

# **THE ANATOMY OF A CHRISTIAN STEWARD**

## **VII. A Heart That Gives**

Today your heart will beat 103,369 times, and during this time it will pump your blood 168,000,000 miles. It's no wonder we're tired!

This year more than a million Americans will die of heart disease. This is more than all of our servicemen killed since the Revolutionary War. Unbelievable!!

This vital organ is no larger than a man's fist, and yet its condition largely determines the state of a person's health. We spend millions of dollars each year in research and development seeking a cure for all the various heart diseases of men and women, and rightly so.

But what about the "spiritual heart." The Bible has much to say on this subject. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." (Matthew 5:8) Obviously He wasn't talking about man's physical heart. In fact, when the Bible uses the term, it refers to the moral and spiritual life of a person. The condition of this heart determines the spiritual health of an individual, just as the physical heart does the physical health. The Hebrew word refers to the intellectual, emotional, and volitional aspects of one's personality.

As the Scripture says, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." (Proverbs 23:7) In fact, our entire relationship to God is determined by the attitude of our heart.

For example:

- ♥ We are to SEEK God with all our heart. (Psalms 119:2)  
"Blessed are they that seek him with the whole heart."
- ♥ We are to BELIEVE God with all our heart. (Romans 10:10)  
"Believe in thine heart... thou shalt be saved."
- ♥ We are to LOVE God with all our heart. (Matthew 22:37)  
"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart."
- ♥ We are to SERVE God with all our heart. (Joshua 22:5)  
"Serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul."
- ♥ We are to do the WILL OF GOD with all our heart. (Ephesians 6:6)  
"Doing the will of God from the heart."
- ♥ We are to GIVE with all our heart. (Exodus 35:5)

God said, "Receive an offering for me from those who have a willing heart."

It should not surprise us then that when the apostle Paul wanted to challenge us in the principles of giving that he focused on the heart: "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver." (II Corinthians 9:7)

Here Paul is speaking to the Christian. He says that God has given you a new heart through faith in Jesus Christ. It is a heart filled with love and faith. A Christian is one who has been forgiven. He has a heart that is forgiving and a heart for giving. It is the new nature to give!

In light of this and realizing that we are God's stewards and His fellow laborers, we should follow His guidance in giving. Notice what He has said about our giving:

It should be willing – God's first command about giving, "Receive an offering for me from those who have a willing heart."

It should be from a willing heart – God's first command about fund raising was "receive an offering from those who are of a willing heart." (Exodus 35:5)

It should be generous – God has been generous in giving to you how can you do less?

It should be sacrificial – as David said, "God forbid that I should make an offering that is not a sacrifice." (II Samuel 24:24)

It should be proportionate – as Paul told all of us, "give as God has prospered you." (II Corinthians 9:7b) Jesus said of Mary, "She has done what she could." (Mark 14:8)

It should be cheerful – Remember, "God loves a cheerful giver."

It should be willing – Again, David said, "I have given willingly; the leaders have given willingly and now I have seen with joy how willingly your people have given." (I Chronicles 29:6,17-18)

It should be loving – Jesus said, "God so loved the world that He gave..." (John 3:16)

Jesus was saying – love matters! God knows your heart.

Yes, one can give without loving, but one cannot love without giving. When one loves he gives generously and gladly. He gives as God has given whether it be large or small. The more God blesses, the more one gives because he is mindful of Christ's sacrifice for him.

"Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift." (II Corinthians 9:15) There is no "hardening of the hearteries here!"

*Lord, my heart is open to You.  
Help me to have a willing heart - surrendered to Your will.*