

THE HEART

By Kent A. Field

Copyright 1979

There are an awful lot of people in the world today who say we must judge things according to the feelings in our heart. They say "let your feelings be your guide". They would have us judge someone as a very holy individual simply because that is the way they appear on the outside. There are people who believe their religious direction is right simply because it seems to be right to them. Some would tell us that we must find our own way from within ourselves. Are they right? Has God left us without a more specific guide? Are our heart and our feelings to be trusted? What does the Bible say?

Carefully study the following passages from the Bible. Answer each of the questions listed with the passages. The answers to the following questions can be clearly seen within the passage. As you locate the answers within the Bible verses given, compare the Bible's answers to how you might have otherwise answered the questions. Remember! We're not looking for your opinions or feelings here. We're looking for the Bible's answers to these important questions.

1. 1 Samuel.16:6,7

1. Did Samuel think the Lord's anointed one was before him based on Eliab's appearance? _____
2. Did God tell Samuel he shouldn't trust in outward appearances? _____
3. Did God reject a person that appeared to be the Lord's anointed? _____
4. Does God look at things and people the way man does? _____
5. What do people usually look at? _____
6. What have you usually depended on to judge someone? _____
7. But what does God look at? _____

2. Jeremiah.17:9,10

1. How deceitful is the heart? _____
2. Is the human heart something good or something wicked or sick? _____
3. Can a person really understand the heart well enough to follow it? _____
4. Who really knows the heart of man? _____
5. Who knows what is going on in men's minds? _____
6. Does God reward us according to the feelings in our hearts? _____
7. Then what does God reward men on the basis of? _____
8. Then on what basis will God reward you? _____

3. Jeremiah.13:1-10

1. From verse 10 what kind of people are they that walk in the stubbornness of their own hearts? _____
2. What kind of people are they that refuse to listen to God's Word? _____
3. Does following one's heart cause them to follow after and serve other gods? _____
4. According to this passage, what are those who follow their hearts good for? What are they worth to God? _____
5. Have you been following after your own heart? _____
6. Then what are you worth to God in that condition? _____

4. Jeremiah.10:23
 1. Is a man's way to be found from within himself? _____
 2. Is it up to each person to direct their own steps in this life? _____
 3. But what does the liberal theologian tell us? _____
5. Proverbs.16:1,2,5;21:2
 1. Are the plans of the heart from the Lord or from man? _____
 2. Where should we get our answers from? _____
 3. Can there be a serious difference between how right men think they are and how right or wrong God knows they are? _____
 4. How does God feel about those who are proud in their hearts? _____
 5. Have you recently exhibited this pride in your own heart? _____
 6. The how does God feel about you according to this verse? _____
6. Proverbs.20:24
 1. Who is it that should direct each man's life? _____
 2. Can a person really understand their own way in life? _____
7. Proverbs.16:25;14:12
 1. Are there ways that may "seem" right to a person? _____
 2. What are the results of following what "seems" to be right? _____
 3. Does your present religious direction "seem" to be right, or are you absolutely certain? _____
 4. What could be its end? _____
8. 2 Kings 5:1-14,
 1. From verse 10 was Naaman told to do something very specific? _____
 2. Was Naaman angry when he was told what to do? _____
 3. Was he angry because he had his own ideas about how God should help him? _____
 4. Was Naaman healed at first even though he sincerely "thought" God should have dealt with him another way? _____
 5. When was Naaman finally healed? By what action? _____
9. Isaiah 55:6-9
 1. Is it necessary for a man to forsake his own ways and thoughts in order to find compassion from the Lord? _____
 2. In the light of what some people are claiming, that God is putting specific thoughts into their heads, are our thoughts the same as God's thoughts according to these verses? _____
 3. Are our ways the same as God's ways? _____
 4. Is it right then to flatter ourselves and assume that God is putting thoughts into our minds and that what we are thinking are really God's thoughts? _____
 5. Why not? _____
10. Acts 23:1;26:9-11
 1. Did the Apostle Paul confess to once being a persecutor of Christians? _____
 2. Did he also claim to have always stood before God with a clear conscience? _____
 3. Clearly then, didn't Paul claim to be a "sincere" Christian killer? _____
 4. Even though one is sincere does this automatically mean that God thinks they are O.K.? _____
 5. Is it possible then for you to have been sincere, but also to have been sincerely wrong? _____

11. Acts 28:27
 1. Is it possible for someone's heart to become hard or dull against the truth? _____
 2. Would it be right to trust in a heart that may have already become hard and resistant to the truth? _____
12. Hebrews 3:8-13
 1. Can a person's heart cause them to go astray? _____
 2. From verse 10 would you say a person could still know God's way as they follow their hard hearts? _____
 3. Is it possible to have an evil and unbelieving heart? _____
 4. Could following your heart cause you to fall away from the living God? _____
 5. Have you ever followed your heart? _____
13. Ephesians 4:17-19
 1. Is it right for us to walk in the direction our own mind gives? _____
 2. According to verse 18 what does hardness of heart produce? _____
 3. Would this ignorance and darkened understanding cause a person to leave God and His way? _____
 4. Does following after one's own heart and thoughts cause a person to practice every kind of evil? _____
 5. Has following your own heart ever led you to practice any religious or moral evil? _____
14. Luke 8:4-15
 1. What kind of ground is the good and honest heart? _____
 2. Do those with a good and honest heart hear their own feelings and follow them or do they hear, hold, and live the Word of God? _____
 3. What kind of ground will you prove to be after this study? _____
15. Hebrews 4:12,13; John 12:48
 1. Is the Word of God in the Bible dead or alive? _____
 2. Is the Word of God active today? _____
 3. Is the Word of the Lord able to expose the thoughts and intentions of a person's heart? _____
 4. Will we be judged according to our sincerity, our feelings, our desires, or by the Word of Christ? _____
 5. Up to this day, have you truly been taught the Word of Christ well enough so that you are ready to be judged by it? _____
 6. Then where does this leave you? _____
16. Acts 1:24; 15:8
 1. Who is it that knows the hearts of all men? _____
 2. Should we presume to know our own hearts or the hearts of other people? _____
 3. Should we therefore trust in something that we cannot know? _____
17. Proverbs 28:26
 1. Who will be delivered? _____
 2. What does God call those who trust in the feeling in their own heart? _____
 3. What have you been following more, your heart, or the Bible? _____
 4. Then what does this verse call you? _____

Yes, the Bible clearly says that we are to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart....". But there is a great difference between loving and following God with all of our heart, and following after and trusting in our heart! We are to trust with our hearts, and not put our trust in our hearts! Remember! It isn't in the heart a man believes, resulting in righteousness. Rather it is "with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness"!