

Messenger of Truth

"Holding forth the Word of Life" (Phil. 2:16)

October 7, 2014

Issue No. 165 Mark Aites, Editor

## **The Heart**

"The deep sea can be fathomed, but who knows the hearts of men?" – Malay Proverb

"All the knowledge I possess everyone else can acquire, but my heart is all my own." – Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

"The heart has its arguments with which understanding is not acquainted." – Anonymous

"Keep love in your heart. A life without it is like a sunless garden when the flowers are dead." – Oscar Wilde

"Home is where the heart is." – Pliny the Elder

The word "heart" appears 832 times in the NKJV, 722 times in the Old Testament, and 110 times in the New. It obviously is a term of great importance. It is not the physical pump that beats in our chest that concerns us, but the emotional and moral compass of our lives.

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths" (Prov. 3:5-6). "...You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind" (Matt. 22:37). The phrase, "all your heart" appears 21 times in sacred writing. God not only wants our intellect, but he also wants our emotional being. The word *all* modifies the thought significantly indicating the depth of the intent.

"Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23). The danger is clearly put forth that one can have a perverse or evil heart, one that would direct us down a path that is foreign to the will of God (Prov. 6:14,18; 12:20). The only safe course is a heart that is wholly and completely given over to God.

"For as he thinks in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7). This verse tends to be a bit disconcerting when we realize that the heart can often be the guiding force in our life. Perhaps that helps us to better understand Paul's discussion of the internal struggle with sin (Rom. 6:17). Even Jesus made the statement, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matt. 26:41). If our heart is not attuned to the will of God, we may well find ourselves dwelling upon that which is sinful.

Like the human pump in our chest, the heart (emotion and moral) can be complicated. It is very powerful and can determine a course of action. It is interesting that it can be altered by our thoughts. That is a key that often is overlooked.