

# DEVOTIONAL

## HEART HEALTHY

Inspection: How's Your Heart? // January 16, 2022

GRACE  
FELLOWSHIP

**Discussion Starter:** Do you evaluate your spiritual health and growth? If so, how? If not, why not?

**Key Text:** *“And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.”* (Ezekiel 36:26)

In *A Man After His Own Heart*, Charles Siebert shares a scientific yet poetic depiction of a heart transplant he observed at New York-Presbyterian Hospital in New York City. After observing the transplant, Siebert attended a banquet for heart transplant recipients, and he was deeply moved by their sincere appreciation for life. They spoke in reverent tones about the second chance at life they had been given. They humbly acknowledged their responsibility to honor the donor. And many of them talked about new desires that came with their new hearts. Siebert concluded (and his research is backed up by many medical studies) that transplant recipients don't just receive a new heart. Along with the new heart, they receive entirely new sensory responses, cravings, and even habits! Siebert called this group of heart recipients “the tribe of the transplanted.”

The Bible says that when God gives us a new spiritual heart—when He places a new spirit within us at the moment we trust in Christ for salvation—we, too, receive not only a new heart but a new sensitivity toward God and new desires that are pleasing to God. The Holy Spirit enters our lives at salvation and changes our hearts from sin-focused and self-focused to God-focused. We who have had the “*heart of stone*” (hard, stubborn, immovable) removed and replaced with a “*heart of flesh*” (soft, humble, teachable) (Ezekiel 26:36b), could now be called the tribe of the transplanted, too!

**Discuss:** What do you think are some causes and solutions for a hard heart?

**Discuss:** In what ways has the Holy Spirit been changing your sensitivity toward God, desires, and habits since you received Christ?

### 1. What is the heart?

The word “heart” is used dozens of times in the Bible, but most of the time, it does not refer to the muscle in the chest that pumps blood. Rather, in Scripture, the heart is often used interchangeably with the soul, and refers to your mind, will, emotions, desires, and personality.

### 2. Why is the heart so important?

Proverbs 4:23 says, *“Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.”* This means that everything we do flows from the heart. The heart is the core, the inner essence of who we are. The heart is a person's inner moral and spiritual life. In Luke 6:45, Jesus said, *“The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.”*

### 3. People judge the outside; God searches our hearts.

1 Samuel 16:7 says, “*But the LORD said to Samuel, ‘Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.’*” People may judge the inside of a person by their outward physical appearances—their looks, build, how they dress, etc.—but God considers a person’s heart: his/her moral and spiritual characteristics. God can examine our motivations and know everything there is to know about us. He knows if a person will be faithful because He sees what people cannot see—our true character. God desires that each of us, like David, be people “*after God’s own heart*” (1 Samuel 13:14).

**Discuss:** What do you think it means to be a person “after God’s own heart”?

### 4. Invite God to search your heart.

Psalms 26:2 says, “*Prove me, O Lord, and try me; test my heart and my mind.*” The Psalmist welcomed God’s inspection of the depths of his heart in 4 areas:

#### 1) The integrity of my faith: “*Prove me, O Lord...*” (v.2a)

A faith that can’t be tested can’t be trusted. God doesn’t test our faith so He can know the quality of our faith (He already knows!); rather, He tests our faith so we can know the quality of our faith and make improvements where needed.

**Discuss:** Why are tests of our faith necessary?

#### 2) The integrity of my beliefs: “*...and try me...*” (v.2b)

**Discuss:** How well do you know what you believe and why you believe it?

**Discuss:** Read 2 Corinthians 10:4-5. What do you think it means to “*take every thought captive to obey Christ*”?

#### 3) The integrity of my emotions: “*...test my heart...*” (v.2c)

**Discuss:** Do you manage your emotions, or do your emotions manage you?

#### 4) The integrity of my thoughts: “*...test...my mind*” (v.2d)

**Discuss:** Read Colossians 3:2. What do you think “*set your minds on things above*” means?

#### For Further Study:

*Ten Questions to Diagnose Your Spiritual Health* by Donald Whitney

“How Was David a Man After God’s Own Heart?” article at [www.gotquestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org)

“5 Indicators of an Evil Heart” article at [www.crosswalk.com](http://www.crosswalk.com)