

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

FEBRUARY IS HEART MONTH

By 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”* (Duet. 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!”* (Duet. 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”* (Duet. 6:5). Jesus called this *“the first and great commandment”* (Matt. 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”* (Duet. 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...”* (Psa. 24:4). Jesus taught, *“Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God”* (Matt. 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”* (Psa. 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”* (Psa. 119:11).

SOUND HEART. The Psalmist declared, *“Let my heart be sound in thy statutes; that I be not ashamed”* (Psa. 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)? ■

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“Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord...” (Psalm 33:12)

By John Gipson

“When America ceases to be good, it will cease to be great,” said Alexis de Tocqueville. In this statement we are reminded that the greatness of a nation does not rest in its military power, social advancements, political acumen or its national wealth. A nation's greatness is found in the quotient of its righteousness. Righteousness is the determining factor in a country’s future. Solomon, the wisest of men, said ***“Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people”*** (Proverbs 14:34).

Theodore Roosevelt warned, ***“The things that will destroy America are prosperity-at-any-price, safety-first instead of duty-first, the love of soft living and the get-rich-quick theory of life.”*** Is it possible that this day is drawing near? To a great extent our objectives have become: success, status, and security. These are followed closely by self-indulgence, pleasure, and comfort. Our permissive society turns freedom into license, rights into riots, and pornography into profit.

Concerned about a higher standard of living, we often fail to live by a standard. Riches are elevated above righteousness; power over piety; and science above the Savior. We abandon the moral law then shake our heads in disbelief as crime increases. Look out, America! Remember the words of Will Durant: ***“No great nation has ever been overcome until it has destroyed itself.”***

If you really desire to be a patriot; if you are truly concerned about America; if you earnestly want God to bless her—Then live a life in harmony with the will of God. ■

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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