

The Heart Tenderized Part 4

Scripture:	
Announcements:	
Scripture Reading:	
RECAP:	<p>So, once again we are in a “mini” series on the heart and our working definition of heart is: the inner self, the place where choices are made, where thoughts come from, the mind, your intellect, or your will.</p> <p>—We saw that the heart is capable of good and evil, we saw that the heart can be hardened, we saw that God softens hearts, and last week we saw that we have a role to play in the softening of our hearts if they have been hardened.</p> <p>— —Last week, we looked at 2 ways we have an active role in the softening of our heart process.</p> <p>— — —We saw that God gives us faith but we can exercise that faith which helps to soften our hearts.</p> <p>— — — —We also saw how we need to be a people of repentance. Repentance is, as we talked about last week, a change of heart. So, if we want to have a tenderized or soft heart we need to come to God often and confess our sins to Him and change our hearts from a self focused heart to a God focused heart.</p> <p>— — — — —Repentance, if done right, helps us re-capture our hearts for God.</p>
INTRODUCTION:	<p>So, this week is our last week in our mini series on heart.</p> <p>—We have finally reached the end!! This week we will be looking at things that we can do to have softened/ tenderized hearts.</p> <p>— —We will see that we are to embrace humility if we want to have a soft moldable heart.</p> <p>— — —We will see that in order to have softened hearts we will have to give up things.</p> <p>— — — —We will also see that we will have to trust God.</p>
Passage Begins	

Scripture:	
<p>Hebrews 3:7–11 (NASB95): 7 Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, “Today if you hear His voice, 8 Do not harden your hearts as when they provoked Me, As in the day of trial in the wilderness, 9 Where your fathers tried Me by testing Me, And saw My works for forty years. 10 “Therefore I was angry with this generation, And said, ‘They always go astray in their heart, And they did not know My ways’; 11 As I swore in My wrath, ‘They shall not enter My rest.’ ”</p>	<p>So, another way that we can soften our hearts is embrace humility.</p> <p>— Humility is one of most difficult things for us to obtain because it calls us to be contrary to our nature.</p> <p>— — Our nature is a prideful nature, a sinful, self-centered nature.</p> <p>— — — I took an interpersonal communication class and one of the key principles was to get a person talking about themselves because people like to talk about themselves.</p> <p>— — — — There is nothing wrong about talking about yourself but why do we we talk about ourselves so much? We self promote often times without even thinking about it.</p> <p>— — — — — Pride is one of the main contributors to hardened hearts and humility is an important softener of hearts.</p>
	<p><u>READ: Proverbs 11:2 (NASB95): 2 When pride comes, then comes dishonor, But with the humble is wisdom.</u></p> <p>— <u>READ: James 4:6 (NASB95): 6 But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, “God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”</u></p> <p>— <u>READ: 1 Peter 5:6–7 (NASB95): 6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, 7 casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.</u></p> <p>— — Jesus lived out humility perfectly.</p> <p>— — — <u>READ: John 13:5–9 (NASB95): 5 Then He *poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. 6 So He *came to Simon Peter. He *said to Him, “Lord, do You wash my feet?” 7 Jesus answered and said to him, “What I do you do not realize now, but you will understand hereafter.” 8 Peter *said to Him, “Never shall You wash my feet!” Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.” 9 Simon Peter *said to Him, “Lord, then wash not only my feet, but also my hands and my head.”</u></p>

Scripture:	
	<p>Jesus going to the cross was a act of humility as well.</p> <p>— But before we get to that we need to understand the word humility.</p> <p>— — The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian church tells us, humility means: submissiveness before God.</p> <p>— — The Holman Illustrated Bible says humility is: The personal quality of being free from arrogance and pride and having an accurate estimate of one’s worth.</p> <p>— — — So, Jesus going to the cross, was an act of humility because He could have stopped it, He could have crushed those who attempted to put Him there.</p> <p>— — — — Jesus had the power and authority to do so but He did not do that.</p> <p>— — — — — What He did instead was: <u>READ:</u></p> <p><u>Philippians 2:5–8 (NASB95):</u> 5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.</p> <p>— — — — — We too must embrace biblical humility and a humble believer in Christ will have a softened or tenderized heart.</p> <p>— — — — — — <u>READ: 1 Peter 3:8–9 (NASB95):</u> 8 To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; 9 not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.</p>

Scripture:	
	<p>The next way we have an active role in the softening of heart process is by getting rid of what causes our hardness of heart.</p> <p>—Andrew Murray wrote, “When God spoke to Israel, the first thing He asked of them was a heart that did not harden itself, but that in meekness and gentleness, in tenderness and docility turn itself to listen to His voice. How much more may He claim this, now that He speaks to in Hi Son. As the soil must be broken up by the ploughing and softened by the rain, so a broken, tender spirit is the first requisite for receiving blessing from God’s word, or being in truth made partakers of God’s grace.”</p> <p>— — We have to break up what is there in our hearts, we have to plow it as Murray says, but we also have to get rid of that which does not belong or what is unhealthy.</p>
	<p>Jesus spoke of things that cause us to sin needing to be cut off.</p> <p>— <u>READ: Matthew 18:7–9 (NASB95):</u> 7 “Woe to the world because of its stumbling blocks! For it is inevitable that stumbling blocks come; but woe to that man through whom the stumbling block comes! 8 “If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life crippled or lame, than to have two hands or two feet and be cast into the eternal fire. 9 “If your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it from you. It is better for you to enter life with one eye, than to have two eyes and be cast into the fiery hell.</p> <p>— — Now Jesus is not telling you to cut off a hand or foot but He is showing us what we should be doing in our lives to remove sin.</p> <p>— — — Jesus is saying we need to do things about our sin and we need to take action against things that cause us to sin.</p> <p>— — — — We need to cast out the things that cause our hearts to be hardened, be worldly.</p>

Scripture:	
	<p>There are so many things that we can live without that are gateway causes to sin.</p> <p>—What do I mean by that? There are things that we keep around and we have in our lives like: certain apps on our phones, websites, images or fantasies in our head, TV channels, certain friends, agreements, drugs, alcohol, and others that we go to comfort us or help us escape.</p> <p>— —These different escapes often lead us into our sin.</p> <p>— — —They become the gateway to resigning our commitment to God; we cancel our commitment to God for a time so we can embrace our sin.</p> <p>— — — —Cutting off things that lead you into sin will not stop you from sinning because once you resign or cancel your commitment to God you will find other ways to sin; but cutting out things that lead us to sin when we are committed to God will help us in having a softened heart.</p> <p>— — — — —Most things that we need to cut out are things that are right next to the grey area. They are not sin and they are not righteousness. Our gateways to sin are those things that cause us to walk the line of the fence between sin and righteousness.</p>

Scripture:	
	<p>Our recipe for sin avoidance should be like Joseph's in the book of Genesis: <u>READ: Genesis 39:6–12 (NASB95):</u> 6 So he left everything he owned in Joseph's charge; and with him there he did not concern himself with anything except the food which he ate. Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance. 7 It came about after these events that his master's wife looked with desire at Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me." 8 But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Behold, with me here, my master does not concern himself with anything in the house, and he has put all that he owns in my charge. 9 "There is no one greater in this house than I, and he has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do this great evil and sin against God?" 10 As she spoke to Joseph day after day, he did not listen to her to lie beside her or be with her. 11 Now it happened one day that he went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the household was there inside. 12 She caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me!" And he left his garment in her hand and fled, and went outside.</p> <p>—We have to flee sin, we cannot entertain it, we cannot have gateways to our sin.</p>

Scripture:	
	<p>My last point I want to make today and in our heart mini series is about trust.</p> <p>—We cannot trust our feelings and emotions to guide us in our relationship with God.</p> <p>— —No, we need to trust God and His word in our relationship with Him.</p> <p>— — —We must remember that: <u>READ: Jeremiah 17:9 (NASB95): more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?</u></p> <p>— — —<u>READ: Proverbs 28:26 (NASB95): 26 He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, But he who walks wisely will be delivered.</u></p> <p>— — — —Let’s think back to the people our passage is talking about: they saw the mighty work of God deliver them from Egypt, they saw the Red Sea part and walked across on dry land, and they saw the power of God over and over again.</p> <p>— — — — —When they got thirsty in the wilderness they stopped trusting God, who did all this amazing things, and trusted how they were feeling in that moment.</p>
	<p>In those moments they “felt” life was better in Egypt.</p> <p>—<u>READ: Exodus 17:3 (NASB95): 3 But the people thirsted there for water; and they grumbled against Moses and said, “Why, now, have you brought us up from Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?”</u></p> <p>— —We can not trust our hearts, we cannot trust our emotions, and we cannot trust our feelings because all of those come from us.</p> <p>— — —We are broken, imperfect, and sinful; we cannot trust ourselves unless we can compare our thoughts, feelings, and emotions to the truth.</p> <p>— — — —<u>READ: Romans 3:10 (NASB95): 10 as it is written, “There is none righteous, not even one;</u></p> <p>— — — —<u>READ: Romans 3:23 (NASB95): 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,</u></p>

Scripture:	
	<p>So, if we cannot trust ourselves, who do we trust?</p> <p>—READ: Proverbs 3:5–6 (NASB95): 5 Trust in the Lord with all your heartAnd do not lean on your own understanding. 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight.</p> <p>—READ: Psalm 37:5 (NASB95): 5 Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, and He will do it.</p> <p>—READ: Psalm 62:8 (NASB95): 8 Trust in Him at all times, O people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us.</p> <p>—READ: Isaiah 26:3–4 (NASB95): 3 “The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace, Because he trusts in You. 4 “Trust in the Lord forever, For in God the Lord, we have an everlasting Rock.</p>
	<p>So, what is our practical application? How do we apply this to our lives?</p> <p>—Well, as we saw in this mini series: the heart is capable of a lot, it can be hardened, the heart can also be softened—we need to recognize our heart condition</p> <p>—we need to do honest heart assessments, we need God to work on our hearts—we will not change unless we have God working in us, and we have to do our work in tenderizing our hearts—we can not just sit back and expect God to do everting without having to do anything.</p> <p>— —So, we need to embrace humility. There is enough pride in this world and Jesus lived out humility in going to the cross for us.</p> <p>— — —We too should live out humility in going to the cross for Him: READ: Matthew 16:24–25 (NASB95): 24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. 25 “For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.</p> <p>— — — —Taking up our cross will cost us. We will have to get rid of those things that cause us to not deny ourselves, we will have to get rid of those things that cause us to set the cross down, and we will have to get rid of those things that cause us not to trust the everlasting rock; God.</p>

Scripture:	
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