

Reading: Mark 7:14-23

***“Guard your heart with all diligence;
for out of it emerges issues of life” (Prov 4:23)***

Karthar Singh belonged to a wealthy Sikh family. When he accepted Jesus as his personal Saviour, his dad tried various methods to lure and turn him from his faith but in vain. Finally his father sent a beautiful girl to him when Karthar was alone, asking her to change his stand by hook or crook. But Karthar Singh said to her, “I have only one heart. I have already given it to Jesus. I’m sorry, I don’t have another one to give it to you!”

All evil originates from the heart (Mk 7:21,22). God knows that “above all things the heart is deceitful, and desperately wicked” (Jer 17:9). That’s why He demands our heart: to remove from us our “heart of stone” and replace it with a “heart of flesh” (Ezek 36:26b). With a lasting patience He goes on knocking at the door of our heart (Rev 3:20). If we open the door and let Him in, He gives us a “new heart” and fills it with a “new Spirit” (Ezek 36:26a).

Someday we might have given our hearts to the Lord. What is its present condition? Should there be any secret sins, it is time to repent, to confess it and renounce it. Let us carefully examine and find out whether love of the world which is hostile to God, pride which He detests, and envy that rots the bones have completely been wiped out of our heart (Js 4:4; Prov 16:5; 14:30). The Lord wants us to humble ourselves and get reconciled with those whom we have wronged (Mt 5:23,24) and forgive everyone wholeheartedly (Mt 6:15).

Let’s decide once and for all to love God with “all our heart” (Mt 22:37). Doesn’t our heart belong to Him? He sacrificed Himself and died for us. Don’t give room for any rubbish, however tiny it may be, even in a corner of your heart. Tell God, “I love You!”

Let us bathe in the blood of Jesus every morning. As the Sun of righteousness He will brighten us everyday. “Our path will be like the first gleam of the dawn, shining and growing ever brighter and brighter till full light of the noon” (Prov 4:18).

*Jesus wants me for a sunbeam, to shine for Him each day;
In every way try to please Him—at home, at school, at play.
I will ask Jesus to help me, to keep my heart from sin;
Ever reflecting His goodness, and always shine for Him!*

(Nellie Talbot)



Gracious Heavenly Father, we worship You for Your heart of love and compassion. Oh how much Your heart churns within You out of sympathy for us! How much it pains Your heart when we allow Satan to fill our hearts with evil thoughts! Oh how jealous Your heart becomes when we flirt with the world and its lusts! Oh how much it rejoices when we return to You and let You take complete control! You have chosen us not because of anything good or great in us, but because of Your pure love and affection.

Father God, it humbles us to think that You enjoy the love from all our heart, all our spirit, all our mind, and all our strength. Forgive us the instances when we allowed our devotion to You divided. Help us, Lord, to identify the competitors for our heart's love for You at the early stages itself and chuck them out. Give us strength to overcome the three main enemies: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. Fill our hearts with holy anger and godly jealousy to drive away anything that defiles us and comes between us and You. Have You not chosen us to be a chaste virgin to be married to Your Son? Make us understand the seriousness of seeking the friendship of the world at the cost of becoming Your enemies. You and Your Son have called us to be Your friends. Let us consciously stay appreciative of this royal privilege.

Almighty God, forgive us for worshipping You with our lips but keeping the heart far away. We need Your help in controlling the wandering thoughts. Our hearts are overoccupied with the cares of this world. How often we forget that You are Jehovah-Jireh, our Provider! Search me, O God, and know my anxieties. Flush out worthless things from my heart and fill it with heavenly thoughts. Let the meditation of our hearts be found acceptable in Your sight. Keep our hearts ever broken before You. Let's walk humbly before You without hardening our hearts against the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Dear Lord, our heart of faith is crushed often by philosophies and rationalism. Help us maintain childlike faith as against the heart of unbelief. Let the Word of Christ fill our hearts giving no room for ungodly thoughts. Let our minds be full of noble, lovely, virtuous and praiseworthy things.

O God, we come to You for the world of sin, sickness and sorrow. Everything You created was very good but now it has become very bad because of its rebellion against You. Let that which breaks Your heart break ours too. Fill our hearts with a biting burden for the perishing souls. In Jesus' Name, Amen!

*(Hos 11:8; 1 Jn 2:15-17; Rom 7:18; Mt 22:37-39; Eph 5:27; Jn 15:15;
Gen 22:14; Col 3:1,2,16,17; Psa 19:14; Heb 3:7-11)*