

✠ Looking at the Heart

- **TURN TO 1 SAMUEL 16 (9<sup>th</sup>... josh, judges, ruth, sam)**
  - **The year is 1043 BC, give or take 50 years. In one of the great stories of the OT history of Israel, the prophet Samuel has been called by God to go to Bethlehem, to the family of Jesse, because one of Jesse's sons is God's choice to be the new King of Israel. Jesse had 8 sons, and when Samuel saw Eliab, he immediately assumed this would be God's choice. But he wasn't...**
- 1 Samuel 16:7** *But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."*
- **The story continues that Samuel looked at seven sons, and then asked "is there another"... David in the field, the youngest... He was God's choice.**
  - **Today starting series "At the Crossroads, from false beliefs to freedom." At the core of this message is the reality that when it comes to LIVING OUR LIVES- dealing with our struggles, desiring to overcome problems, fears, experience VICTORY and FREEDOM in life... that even as followers of Christ, we tend to spend most of our time focus on things that are on the SURFACE.**
    - **We seek to change our circumstances**
    - **We seek to change dynamics in relationship... maybe seeking meaning and contentment by entering a relationship**
    - **We seek change by changing our jobs, our locations, our physical health, social status**
    - **SEEK to change our BEHAVIOR PATTERNS**
  - **THESE ARE ALL IMPORTANT!! And for most of us, these are areas where we could really use positive change, health.**
  - **BUT, these are all SURFACE ISSUES. They are things that are visible in HOW WE APPEAR. All of these dynamics of life are the result of something deeper, and many of them are temporary in nature.**
  - **The story of Samuel and David is so meaningful to us because of the great Truth that GOD WHO CREATED US, AND DESIRES FOR US to be spiritually and emotionally healthy and free, HE DOES NOT FOCUS ON THE EXTERNALS. HIS FOCUS is OUR HEART, and throughout His WORD, he calls for our focus to be the same.**
  - **Because here's the reality. Whether we realize it or not, we all have a functional source of living, and that source is what we call OUR HEART.**

✠ Our source, whether we realize it or not

- **We use the term 'Heart' a lot, in popular culture and in the church. "Courage" (he has lots of heart)... "compassion" (she has a big heart for kids)... the BIBLE... DEEPEST PART OF WHO WE ARE, and in this inner core of our SOUL we will find what we TRULY, FUNCTIONALLY, believe to be TRUE.**
- **Our core functional beliefs- our heart- inform how we think, how we think leads to how we feel, which ultimately results in our choices, actions, behaviors.**
- **In proverbs 4:20-23, the teacher stresses the importance of our HEART being filled with God's Word, God's truth, for our heart will be the source of all of who we are...**

**Proverbs 4:20-23** *My son, pay attention to what I say; turn your ear to my words. <sup>21</sup> Do not let them out of your sight, keep them within your heart; <sup>22</sup> for they are life to those who find them and health to one's whole body. <sup>23</sup> Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.*

- **Above all else, guard your heart! We think of this in terms of what we PUT IN, what we let influence us... but another big part of guarding our heart is KNOWING OUR HEART.**
- **PETE POINTS OUT that much of our functional belief system, how we think about things, how we respond to what is said to us, our core attitudes... are unconscious, like breathing.**
- **LIKEWISE, many of our core beliefs were instilled when we were young, often by what happened to us, what our life taught us to believe about the world around us, other people, ourselves, how life works, and about GOD.**
- **EXAMPLE... as we grow and live, we develop multiple I AM statements about ourselves**
  - o **I AM undesirable, unloveable. Less than**
  - o **I AM all I need. I AM better than others (PRIDE)**
  - o **Healthy- I am of value**
- **ALSO DO THIS TOWARD OTHER "PEOPLE ARE"**
  - o **People are untrustworthy. People lie**
  - o **Christians ARE hypocritical, judgmental**
  - o **Peers are cruel, uncaring**
  - o **WIFE IS... MEN ARE... WOMEN ARE...**
- **ALSO do this about outlook on life.. LIFE IS...**
  - o **Hopeless. Pointless. Scary. Unfair.**
  - o **Significant, valuable, precious**
- **Self-awareness of our behaviors- how we impact ourselves and other people- is sign of maturity... BUT, to be self aware of our deep belief systems, our HEART, rarely happens without great intention. KEY!! KNOWING OUR HEART takes COURAGE, EFFORT (and, can be helped by skilled counseling).**
- **THIS IS THE JOURNEY WE WILL BE ON FOR THE NEXT 8 MESSAGES, as we examine the core FALSE BELIEFS many of us carry in our HEARTS.**
- **THIS LEADS to the central illustration in Peter's book, and in our study... THE ICEBERG**
- † **The Iceberg: Understanding the power of what we really believe**
- **Of course, iceberg is a great illustration for many things, but here, it is a powerful picture of what Jesus said... "tree recognized by its fruit"**

**Matthew 12:34-35** *For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him.*

- **What we see, deal with on the surface, comes from what is below the surface. Lets walk through this...**
- **RIGHT SIDE, UNHEALTHY SIDE- where many people live... start at the bottom. At our deepest level...**
  - o **FALSE BELIEFS.. have fun just a sec...**
    - **that facial hair increases as one grows older**
  - o **Leads to DISTORTED THOUGHTS...**
    - **My scraggly beard really looks good (self deception)**
  - o **Leads to UNHEALTHY EMOTIONS**
    - **Frustration and sadness that beard is... jealousy at men with great beards**
  - o **Leads to DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOR**
    - **I refuse to shave and I break my razor**

- **AGAIN, BUT MORE SERIOUS**
  - **FALSE BELIEF:** *My value depends on my performance before people*
  - **DISTORTED THOUGHTS**
    - *I have to be right all the time*
    - *If people correct me, disagree with me, they are trying to demean me, hurt me*
  - **UNHEALTHY EMOTIONS**
    - *Shame, resentment when I fail*
    - *Pride when I succeed*
    - *Hypersensitivity to what others say*
    - *Very Emotionally needy, insecure*
  - **DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOR**
    - *Perfectionism, stressed out*
    - *Assume negative intentions into others*
    - *Speak negatively about people who don't actively approve of me*
    - *Talk over people, unable to have difficult conversations*
    - *Damaged relationships, isolationism*

– **ULTIMATELY...**

**Proverbs 14:12** *There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death.*

- **OTHER SIDE OF THE ICEBERG... at our core...**
- **TRUE BELIEFS:** *My value and identity as a person is rooted in who I am in Christ, what God says is true about me. I am Holy and Dearly loved... I am not bound by performance based acceptance.*
- **ACCURATE THOUGHTS**
  - *It's okay to fail*
  - *I don't have to project myself from the opinions of others*
  - *People who disagree, who are different from me are just as valuable as I am, I can respect....*
- **HEALTHY EMOTIONS**
  - *Humble heart in failure and success*
  - *Resilience and patience in relationships*
  - *Emotionally secure*
- **CONSTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOR**
  - *Accepting, more at peace with what I can do*
  - *Start- Assume positive intentions with others*
  - *Seek to build other people up, not tear down*
  - *Good listener, ability to sincerely hear others*

– **These examples may be extremes, but... THIS BEGINS TO REFLECT what Jesus said...**

**John 10:10** *The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*

- **"I have come that you may know me, know my truth, receive my life... and through me experience transformation in your MIND, EMOTIONS, and WILL... in how you THINK, FEEL, ACT... in your THOUGHTS, EMOTIONS, and BEHAVIORS.**
- **IN JOHN 8 story of Jesus, great significance...**

<sup>31</sup> To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples.

<sup>32</sup> Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

<sup>33</sup> They answered him, “We are Abraham’s descendants.... We’re free! What are you talking about!

<sup>34</sup> Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. <sup>35</sup> If you are a slave, you are on your own... but a son has a family, a source, that will never fail.... <sup>36</sup> So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

- **Friends, it is Christ’s desire that we be FREE INDEED. And for us to be free “In DEED”... in our behaviors, our emotions and thoughts... We must let Jesus get to our heart. I mentioned earlier that this takes COURAGE, EFFORT.. it also takes SURRENDER. Great Biblical paradox of...**

#### ✠ Victory through surrender

**Psalm 139:23-24** Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. <sup>24</sup> See if there is any offensive way (**false beliefs, offensive thinking,**) in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

- **As we go through this study.. lots of good, biblical, teaching... but the question really is, WILL YOU SURRENDER? WILL YOU TRUST GOD with the deepest part of who you are, so that...**

Communion