

gracepoint

A M E T H O D I S T C H U R C H

Homegroup material



I. Introductory Discussion Questions

1. What stood out for you most about the “Love God” sermon?
2. Read Mark 12 vs 28-34. What stands out for you most in this passage?

- **Mark 12 vs 28-34:**

“One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?” “The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.” “Well said, teacher,” the man replied. “You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbour as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.” When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions.”

3. Jesus said that the greatest commandment is to love God with all our hearts, souls, minds and strength.
 - i. What do you think it means to love God with all your heart?
 - ii. What does it mean to love Him with all your soul?
 - iii. What does it mean to love Him with all your mind?
 - iv. What does it mean to love Him with all your strength?
4. Our ability to truly love God is closely connected to the state of our hearts. How would you describe the state of your heart at present? Why?
5. God desires that we love Him authentically. What do you think authentic love for Him looks like?
6. What prevents you from loving God authentically with all that you are?
7. Jesus said that love for God is demonstrated in obedience (John 14:15). How are you doing in terms of obedience to God at present?

ii. We examine our hearts

1. In order to truly love God we need to take time and make the effort to do a spiritual check-up and honestly examine our hearts. How do you think can do a spiritual check-up?
2. The following are some things that may help determine the state of your heart. *Perhaps print this out and give it to each member of your group. Spend some time thinking through these questions and then discuss your findings.*

Spiritual check-up

The Bible says that out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks (Luke 6:45). What do my words and my way of speaking right now indicate about the state of my heart?	
Am I generally positive and hopeful or negative and hopeless?	
What has saddened me this last month?	
What has made me happy this last month?	
How have I spent my time and my money lately?	
What is my reaction to others when I am tired or frustrated?	
Spend some time asking God how He sees your heart. What does He say?	

3. What do you think keeps us from honest self-examination?
4. How can we overcome these obstacles?
5. Read the following extract from Psalm 26. How do you think David got the point of being so vulnerable before God that He could authentically ask God to examine His heart?

- **Psalm 26 vs 1-3:**

“Judge me, O LORD; for I have walked in my truthfulness. I have trusted also in the LORD; I shall not slide. Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; purify my heart and my mind. For Your loving-kindness is before my eyes; and I have walked in Your truth.”

iii. We surrender our hearts

1. When we recognise sin and evil in our hearts we can either justify or ignore it, or we can find a way to do something about it. How do you think we can go about purifying our hearts?
2. We cannot become righteous or Christ-like on our own or through our own effort. In order to change, we must surrender ourselves to God. What do you think prevents us from doing this?
3. Read the following passages. What do they reveal to you about the transformation of our hearts?

- **Psalm 51 vs 10-12:**

“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Your presence, and take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.

- **Ezekiel 11 vs 19-21:**

“I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh. Then they will follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. They will be my people, and I will be their God. But as for those whose hearts are devoted to their vile images and detestable idols, I will bring down on their own heads what they have done, declares the Sovereign LORD.”

- **Hebrews 4 vs 12:**

“For the Word of God is living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing apart of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

- **Hebrews 10 vs 22-23:**

“So let us come near to God with a sincere heart and a sure faith, with hearts that have been purified from a guilty conscience and with bodies washed with clean water. Let us hold on firmly to the hope we profess, because we can trust God to keep his promise.”

IV. We protect our hearts

1. Proverbs 4 vs 23 says: “Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.” What do you think this means?
2. How do you think we can guard our hearts without building walls around them and not letting anyone in, i.e. how can we be vulnerable enough to love while being wise enough to protect ourselves?
3. Do you think the things we read, watch and listen to influence our hearts? How?
4. Are there relationships that are destructive for you at present? How do you think you can stop engaging with people who are having a negative impact on the condition of your heart?
5. What are things you can do that will have a positive impact on the state of your heart? How can you make more room and time in your life for these things?

V. Call to action

1. What will we do with what we have discovered in this session?
2. How will we hold each other accountable to this?