

# “The Heart”

## PDF Version of the eDevo Series

heart  
clutter



"Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life."  
Proverbs 4:23, NKJV

Are you feeling the need for a major spring cleaning? In your house? Garage? Basement? Flower gardens? Backyard? Do you see clutter everywhere and just need some time to get things cleaned out and organized?

Often, we need to do the same thing with our hearts! We may need a spring cleaning for different areas of our hearts. The reason this is important is because all the issues of life spring out of the heart. That means, the starting point for God's direction, God's wisdom, God's leading and God's will is our hearts. Our hearts are our personal headquarters and the place in us that's connected to the Lord.

When we need the Lord's direction for any issue of life—whether it be our spiritual life, marriage, parenting, friendships, finances, health, addictions or any other issue you can think of—guidance is going to come from our hearts, for that is where God speaks to us!

If our hearts are full of clutter—we will have a hard time hearing the Lord's direction for all the issues of life. That's why He exhorts us to guard the heart and keep it free from clutter.

Clutter like...

**Busyness:** It's hard to hear our hearts and follow the things that spring up when

we are too busy to listen to the Lord. When we live a non-stop, red-line life—it begins to clutter up our hearts. Remember Martha? Luke 10:38.

**Voices:** There are a lot of voices these days that seek to confuse our heart. The media, friends, enemies, family, the devil, our own voice...everyone wants our attention and if we aren't careful, we let those voices drown out God's voice in our hearts.

**Guilt:** Guilt tries to gum up our hearts. There are two kinds of guilt: true guilt and false guilt. True guilt is legitimate. This is when our hearts condemn us because we are disobeying God and His Word and we know it. This type of guilty conscience demands our repentance and a contrite heart to "go and sin no more."

False guilt is the type of guilt the devil throws on us to discourage, condemn, overwhelm and destroy us. We have a difficult time living out of our hearts if we are listening to false guilt. We need to stand in 2 Corinthians 5:21 and declare the reality that through Jesus' blood we have been made the righteousness of God in Christ!

**Fear:** Another biggie. Through the fear of man, fear of losing our security, fear of living by faith, fear of loss, fear of just about anything the enemy seeks to rob us of peace and the ability to follow our hearts.

Thankfully, we can guard our hearts and clean out the clutter! So, today, why not do a spring cleaning and get rid of the clutter of busyness, voices, guilt and fear.

*"Keep vigilant watch over your heart; that's where life starts." (Proverbs 4:23, Message)*

"Father, I am so glad that all the issues of life spring forth from my heart. I choose to guard my heart and today, I will start with a spring cleaning to remove the clutter. Help me listen to and follow the things You put in my heart. In Jesus' Name. Amen."

Blessings,



Beth Jones

# heart people



"I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart...."  
Philippians 1:3-7, NIV

Everything God does in and through us comes from the heart. Everything. It's so simple; it's easy to stumble over this simple truth.

How about relationships? Who has God called you to relate to? Who does the Lord want you to hang with? Who does He want you to minister to? Who do you write for? Who do you pray for? The answer can be found in answering this question:  
***Who's in your heart?***

The Apostle Paul said something very insightful in that passage in Philippians 1. God used him to relate to all kinds of people. In reading his epistles you can see that he had many friends, many ministry friends, many acquaintances and many church congregations who were dear to him. However, notice this one particular statement he made in writing to the Philippians church; he said, "...I have you in my heart...."

Listen to what he said...

*"It is right and appropriate for me to have this confidence and feel this way about you all, because you have me in your heart and I hold you in my heart as partakers and sharers, one and all with me, of grace (God's unmerited favor and spiritual blessing)." (Philippians 1:7, AMP)*

The most fulfilling, God-breathed relationships are the ones that God puts in your heart. So, who's in your heart? Who has the Lord given you a heart for or towards? It may be a person or persons or a niche group or a nation!

As leaders and ministers, it's important that we ask that question when it comes to our ministry, our churches, our cities, our regions, states and countries. Do I have the people to whom I am ministering in my heart? If I am a missionary in

Italy...are the Italians in my heart? If I am a pastor, is my congregation or my city/county in my heart? If I am a writer, I need to know who's in my heart so that I can write to them.

If I am investing my heart and life into others...it's important to know where God wants all that energy and ministry to go, right? The way we determine that is by identifying who He has put in our hearts. It also helps to identify who's *not* in your heart and then order your life and time accordingly.

Here are some things to consider...

**Concerning ministry:** *Those God has called you to reach out to.* Who has God put in your heart? Believers? The Lost? Women? Men? Teens? A city? A race? A country? Single moms? Drug addicts? Homeless people? Children? GenX'ers? Elderly? What people...what needs...what injustices...what hurts and pains...what people group moves your heart? Are you moved to tears as you pray for any particular group or city? Do you drive through your city and cry out to God for their souls? Do you read stories about child sex slaves and find your heart breaking to do something about it? Is God's Word shut up in your bones ready to bust out on any particular group of people who need to know what they don't know? Locate this in your heart. Isolate the large and/or small groups of people God has put in your heart.

**Concerning friendship:** *Those God is knitting your heart with.* Who has God put in your heart? Are there individuals who your heart gravitates towards? Are there people who refresh you? Who you feel compassion toward? Who you desire to be a blessing to? If so, it's likely that God has put them in your heart. Prayerfully locate your heart and see who God has put there. Identify His purpose and follow your heart.

Paul had big and small people groups in his heart. On a large scale he had the Gentiles (heathen, non-Jew) in his heart. He was called by God to reach them and this large group of unreached people were in his heart in a massive way. On a smaller scale he had various churches and specific individuals in his heart. We see that the Philippian believers were in his heart—he loved them, he prayed for them, he taught them.

Today, who's in your heart? Why not take some time to pray for them and then follow love and reach out to them in whatever way the Lord directs.

"Father, I thank You for putting me into the hearts of other people and for putting people into my heart. Help me identify all of the "whos" you have put in my heart! Thank You for Your love and purposes for all of these God-breathed relationships. In Jesus' Name. Amen."

Blessings,



Beth Jones

# heart detective



"For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Hebrews 4:12, NKJV

OK...so everything God does in and through us comes from the heart. The heart is our core. Our personal headquarters. It's the place in us that God contacts. All the issues of life flow from this place that we know as our heart, or spirit.

Once we cleaned out all of the "heart clutter" and identified "heart people"—how do we do a better job of discerning God's voice and leading? How do we quiet down all the voices, wade through distractions, personal desires, emotions and our self-directed opinions? How do we ever get the path cleared enough to discern, listen to, follow and trust our heart?

Great questions! God has a great answer: His Word!

The only thing that can penetrate all the clutter and divide between what God is saying to our spirit (heart) versus the voices in our own soul (mind, emotions, will) is God's Word. The only thing that can discern between our own thoughts and the intents God puts in our hearts is: the Word. The Bible is the Great Detective—able to discern the truth in every situation.

How does this play out real life challenges? Let's look at a classic example. This scenario has been repeated by thousands of Christians around the world. Mrs. Fabulous-But-Oh-So-Bored Christian and Mr. Charming-But-Going-Through-a-Mid-Life-Crisis Christian are both married, but not to each other. They are both vulnerable and unhappy—and the perfect targets. Perhaps they work together...or they're on the same worship team...or they're neighbors—pick a scene. One day, after what seemed like innocent, flirtatious glances, they find that they have feelings for one another. They start to desire one another.

This is when the heart discernment should kick in. At this time, if people are

honest, they will notice a red flag going up in their hearts. They will hear the Holy Spirit's discerning voice speaking God's Word to their hearts. *"Don't do it. Flee from immorality. Avoid the appearance of evil. Husbands love your own wives. Wives, honor your own husbands. Don't trouble your own family; you'll inherit the wind. Don't do it. It's a test. It's a lie...don't do it...."*

It's a battle at first....the battle of the flesh versus spirit (heart!). Doing their best to rationalize things, people often begin to reason with their thoughts and feelings, "Yeah but, I am so unhappy in my marriage. My spouse is a dud. This new amazing person loves the Lord and makes me feel things I haven't felt for years. I am so happy when we're together. Surely, God must have brought us together. This can't be wrong, can it?"

At this point, it's vital that Mrs. Fabulous and Mr. Charming listen to God's Word in their hearts—and not override it—because of what they feel in their emotions, feelings or personal desire. This is where we are wise to agree with and obey the Word, regardless of our personal feelings, desires or emotions.

This same scenario and struggle between our flesh and our heart can be played out in a million different ways—career choices, temptations to get offended, ethical questions, business practices, church involvement, physical health, relationships, where to go and what to do. God's Word is the heart detective! Name any issue in life—if we will trust and lean on God's Word—the Lord will help us properly discern the truth and divide between our heart and our thoughts.

God's Word is always a safe choice. It always gives us the right discernment. Let's allow God's Word to give us the godly heart discernment we need—and let's watch His will and His goodness overflow in our lives as a result!

"Father, help me to operate from my heart and not my head or emotions. Help me to listen to Your Word and allow it to give me godly heart discernment for every issue, every temptation and every situation I face. In Jesus' Name. Amen."

Blessings,



Beth Jones

# heart guide



"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."  
Romans 8:14, NKJV

Ever taken a tour? Whether it's a rafting tour, factory tour or cave tour—it's nice to have an experienced guide, isn't it? In our "tour of life"—thank God—we have the ultimate, experienced tour guide: the Holy Spirit Himself. He is the Heart Guide!

The Holy Spirit wants to lead us into amazing, fruitful, faith adventures! He does that as we follow Him from our heart. Over the years, I have witnessed, experienced and observed one simple way to practice listening to my heart and being led by the Spirit.

It's these two simple words: Follow Love. When we identify the love, passion or compassion the Lord has put in our hearts and follow it—we are bound to take an amazing journey! When we are led by the Spirit and follow love, we will end up doing what we love, being with people we love and loving people we didn't think we could!

Have you ever noticed God's love filling your heart for someone or something? Have you ever found yourself thinking of a particular cause, mission or person—and "feeling" God's love, passion or compassion?

What should we do when that happens? *Follow it!* Follow what's in your heart. Do you have a strong passion to make a difference? Do you have a desire to let someone know God cares about them? Do you have a strong sense to pray for a particular project or person? Do you have a desire to bless others in some way? Maybe you find compassion welling up in your heart with the desire to write someone a note of encouragement or buy them a little gift. Do it! Follow the love, passion and compassion that is in your heart. Don't stand still. Start moving and follow your heart into action. As we follow love...from our hearts...the Lord will lead us into some amazing things!

Here's a great example: My sister, Rhonda, told me this story a few years ago. She was flying first class from Mexico City to Washington when the Lord put this love-filled idea in her heart: *"Give your first class seat to someone."* She was excited about this idea and began to "follow her heart." She started looking for

"the person" God wanted her to give her seat to. After a few minutes, she saw an American soldier board the plane and in her heart she knew he was "the one."

The plane took off and Rhonda asked the flight attendant if she could give her first class seat to the soldier in coach. Permission was granted. Rhonda went back to the soldier and told him she wanted to give him her first class seat. To make a long story really short...what transpired over the next hour is amazing.

The entire airplane began to clap! As the soldier walked up to his first class seat, everyone was clapping and cheering. The entire airplane couldn't believe my sister had done such a thing. The flight attendants brought Rhonda fresh drinks, a nice lunch and gave her the royal treatment! They had never seen anyone give up a first class seat to anyone, ever. They told Rhonda that she had inspired the whole airplane!

Today, what fun, love-filled, supernatural thing does God want to do in and through you? Obey the Holy Spirit—your Heart Guide—by following His love!

*"This is the commandment, as you have heard from the beginning, that you continue to walk in love [guided by it and following it]." (2 John 6, AMP)*

"Father, help me to follow the love You put in my heart. Help me to walk in love, be guided by it and follow it. Thank You for the great Holy Spirit, my heart Guide! In Jesus' Name. Amen."

Blessings,



Beth Jones

# heart faucet



"...for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks..."  
Matthew 12: 34, NKJV

Did you know our hearts have a faucet? It's our mouths! (Maybe you thought it was your tear ducts?) No, we can always tell what is in our hearts by turning on the faucet. Our mouths will always reveal what is in the reservoir of our hearts. The faucet, when released, will bring forth the things in the reservoir! Therefore, since this heart/mouth connection is so huge and has the potential to affect change and bring forth so many things, let's talk about it today.

Our hearts (the reservoir) will always be filled with something. Our mouths (the faucet) will always spill forth the things in our hearts. Whatever is in our hearts in abundance will come out of our mouths. It just will. And then...through the words that come from the abundance of our hearts, things will be brought forth!

Jesus said so: *"Either make the tree sound (healthy and good), and its fruit sound (healthy and good), or make the tree rotten (diseased and bad), and its fruit rotten (diseased and bad); for the tree is known and recognized and judged by its fruit. You offspring of vipers! How can you speak good things when you are evil (wicked)? For out of the fullness (the overflow, the superabundance) of the heart the mouth speaks. The good man from his inner good treasure flings forth good things, and the evil man out of his inner evil storehouse flings forth evil things."* (Matthew 12: 33-35, AMP)

If our hearts are filled with...

...thankfulness, gratitude, and joy...our mouth faucets will speak of those things quite frequently. We'll find ourselves talking about how good God is, how He has blessed us, and how thankful we are—and His joy will "fling" forth in our lives.

...resentment, anger or bitterness...our mouths will give us away. We'll find our words are sharp, critical and negative—and the result of this is brought forth in our lives.

...others...our faucets will overflow with good words, caring comments, love and truth-filled words about others—and godly friends will fling forth.

...self...our mouth faucets will expose our ego and narcissism with words of "me, myself and I"—and a lonely life will be brought forth.

This is a simple, but powerful truth. Whatever fills our hearts will come out of our mouths. Whatever comes out of our mouths will be brought forth in our lives. So, since, the faucet of our words will bring forth good things or evil things from the reservoir of our hearts—we must guard, protect and fill our hearts with the good things of God that we want to experience in life! Did you follow all that? I encourage you to reread these things and meditate in God's Word and allow the Lord to enlighten you on this important topic.

The reality of the connection between our hearts and mouths cannot be overemphasized. The Bible is loaded with this concept. Check out these verses on the heart/mouth connection:

*"A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For **out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.**" (Luke 6:45, NKJV)*

*"...But what does it say? 'The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart' (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that **if you confess with your mouth** the Lord Jesus and **believe in your heart** that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Romans 10:7-11, NKJV)*

*"I have hidden **Your word in my heart**...." (Psalm 119:11, NLT)*

*"My **mouth** shall speak wisdom, and the meditation of my **heart** shall give understanding." (Psalm 49:3, NKJV)*

*"The **heart of the wise teaches his mouth**, and adds learning to his lips." (Proverbs 16:23, NKJV)*

*"Do not be rash with your **mouth**, and let not your **heart** utter anything hastily before God. For God is in heaven, and you on earth; therefore let your words be few." (Ecclesiastes 5:2, NKJV)*

*"Let the **words of my mouth** and the **meditation of my heart** be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer." (Psalm 19:14, NKJV)*

"Father, help me to load my heart with Your Word and good things, so that from the abundance of my heart my mouth will speak and bring forth those very things. In Jesus' Name. Amen."

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Beth Jones', with a stylized, cursive script.

Beth Jones