

“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11).

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FEBRUARY IS HEART MONTH

John Edwards

“February is American Heart Month, a time when all people can focus on their cardiovascular health” (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). This is a good time for us to have a spiritual heart check-up.

WILLING HEART. God has always desired a willing heart of His people. The Lord instructed Moses, “*Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering*” (Ex. 25:2). How willing-hearted are we?

GOD-SEEKING HEART. We need a heart that wholly seeks the Lord. “*But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul*” (Dt. 4:29).

GOD-FEARING AND COMMANDMENT-KEEPING HEART. Notice the kind of heart God wants in us: “*O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!*” (Dt. 5:29).

GOD-LOVING HEART. It is written, “*And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might*” (Dt. 6:5). Jesus called this “*the first and great commandment*” (Mt. 22:37-38).

GOD-SERVING HEART. Among the things God requires is: “*...to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul*” (Dt. 10:12).

PREPARED HEART. Do we have the purpose of Ezra? The Bible says, “*For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments*” (Ezra 7:10).

FAITHFUL HEART. Can what was said of Abraham, in Nehemiah 9:8, be said of us: “*And foundest his heart faithful before thee...*”?

PURE HEART. Residents of heaven include: “*He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart...*” (Ps. 24:4). Jesus taught, “*Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God*” (Mt. 5:8). Are we pure in heart?

GOD-PRAISING HEART. The Psalmist exclaimed, “*I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore*” (Ps. 86:12). Do we praise God?

WORD-HIDING HEART. The word of the Lord within the heart is a safeguard against sin. “*Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee*” (Ps. 119:11).

SOUND HEART. The Psalmist declared, “*Let my heart be sound in thy statutes; that I be not ashamed*” (Ps. 119:80). Is our heart healthy and whole?

TRUSTING HEART. The wise man counseled, “*Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding*” (Prov. 3:5).

MERRY HEART. Is our heart merry? “*A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance...*” (Prov. 15:13). “*...he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast*” (Prov. 15:15). “*A merry heart doeth good like a medicine...*” (Prov. 17:22).

PURPOSED HEART. “*But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself...*” (Dan. 1:8). Is our heart purposed in this way?

HONEST AND GOOD HEART. The only productive soil is the good ground — “*...they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience*” (Lk. 8:15). Is our heart honest and good?

BELIEVING HEART. This was Philip's response, when the Ethiopian eunuch asked, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?", "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest..." (Acts 8:36-37). Do we believe with all our heart?

OBEDIENT HEART. Romans 6:17 expresses Paul's thanksgiving for the saints at Rome: "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you." Have we obeyed from the heart?

MELODY-MAKING HEART. Ephesians 5:19 teaches, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." Does our heart make melody to the Lord?

TRUE HEART. The Hebrew writer exhorted, "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water" (Heb. 10:22). Is our heart true?

We are admonished, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23). Is our heart right with God (Acts 8:21)?

LET'S TALK ABOUT LOVE

John Edwards

It begins with God's "love toward us" (Rom. 5:8; Jn. 3:16). "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us..." (1 Jn. 4:10). Let's talk about...

LOVE FOR GOD. The first and great commandment: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Mt. 22:37). To love God is to keep His commandments (1 Jn. 5:3; 2 Jn. 6).

LOVE FOR GOD'S WORD. Some will perish "because they received not the love of the truth" (2 Th. 2:10). If only we could have the kind of love the Psalmist had for the Lord's word (Ps. 119:97, 113, 119, 127, 159, 163, 167)!

LOVE FOR WISDOM. Solomon said of wisdom, "...love her, and she shall keep thee" (Pr. 4:6).

LOVE FOR NEIGHBOR. Think of the situation if each would "...love thy neighbour as thyself" (Lev. 19:18; Mt.22:39)!

LOVE FOR GOOD. Amos 5:15, "Hate the evil, and love the good...." Too many get this backwards, like Micah 3:2.

LOVE FOR MERCY. Among things required by God is "...to love mercy..." (Micah 6:8).

LOVE FOR ENEMIES. Jesus' teaching includes "Love your enemies..." (Mt. 5:44).

LOVE FOR BRETHREN. "Let brotherly love continue" (Heb. 13:1).

LOVE FOR CHRIST. Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (Jn. 14:15).

LOVE FOR WIVES, HUSBANDS AND CHILDREN. The happy home abounds with love (Eph. 5:25, 28, 33; Col. 3:19; Titus 2:4). Read Proverbs 15:17; 17:1.

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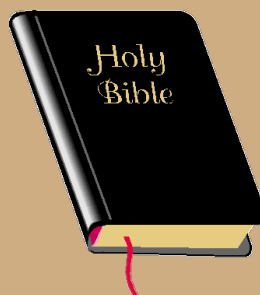
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