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SERMON TITLE

Matters of the Heart, part 1

SERIES

DATE

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KEY SCRIPTURE

Proverbs 4:23

SYNOPSIS

The root of all the unrest in our world, cities & homes is a matter of the heart.

HIGHLIGHTS



☞ **Matters of the Heart, Part 1**

Have you felt it? The tension in our world right now? Feels like every headline brings more division. Social media is full of people picking sides, shouting past each other. The "United" States don't feel all that united, do they?

Perhaps you've seen something like this in the grocery store... overhearing two people, complete strangers, get into it right there in the cereal aisle. Perhaps it started with a comment about prices, then escalated to politics, and in no time, they were practically shouting at each other over Cheerios. If you've witnessed something like that, here's what you need to know... That anger didn't start in the cereal aisle. It was already there, just waiting for a reason to come out.

☞ The Bible says it this way in **Proverbs 4:23: 'Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.'** Everything. That's what we're talking about today.

The chaos we're witnessing in our nation and even in our own homes is not just political. It's not just about policies or parties. It's deeper than that. It's spiritual. And here's the truth we need to

☞ hear: **the external chaos is simply revealing the internal condition.**

We look at the world and say, "Everything's falling apart!" But what if God is pulling back the curtain and saying, "Look, this is what hearts look like without Me. This is what happens when people try to find peace, purpose, and hope in anything other than Jesus."

Now, I'm not here to dive into politics... that's not my calling. I'm here with God's Word because at the root of all this unrest is a matter of the heart. And today we're going to discover why our hearts are the real battleground, and how Christ offers the only lasting peace, not just for our nation, but for your soul.

☞ **The Problem of the Core (Your Heart)**

Jeremiah 17:9 says, **"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?"** That's God's diagnosis. Not "a little misguided." Not "needing fine-tuning." Desperately sick.

Have you ever said something and thought, "Where did that come from?" I've done it... saying something out of frustration, or simply not thinking it through, and then later thought, "That didn't come out right." Well, it didn't just come out of nowhere... that came out of the heart. That's what Jesus meant when He said, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." (**Matthew 12:34**).



It's like a car with a bent alignment. You can let go of the wheel for just a second, and it drifts. I remember driving an old car years ago that needed a front-end alignment. I could be going straight down the highway, both hands on the wheel, concentrating, and it would stay straight. But the moment I relaxed, got distracted or let go? It would pull hard to the right. Didn't matter how good my intentions were. Didn't matter how careful I was. The car was bent, and it wanted to go its own way. That's your heart.

Or, think about scrolling through social media. You open the app just to check messages, right? Innocent enough. But then you see a post... an opinion you disagree with, a comment that rubs you wrong, a picture that makes you jealous. And suddenly, without even thinking, you're typing up a response. Maybe a little sarcastic. Maybe a little harsh. You think, "They need to hear this." But later, you think, "Why did I even engage? Why did that bother me so much?" I'll tell you why... because the problem isn't the post. It's the heart. The post just revealed what was already in there: pride, envy, anger, insecurity.

We all have a natural bent like that old car of mine. We want to go our own way because our hearts have a big problem. They're desperately sick and need a renovation. **The answer is Jesus. Always Jesus.** Because we can't fix a heart problem with behavior modification. We need something... Someone... who goes deeper.

When we don't deal with our heart condition, it doesn't stay internal. It leaks out into our lives, creating chaos we were never meant to carry.

☞ **The Personal Chaos**

Philippians 4:6–7 says, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God, and the peace of God which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

I've experienced anxiety before. I can remember lying awake at 2 a.m., staring at the ceiling fan, my mind racing. I had so many "what-ifs" swirling that I couldn't breathe straight. I've even gotten up and paced through the house, or turned on the TV to try distract my mind. And I finally had to whisper, "God, I can't carry this tonight; you've got to take it." And you know what? His peace didn't erase the problem, but it did let me sleep.

☞ **1 Peter 5:7 says, "Cast all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you."** It's sort of like carrying groceries all in one trip. You're loaded down, bags cutting into your hands, something's about to spill. Then someone says, "Here, let me carry a couple." That's Jesus with your burdens.



What "bags" are you white-knuckling that He's been asking you to hand over? Our hearts are sick and tend to create chaos. So we need to find a solution.

☞ **The Proper Cure**

Psalm 146:3 says, "Do not put your trust in princes, in human beings, who cannot save." I hope you understand that salvation doesn't come from a ballot box. It requires something much higher than that. We need to put our trust in Jesus instead.

It's like GPS when you're lost and your phone reroutes you. "Recalculating, make a U-turn." That's what Jesus does. He doesn't just tell you you're lost, He gives you a way back home. Without the GPS you might keep trying to find your way, but you're still lost. Likewise, self-help books, vacation, or a new friendship only offer limited renewal. Because your heart is so desperately sick, you need a complete redirection. God actually offers to give you a brand-new heart.

Ezekiel 36:26 says, "I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you." Spiritually, God doesn't just patch us. He gives us a brand-new heart. But let me get practical for a moment. What does it actually look like to receive a new heart from God? Some of you may be thinking, "Okay, I get it, I need Jesus. But what do I actually *do*?"

Here are three steps, and they're not complicated, but they are life-changing:

☞ **First: Admit the Problem**. You have to admit that your heart is sick. Not just "struggling." Not just "going through a hard time." Sick. Sinful. In desperate need of a Savior. **Romans 3:23** says we've *all* sinned. That includes you. That includes me. No exceptions.

☞ **Second: Believe in the Solution**. **Jesus** didn't just come to give good advice. He came to die in your place, to take the punishment your sin deserved, and then He rose from the dead, proving He has power over sin and death. You have to believe that. Not just intellectually, but with your whole heart.

☞ **Third: Concede Control**. This is the part where we struggle the most. We want Jesus to be our Savior, but we don't want Him to be our Lord. We want the benefits without the **surrender**. But it doesn't work that way. When you give Jesus your heart, you're saying, "I'm not in charge anymore. You are. My life is Yours. My plans are Yours. My future is Yours." And that's when the new heart begins.

☞ **Romans 10:9** says, "**If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.**"



Now let me pause and speak directly to some of you who've been Christians for years. You prayed the prayer. You walked the aisle. You got baptized. But if we're being honest, perhaps you've never fully surrendered. You say Jesus is Lord on Sunday, but the rest of the week you're still calling the shots.

☞ Here's the hard truth again: **The answer is Jesus. Always Jesus.** But He won't share the throne of your heart. It's all or nothing. So let me ask you today... who's really on the throne? Who's making the decisions? Who are you trusting when things fall apart? And, here's some really good news: Jesus doesn't just save us and leave us to figure it out. He offers us something for the journey. Something we desperately need in this chaotic world.

☞ **The Peace of Christ**

John 14:27 says, "**Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.**"

Have you ever been on a flight where everything seems designed to stress you out? Picture this: you're stuck in a middle seat because you booked late. There's a baby crying two rows back. The guy next to you is snoring. Flight attendants are clanging carts up and down the aisle. And you've got work to do... maybe a presentation to prep, a deadline hanging over your head... and your stress level is through the roof. You can feel your chest tightening, your mind racing. Then you remember... you've got noise-cancelling headphones in your bag. You pull them out, power them on, and the moment they activate, everything changes. The baby is still crying; the guy is still snoring; the plane is still roaring through the sky at 30,000 feet. But you can't hear it anymore. Suddenly, you can think. You can breathe. You can focus.

☞ That's what **God's peace** does. **It's not the absence of noise, it's clarity in the middle of it.** The problems don't disappear. Your circumstances don't magically resolve. But His peace becomes the stronger signal. His presence becomes louder than the chaos. Now, this peace doesn't mean we ignore problems. It doesn't mean we bury our heads in the sand and pretend everything's fine. It means we face the chaos with a different power source. We face it with Jesus, who has already overcome the world.

Colossians 3:15 says, "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts." That means His peace makes the calls, not anxiety. His peace gets the final vote, not fear.

So, you can receive a new heart and experience peace that surpasses understanding. But some may still be wondering about those times when everything really does fall apart. What then?

☞ **The Promised Conclusion**



Revelation 21:4: "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes... no more death or mourning, or crying, or pain."

I've stood at a graveside, listening to the sobs of a family, and thought, "What do you even say in a moment like this?" The only real hope is that one day, God Himself will wipe every tear away. That's His promise. It's certain. That day is coming. But it's not here yet. So what do we do in the meantime? How do we live in the space between the "already" and the "not yet"? We live like people who know how the story ends.

When the world feels like it's unraveling, we don't panic, because we know who holds it together. When relationships fracture, when health fails, when finances crumble, we don't lose hope ☞ because we know this isn't the final chapter. **This is not the end. Jesus has already won.** And He's coming back to make all things new. That's not denial. That's biblical hope. And it changes how you walk through today.

Now the question is, where's your heart in all of this? Is it drifting? Is it heavy? Restless? Anxious? ☞ **The answer is Jesus. Always Jesus.** And He's offering you peace today. Not the world's kind of peace which depends on circumstances, but His peace... The kind that aligns your heart and mind; that guards, cancels the noise, and never weakens.

Maybe you came in today restless, heavy-hearted, even hopeless. And for the first time you're realizing it's not just your circumstances, it's your heart. But the good news is this: God can give you a brand-new heart. That's what Jesus came for.

☞ If you're ready, you can pray something like this, right where you sit: **"Lord Jesus, I know my heart has been far from you. I confess my sin, I confess my need. I believe You died for me and rose again. Today I give you my heart, my whole life. Make me new. Amen."**

And for others... you know Christ, but your heart has been heavy. You've been carrying burdens you were never meant to carry. Today, it's time to hand Him the grocery bags. Time to let His peace drown out the noise. You might pray something like this: **"Jesus, I give this to You. Guard my heart with Your peace."**

Closing song options:

**A Heart Surrendered
Worth It All**