heart change.

That's the emphasis of this passage. If you'll look with me then at the verse we'll zero in on this morning from Genesis chapter 6, it's verse 5. We'll just deal with this verse.

Then the Lord saw. What did He see? That the wickedness of man was great on the earth and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Now we may be tempted to think, yes Jeff, but we're in a modern age. We're in a progressive age. We've had thousands of years to evolve in this. Well, stay tuned. I'm going to say something about that in just a little while from the Scriptures.

[7 : 24] In verse 5, what we have is God identifying for us this evil and He identifies it as man's root problem.

So if you want to know and I want to know what is the root issue of my spiritual life? What is the root cause of why I do wrong things?

Wrong things toward other people? Wrong things in the attitude of my heart? Why do I harbor things inside of me that I know are wrong and that I shouldn't be thinking like that? I shouldn't be having those kind of desires like that?

Things that I say, I shouldn't have said that? Shouldn't have said it in the way I said it? Well, right here we have God telling us, identifying for us, that the evil that we do has a root home.

It's our root problem. That root is in the heart of each human being. So this passage is teaching us that Satan is attacking people's hearts or their minds.

[8 : 30] And he does that to thwart God's promise from Genesis 3.15. The context that we're looking at in this satanic attack as he tempts people to evil.

Can Satan make me sin? No, he cannot. Satan does not have the power to make you sin. Sin. Even as an unbeliever, he can't make you sin.

Whenever you sin, whether you're an unbeliever or a believer, a Christian or a non-Christian, whenever you and I sin, we sin out of desire. We sin because we want to. All right?

Nobody's twisting our arms spiritually to make us do something we don't want to do. We get to the place where we sin because in our heart in that moment, that's what we chose to do. Okay?

Or think. Or dwell on. Or desire. That's what we're dealing with in this. So Genesis 3.15 is the issue that Satan is coming to attack and tempt people away from and tempt people to be evil in.

[9 : 36] What am I talking about? Well, let me put it up here on the screen for you and show you.

Genesis 3.15 says, And I, that is God, I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed.

He shall bruise you on the head and you shall bruise him on the heel. Now, I told you last week when we looked into this that I spent an entire series of sermons talking about Genesis 3.15. You can access those sermons on our website.

Go into the sermon part and you can click down. There will be slides that attend just like this to that sermon series dealing with the importance of this verse. I can tell you this this morning.

This verse refers to spiritual warfare between Satan and the woman. In the immediate context of the passage, that refers to the devil and Eve.

I'm going to put war. Well, I'm so tempted to start talking about that, but I really need to move on because it's so important. It's between also the warfare moves beyond Eve and it says in the verse and between Satan's seed, which would be unbelievers, and the woman's seed, Jesus Christ. [10:52] So, I'll put this up here for you. This is God's promise. Genesis 3.15 is God's promise to use a woman in order to send His Savior to rescue mankind from the power of Satan and sin.

Here's the quote from one commentator. Here then is the valuable role of women that Satan hates. What is it? One of them would bear the one who would doom him.

From a woman will come this great deliverer, this promised Messiah from a woman. Now, here's the issue. Satan doesn't know which woman and he doesn't know when.

He doesn't know the time that God will do this. What he knows is that sometime in the future, a woman will have a male child and that male child will be God's designated deliverer.

He will break the curse that God has put on the land, the people. He will break the curse of sin and what sin has done to the human race.

[12:07] But he doesn't know when. The great church reformer, Martin Luther, said of this verse, The promise and the threat are both clear and obscure.

It left the serpent in the dark about which woman should give birth to the seed of the woman so that he had to think of every woman as possibly becoming the mother of the blessed seed that is Jesus. On the other hand, it gave some clarity, didn't it? It gave our first parents, Adam and Eve, great faith that from that very hour they expected a Savior.

You see, Adam and Eve understood Genesis 3.15 very clearly that God is making a promise that from a woman will come a deliverer, someone who will break this curse, break this sin and deal it a death blow.

So they looked in faith for that expected Savior. So folks, whenever you hear people talk about how Old Testament saints were saved, they were saved in exactly the same way that you and I are saved, by faith in the one to come.

[13:21] We have the benefit of looking back on the cross. They had the privilege and ability to look forward toward that time when God would bring this great deliverer.

They didn't understand all that we do now because it hadn't been revealed. It had yet to be revealed in Jesus Christ. But they knew He was coming. What God was going to do with Him and how it was all going to work out, they didn't know all those details, but they knew that they had to hope in that one that was promised.

And so that's faith. They were putting their faith in the one, the Deliverer, the Anointed One, the Christ, the Messiah. Just like we do. It's no different. And they were saved by grace through faith. That isn't a belief that they came to on their own, is it? It was the gift of God working in their lives and drawing them to that faith. We know that because the Bible tells us and He also tells us that not everybody in Israel believed like that, did they?

Some of them were putting their faith in ritual or just in the simple fact that they were born a Jew and raised in a Jewish home. Like we might say, I'm saved because I was born in America.

[14:33] I love my mama and apple pie. So I'm good. I'm a Christian. No. Something very different is at work here. Now look, Satan's lack of knowing which woman prompted him to do something.

And this is where we are in our text now. All of this has moved forward to this moment. Because he doesn't know which woman, he was prompted to an immediate action so that he enacted this very vile plan to send demons to possess human men in order to defile the daughters in the lineages of both Seth and Cain.

And so he hedged his bets. He said, because I don't know which woman, I'm just going to send my demons, cut them loose, they're going to possess these men and they're going to go out and then they're going to cohabit with all of these women and try to corrupt or poison the bloodline from which the Savior is supposed to come.

That'll do it. And so what I'm trying to tell you, based on the sermons that I've preached the last couple of times where I've given you explanation for all that, I'm trying to tell you something unprecedented is happening to humanity right now.

This is something the world, even in its youthfulness at this point, has never seen. And I don't know that we've seen it since. Something extraordinarily evil is happening to humanity.

[16:02] Perversion dominated humanity just before God commissioned Noah to begin working on the ark and it continued afterwards until Noah finished the ark.

Unprecedented evil. Now, here's what we need to understand. God has a deep aversion to perversion.

And that is what we're seeing. Now, I believe that what we see happening in these verses in chapter 6 describe for us this terrible, satanically inspired depravity.

It came to define society so that it progressively then dehumanized and enslaved society to their deceitful, degrading desires.

And you ask, well, Jeff, I mean, how bad can it get? Well, again, if you look at the remedy for the problem, it gives you a strong indication just how bad the problem was.

[17 : 14] God sent a global flood to wipe out every air-breathing creature on the planet. Now, what does that tell you about how bad the problem was? Pretty sobering, isn't it? How bad can it get?

The people were drunk with personal lust from greedy hearts. And it was widespread. It was women. It was children.

It was men. Young people. Across, this is what they came to know and live by. Unbridled, selfish lust.

Don't just think sexual immorality. Yeah, there was plenty of that. But think whatever they wanted in the way of chasing pleasure, there was no bridle to it. It was whip the horse and go full speed.

That's how people lived. It was across society and culture. It's unprecedented. Now, how does all of that help with the context? Well, look.

[18 : 15] What happens then is Moses writes this. Moses is the one who penned this all the years ago. He writes to God's children of promise, the Hebrew people, so they will know the origins of evil and its pervasively devastating effects on any people who turn their backs on God and go after the idols of their deceitful hearts.

Idol worship is the issue of a sinful heart. We exchange the truth of God and God Himself for something else in God's place and we bow down to it and we give it the allegiance of our heart as we pursue it.

and we almost get to the place where we worship it like we should be worshiping God because we're asking it to do for us what only God can do.

Bring me a sense of peace. Bring me a sense of joy. Help take me away from my problems. Help me deal with the pressures of life, the trials of life, the suffering of life, the sense of inadequacy that I feel, the sense of insecurity that I feel, all the troubles that I face in my...

Those are the things we should be taking to God. But what do we do? We take a God replacement and put it up and then we ask that thing to do all of that for us in some way or another.

[19 : 38] And what do we find out time and again? That it's elusive. It doesn't work. Does it? It doesn't help, it doesn't solve, it doesn't heal, and it doesn't last.

This is what we find out. Moses is writing to these people to help identify these issues for them. Now in turn, Moses is also showing his original readers.

This was written for a certain group of people in a certain period of time. He is trying to show his original readers to Hebrews who will inherit the promised land. Remember, this is all being written and read while the people are coming out of that 40 years of wandering in the wilderness.

They're about to go into the promised land and God inspires Moses to write this history for them and help them understand this better. He is helping them to understand why.

Because that's the big question. Why did God bring this catastrophic judgment on the people of this era? What was so bad that God had to take these kind of dramatic, drastic measures to kill every single person and animal on the planet save eight people and the animals in the ark?

[20 : 56] What in the world? What is that all about? I'd want to know. Verse 5 of chapter 6 not only shows us God's view of how bad it really, really was, but the verse also gives us, and this is very important for you, the theological foundation for how God weighs and is able to rightly judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

I want to help you with this theological framework. And what that means is trying to help you understand God and His ways.

That's the theological part. You're trying to understand God and His ways in terms of how He measures or weighs the heart and rightly judges the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

It's very important that we understand that work of God toward us in relationship to us. Now here's what I did. I put this up here for you last time and we did.

We went through the first point. All these points relate to chapter 6. There'll be several more as we work through it. Last week it was the sinfulness of society in verses 1-4.

[22 : 10] Today we're going to focus on the sagacity of God in chapter 6 verse 5. Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth.

That every intent every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. Now look sagacity means a readiness of apprehension.

A readiness of apprehension. It means to discriminate. So you have a discriminative intelligence. It has to do with having an acute practical judgment.

So sagacity is the quality of being wise, discerning, sound in judgment. And so we can say about God he's supremely sagacious, supremely wise, discerning.

He is so astute in his ability to see into the reality of things. and his view or his assessment, his evaluation of those matters is always true.

[23 : 15] Now do we know how important that is? That every time God weighs in, what he weighs in with is perfect. It doesn't have any measure of error.

So when God looks into your heart and puts his finger on your heart and reveals something, as he uses the word to do that, we'll talk about that in a minute, it is always spot on.

Oh, you may wiggle. Oh, you may complain. You may whine and cry, but you cannot escape the reality of the truth of your God seeing what is really true about you.

And neither can I. Now for some people that's terrifying and off they run. And for other people, it makes them fall down on their knees before this holy God and be like Isaiah.

I am a man of unclean lips. Look away from me. Look away from me. But when God sees us in Jesus Christ, he sees us in his Son. He looks at us as if he's looking at Jesus.

[24 : 18] Why? Because he is. Because the only righteousness and holiness we possess is the righteousness and holiness of Jesus. And that's how we're to stand before the Lord. I don't have a righteousness of my own and neither do you.

So we come before the Lord in the righteousness, cleanness, robes of holiness of Jesus. And that's how God looks at us and sees us. Say this is too good to be true. I know.

It really is. It's all by mercy and grace. You don't deserve it and neither do I. It's a gift. It's a gift. It's not something you deserve or I deserve.

This is what we're dealing with when we talk about the sagacity of God. Now I want you to notice that the Bible says here then the Lord saw.

Now take that little phrase and think about what this means. Then the Lord the Lord saw. So it is God seeing that gives us the idea of God's perfect perception as He applies His wisdom to our hearts and to our lives.

[25 : 24] He observed perfectly the motives and desires of all these people. In other words, God wasn't wrong. He didn't get it wrong. He didn't misjudge. He's not playing favorites here.

He sees widespread wickedness. So Creator God is looking with perfect insight, perfect understanding into mankind's life on earth so that when God judges a heart, He's not hindered, He's not negatively affected by personal sin.

God doesn't have any sin. He's not negatively impacted by selfishness or pride like we are. He's not limited by a lack of knowledge about the context, situation or person.

He's not limited by any of that. And He's not limited by deceitfulness, the deceitfulness of sin, because He doesn't have any. That all describes us. When we try to weigh in on something, whether it's an issue in a relationship or suffering or a trial or something we're struggling with, we tend to battle all those things, don't we?

We battle pride, we battle deceitfulness, we battle the schemes of the devil, we battle lack of knowledge because we don't know everything about whatever is going on. Oh, we think we do, but we don't.

[26 : 44] That's us, but that's not God, is it? So, see, you can trust God. You can trust God, Fred, to have a complete and total, true, accurate assessment of your heart, just like I can, as He looks at my heart.

So, whatever God reveals to me out from His Word as He searches my heart, I can trust it. I don't have to pray, now God, am I getting this right? If the Word says that's what's going on with me, then I'm like, okay, there you go.

I have my answer. Look, here's another way of saying this. There is not a more sophisticated answer to the issues of your heart and your life than what the Scripture will reveal to you. On the planet Earth, there's not. Mankind cannot come up with a more sophisticated assessment and measure and diagnosis, prognosis and help for the ills of the human soul. You go to the brightest, the best, you go to psychology, philosophy, Scientology, it doesn't matter who you go to. No one has as sophisticated an answer for man's problems than the Lord does. [27 : 56] He made us. He understands sin backward and forward, although He Himself has no sin. That puts Him in a perfect and unique position to judge it.

Does it not? Because He doesn't have to worry about it affecting Him. High and holy God. Man, that's who I want to run to. So He has perfect perception, perfect insight, perfect depth of understanding, and He applies all of that always perfectly. We can trust God's wisdom. Look, there are other passages that speak to this. Look at what it says in Psalm 19 9. The judgments of the Lord are true. They are righteous all together. Notice that verse. True has to do with what is faithful, sure, firm, reliable, and righteous means to be just or right. So God's decisions on what are right and wrong are always true, always right, always just, always. It says that they are righteous all together. [29 : 07] They're true. Look at this one. Psalm 119, 137. Righteous art thou, O Lord, and notice, upright are thy judgments.

Upright in this verse means straight, correct, fitting, or proper. So Lord, you are righteous in your person and you are upright in all that you judge, all that you discern, determine. You are upright. That is, you are always straight in it. You are always correct in it. You are always fitting and proper in how you make judgments about people's hearts. Now look, folks, verse 5 tells us that God's accurate evaluation of mankind was based on two things that He Himself observed about these people. So God is bearing witness. God is seeing physically, He's seeing as it were, and He's also perceiving. [30 : 15] Seeing the actual happenings and then perceiving behind the activity. And that's something that we can't do. I can't see into your heart and you can't see into my heart.

I've been married for 41 years and I cannot see into my wife's heart. I may understand patterns about her life as I've gotten to know her, etc. So I know more about her strengths and her weaknesses. I get that. So I can do a little forecasting as I try to be a good husband to her. but there's one thing that I can't do. We experienced a power outage and a portion of the sermon was not recorded. The message resumes here. Thank you for your understanding. Motive and desire of your heart and knows what and who you really are. Now again folks, that can be terrifying, but for those of us who love the Lord and want to fight sin, that's music to our ears. Because we want to run to a God who really knows us and will tell us the truth every single time. Amen. That's what we want. People who care about personal holiness care about having a God that will tell them the truth.

[31 : 26] No matter how much it hurts. No matter where it takes you in regarding your soul. We need a God like that. Do you want God to tell you what you want to hear or what you need to hear? See, that's what it comes down to. Who said need to hear? Amen. Alright, you keep teaching them, Mike. You stay on top of that.

So this emphasizes their behavioral sins. Look at what the Bible says. For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the Lord and he watches some of his paths. Nope. A few of his paths. Nope. All of them. That's the God you want to go to. How about this one? The eyes of the Lord are in every place watching the evil and the good. Now that shouldn't unnervous. It should help us understand that for those of us who are pursuing holiness, there's nowhere to go to hide from God. Why would we want to?

[32 : 34] Notice also that God's assessment is that this wickedness is as I mentioned great on the earth.

Now great refers to God's assessment of it being widespread epidemic. So this is epidemic behavioral pervasive behavioral iniquity characterizing how people are pursuing life.

They are a people defined by their lewdness and their cruelty. Lewdness and cruelty. Now I just want to stop and ask you does that sound vaguely familiar?

What does it remind you of? Does it remind you of anything you see today? It does me. It reminds me very much of what I see going on today.

When we can have literally thousands and thousands of people jumping up and down and waving flags and burning cars and screaming and hollering at the top of their lungs Hamas Hamas from the river to the sea when those people went into a place and cooked babies in ovens and went on a rape rampage and shot children in front of their parents and indiscriminately murdered other human beings why?

[34 : 09] For one reason because I hate you not because you attacked me not because you came after my family but because I hate you for being a Jew now you think about the wickedness of our hearts and what we're capable of when people strip down to almost nothing by the thousands and march and parade themselves through the major cities of our country celebrating gay pride and displaying it as if it's the greatest thing on the planet and they feel sorry for all of you who don't embrace it boy what you're missing out on and you ask yourself because I do how long oh Lord how long how long

I hope you feel righteously indignant about that because that is like taking excrement and throwing it in the face of Jesus Christ Paul said that he came to the place in his life where he thought about things that made him a greater man man's wisdom he considered them as dung compared to the knowledge of Jesus Christ we have to be willing to tell the truth people with grace with love but I tell it as straight as I know how to tell it people who are embracing things like that need to come to terms with the depravity of their own heart and they need message that we need to bring political astuteness wars on top of wars none of that stuff is going to bring about the change that everybody wants to see happen in the

Middle East and other places in the world but believing in Jesus Christ and trusting in him for the forgiveness of sins will make us all blood relatives in him it will make us bow the heart and bow the knee to one Lord and one Savior under one banner and it's the banner of Jesus not Hamas not even America can I get okay thank you we love our country and we love the fact that we can do what we're doing today but we are not branding the world under the American flag as salvation for the world it's under the banner of the Lord Jesus Christ and we're thankful to live in a nation that allows us to proclaim that at least for now these people are being defined by lewdness and cruelty if you'll look at verse 11 of chapter 6 now the earth was corrupt!

in the sight of God and that's what matters God says it's corrupt And the earth was filled with violence that's God's perspective on what's happening if you look down at verse 13 then God said to Noah the end of all flesh that is I'm going to kill them all has come before me for the earth is filled with violence because of them not because of Satan because of them and behold I am about to destroy them with the earth now folks this is great wickedness and I'll put it up here for you this is great wickedness rooted in first of all the wholesale abandonment of all godly constraints and values I've talked about that already this is rooted in prideful violation of God's boundaries for human existence they have thrown off all constraints and they're doing whatever they want to do and they're proud of it and then finally the total disregard for

God and his ways it's rooted in a total disregard for God and his ways and so God has given them over to what they want he's just removed restraining grace as I preached the last couple of sermons and now he's just turned them loose to run wild in what they want out of their heart the outward evidence of evil was staggering everywhere God looked he could only find people whose hearts were immersed in pursuing a malignant way of life an evil wicked way of life so everything that the Lord then said that he made is good and very good mankind has defiled debased and exploited for their own gain and pleasure apart from any relationship or accountability to God folks look isn't that what sin does doesn't sin bring us to the place where we're defiling and polluting!

[39 : 16] and exploiting what God wants to bless us with sin ruins! everything it touches it ruins your marriage your job it ruins your role as a parent it ruins you in terms of your gratitude to God you don't have any thankfulness toward God while you're chasing sin you could care less about God and his ways!

You see sin takes us further and further away from what is right and true and pure and what is good for us this is why at the very beginning of my message I told you our enemy is sin it's not our friend it will always seek to ruin us now add to this real quickly a second observation about mankind the

first one was the wickedness he saw the outward behavioral iniquity but now what about this their inner evil notice how the text brings this out every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually so this again refers to the root of behavioral iniquity it's the cause of all this wicked living God says that man's wicked lifestyle is produced by his evil heart the wickedness we do issues from who we are so what does that mean well what did

Moses the writer of this mean by using the word heart in the context of Genesis 6:5 well the heart in Hebrew thought was the core of your personhood so we might say it this way in our terms we might say your heart is who you really are it's who you are at the center of your being it's who you really are one commentator that I consulted Lawrence Richards explains it this way Hebrew thought maintains the unity of the person so he doesn't break us all into pieces it looks at a human being as a

whole! expresses all of these and the other inner human functions by use of the word heart so everything that goes on in your inner person not your organs but your inner personhood your being all of that has to do with what he says is your conscious self the inner person with every function that make a person human so your heart then what is it your heart is your mind that is your thinking your thoughts your heart is your mind your will your will is the choosing apparatus of your personhood you choose out of your will when you enact your will you will you will you are using your will to get the rest of you in motion so you choose out of your will so your mind your will your emotions or your feelings and then finally your desires your affections what it is that you want what do you desire most in any given moment if you're struggling with a particular sin and you continue to repeat!

what you're battling is not simply an outward thing coming at you what you're really battling in that failure that continuing failure are desires that are not being dealt with at the level of your heart you've got to reach in and tap the root of what is bringing you to the place of doing things that are sinful wrong displeasing to God whether they're thoughts that you hold in your mind and play over and over again because Jesus said to lust after a woman is like sinning with her like physically sinning with her because you've already committed to sin where in your heart in your heart that's the issue and when we don't deal with the heart when we don't deal with the mind the will the emotions and the desires when we don't deal with the heart in a way that's going to help us pursue holiness we're just going to find ourselves in a cycle have you ever experienced that cycle you know [43:51] I think I'm doing okay and then I'm not and I find out that I walk myself right into this again and then it starts all over again and now all the feelings of guilt and shame and loneliness etc sense of failure that all pursues me and it just it's all right I just described issues of the human soul so your heart your mind your will your emotions that's all ways of talking about your soul heart soul are synonymous terms this is the way God understands how he made human beings we are bodies!

housing a soul the most important thing about you is your soul and your body is just the tent the dwelling place for your soul when you die how much of what you see standing before you and sitting here is going to go to meet with the Lord only your soul not your body because this body is sickly and weak and it's wearing out it's not fit for heaven you're going to get a new body for eternity this one won't make it forever so you're going to get one glory let me tell you you see that scar I'm ready to get one doesn't have all this and so are you now all of this brings us to the place of understanding that Genesis 6:5 reveals the depravity of mankind

Genesis 6:5 is giving us a theological framework a God view of how we're to understand evil sin wickedness the wrong that we do very important it's often referred to as total depravity now I want to explain that real quickly so I'm just going to put these now remember you can access these online after we put all this on upload it whatever you call it so look here's what I'm talking about total depravity emphasizes the devastating impact of sin on the person and covers three related concepts first of all sin is total total it's pervasive I put that up for you right at the beginning of the message in all components of a person are polluted by sin so there's no part of you that is not polluted by sin there's no part that escapes you don't have a little piece somewhere where there's no sin or hasn't been affected by it sin and then sin is total in that man is incapable of pleasing God on his own sin is universal in that all humans are sinners so what does the Lord want us to know about the inner condition of human beings which prompted God to render such cataclysmic judgment against these folks well he says that the intent of the thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually now I want to help you understand the gravity of that it led to gross sinful lifestyles so the word intent what are we talking about let's break it down just for a moment intent can mean

framework it can mean purpose form as in forming pottery it's akin to the word that God used in 2 7 where he said that he formed man from the dust of the ground that's the concept so it's what you form in your heart what you create what you make in your heart to think and say and do either for evil or for good can go either way and then the word thoughts thoughts can also be translated devices or inventions so so thoughts highlight the work of your mind as the most critical component of what you form in your heart in this context due to the sin the evil we do in

God's sight is formed in our hearts that's the takeaway the evil is formed! our hearts so when I want to do business with God concerning my sin I'm going to ask God to search my heart I'm not just going to confess what I did I want God to search my heart for the root cause of what motivated me out of desire to do what I did or say what I said that was sinful God help me go into where it's coming from and deal with it there no band-aids boy that surgery hurts so now look taken together then the intent of the thoughts of a man's heart refer to inner natural dispositions it's the place where we form produce and frame our plans and our purposes and our intentions again I say this to you in love beloved because I want you to know the truth you have never ever sinned that you did not at some level plan and move forward in the plan to do what you did in the way of sin sometimes we think that it just happened it doesn't just happen our hearts are structured in a way where we act on what we want most in the moment that's the hard part for us that just slams right into us oh dear [49 : 36] God I wanted sin more than I wanted you in that moment God help to humble us before the Lord to bring us before God confessing our sin here's what I'm saying as meaning makers you and I want to understand and solve the problems of life we encounter meaning makers want to do that we want to make meaning why we're constantly asking that sin though sin deceives us we see our problems through the lens of self we're self deceived and then we have an enemy who's trying to deceive us Satan so we diagnose our problems as being outside of us it's society it's my job it's the stress I'm under it's the lack of it's too much of fill in the blanks so we're always because of this prideful self we're always seeing the issue as outside of us if I could just get all these things outside of me fixed then

I'll be fine and what we do is we betray a misunderstanding of the truth of scripture that says no your problem is within you and you don't have your own answer if if you look in what you should see is darkness you have no answer to rescue yourself you don't have it I don't have it I cannot save you and you can't save me we have to look outside of ourselves for something much more reliable and so here's what I can show you this does the Bible bear that out Jeff well look look here the Bible in Psalms!

who can discern his errors who can look into his life and figure out all the wrong the evil all the patterns all the webs who can do that well the obvious answer is no one no one can do that so then in light of that he says this acquit me of hidden faults!

That's a prayer God I can't find out my own faults! I can't! know all of the depth of the wrong that I'm capable of or that I've even done and so what does he ask God God you forgive me of even the hidden stuff that I don't know to ask about you with me that's a great prayer isn't it that's Psalm 1912 here's what Solomon said the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil full madness is in their hearts throughout their lives did you know that was in the Bible who's he talking about God us by Genesis chapter 6 hundreds and hundreds of years of reproducing and building and relating have gone by but has man's heart evolved into something better at best man's heart has devolved to devise evil all the time to produce disorder violence corruption and every evil practice under

God's sight and the reason is because of this the heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick who can know it that's the reason who can know their own heart answer no one so God can reveal our hearts to us but we can't and that's why the Lord tells us this you see this scripture I Yahweh search the heart I test the inmost being even to give to each person each man according to his ways according to the fruit of his deeds in other words I'm not going to candy coat it I'm not going to sugar coat it God says I'm going to search and I'm going to show you what I find unvarnished wow what else does it say for God knows the secrets of the heart what else does he say there is no creature hidden from his sight all things are uncovered and laid bare to the eyes of him to whom we have to give an account now folks listen again some people are going to read that and it's going to terrify them or they're going to dismiss it and say yeah

[54 : 12] I don't believe any of that okay I mean everybody makes a choice out of your will but just realize this for those of us who care about personal holiness for those of us who are committed to fighting sin we read this and this is life to our heart because it tells us we can run to God and he will

tell us the truth and the truth will set us free from what sin shame guilt dishonor destruction despondency depression degradation we'll be set free from all of that or you can pursue sin and let it drag you down into its dark clutches you can turn to Jesus or you can stay being your own little God little G and you'll continue to find out that you're terrible at it friends we cannot trust our own hearts

God's view of our hearts is trustworthy he alone sees who we really are his assessment is always proper and fitting he never lies he never misjudges he always tells us what is truly there and he uses the word of God to reveal that to us say Jeff how does he do that do I get down on my knees one day and start praying light some candles do and then God somehow just does it and I know no he does it through his word he uses the truth of the Bible to open the eyes of your heart and help you to know what is and you say alright now where is the discrepancy where am I falling short how does God answer me falling short and I'll tell you every single time what the answer to that question is it's Jesus Christ in Jesus Christ you don't fall short anymore in him you are full complete you are a new creature in

Christ amen now that's glorious say Jeff do I still sin?! then I go to God and I ask for forgiveness and I ask him to search my heart and equip me of hidden faults and I ask God to reveal to me and lay bare to me what it is that's getting in the way of me continuing to walk in holiness with him in this way and you know what he answers that prayer and so off now I am on a process of personal holiness of becoming more like Jesus in my life and that's what brings joy to my soul it brings joy to my soul to become more and more like Jesus in character word and deed amen that's the Christian life here's what I'll end with the unfolding of your words gives light it gives understanding to the simple you're looking at a simple guy and I need that kind of understanding and so the light that he gives is the light of the truth in his son

Jesus as Jesus in the power of the spirit uses God's word as a lamp to my feet and a light to my path that's what we need Genesis 6 5 it points us to Jesus who is our hope let's pray together father these are heady matters these are deep waters where we are challenged to try and understand what you tell us about our own hearts and so I pray for encouragement for my brothers and sisters to hear a message like this can sometimes be very intimidating and even terrifying because we recognize that the sin that we do and possibly that we're trying to keep in secret is not kept from you but God help us to run to you father help us to run to you as your children and for those who are in here who are struggling with knowing whether or not they're truly a

Christian I pray! that you would who Jesus is I want to know more about how to have a relationship that you talked about earlier where God will forgive me for my sins and help me fight against the things that are ruining my life can I have God can I know him the answer is yes God help those people in the sound of my voice now to bow their heart before you and to trust you and to you will no wise cast out as they call upon you through faith in Jesus Christ we thank you almighty God for the way you're working in our lives and in our hearts as a church family to tell us the truth that we might bring that truth to a watching world a needy world help us to be people who love well and deeply help us to be forgiving!

[59 : 41] soul with you as we walk with Jesus we want to please him in all respects and we want to live in the joy that we need to have and should have as we reflect on how much you love us in Jesus and how you see us as perfectly righteous in him thank you for these wonderful gifts of salvation in Christ's name we pray!

Amen