

BIBLE VERSES

Question 1

Psalm 115:4-8 ESV - 4 Their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands. 5 They have mouths, but do not speak; eyes, but do not see. 6 They have ears, but do not hear; noses, but do not smell. 7 They have hands, but do not feel; feet, but do not walk; and they do not make a sound in their throat. 8 Those who make them become like them; so do all who trust in them.

Question 2

Genesis 3:1-6 ESV - 1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?'" 2 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, 3 but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" 4 But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." 6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.

Question 3

Proverbs 4:23 NLT – 23 Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.

Colossians 3:12-17 ESV - 12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. 14 And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. 17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Psalm 37:4 ESV - 4 Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.

“You Might Not Love What You Think”

Hidden Heart week #2

INTRODUCTION

What comes to mind when you hear the word idol? Is it those little gold statues in foreign gift shops, or perhaps a TV vocal competition? God warns us about idols in his Word but most of us gloss over that and relegate it to the problems of Greek, Roman or pagan cultures. But if we do not guard our hearts, we may find ourselves unwittingly allowing “idols” into our own lives that will steal away our affections from God.

Ice Breaker (Optional—8 min)

If you had to choose to give up one of these, would you unplug from all things digital, or forego coffee?

STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)

You Become What You Worship

Q1. Read Psalm 115:4-8

We were created to worship and we all have a longing deep within us that seeks fulfillment which only God can give. But we don't always fill our longings with the right things. And when we put something else in that role of fulfilling our deepest needs, we are making it into an idol. What does Psalm 115:4-8 tell us about idols? Idols hold the promise of something good, but ultimately, they are worthless and leave us unsatisfied.

List some things that can easily become idols in our lives because they promise success, happiness, fulfillment or pleasure.

success _____

happiness _____

fulfillment _____

pleasure _____

What are some ways that the things you listed can direct us in a path away from God? Can you think of an example of how following after these things might cause us to act and live in an ungodly manner?

Habits that Express Our Deepest Desires

Q2. Read Genesis 3:1-6

When Eve was first tempted in the Garden, how did the serpent cast doubt in her mind? In verse 6 what were the three desires that Eve saw promised in the fruit of that tree? If Eve believed God would provide these things for her, why would she have sought to provide for her needs elsewhere?

If we are not careful in making our everyday choices and habits we may unwittingly elevate the importance of some things beyond what is “healthy”. Reflecting on your habits of this day, what occupied your attention the most? Is there something you feel you just couldn’t live without? If we allow it to, our love of those things we desire most will undermine our love of God. We may find ourselves turning to social media, sports, news, coffee, politics (or whatever draws you in) rather than God to satisfy our deepest needs.

Redirecting the Desires of Our Hearts

Q3. Read Proverbs 4:23; Psalm 37:4; Colossians 3:12-17

Proverbs 4:23 tells us the heart directs the course of our lives, and we must guard it. But how? A good place to start is in recognizing the habits we immerse ourselves in.

Let’s consider some of the automatic behaviors you use to navigate life’s challenges. How do you de-stress? If it doesn’t already involve God, how can you make God, rather than something else, the focal point of your stress relief? (e.g. If you exercise, pray while you do. If you listen to music, make it worship songs.) Psalm 37 tells us the key to receiving the desires of our heart. It is to delight in the Lord. Including God in your daily habits allows your delight in Him to grow and shapes your heart’s desire.

Colossians 3 gives us a glimpse of God’s version of living the good life. It begins with our choice to “put on” attributes that reflect God. Look over the attributes listed and identify those you feel you reflect well and those you would like God to increase in your life.

Doing well _____

Need to increase _____

THE BOTTOM LINE

A heart that desires God is reflected in the habits and practices of our daily lives. But the things that we “just do” can undermine our heart’s desire. They can become idols if we allow them to pull us far enough off course. To love the things that God loves takes a conscious effort, choosing to involve God in all aspects of our lives and to put on Godly attributes that reflect the Spirit that lives in us.

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

We know our daily practices train our desires. Last week our practice was to memorize Pro. 4:23. Can you recite it now? This week take time to get alone with God and ask Him to reveal what we have been blind to as you examine the habits of your daily life. Use a journal to write down your reflections and impressions and see what occupies your attention most. If God is low on the rankings there may be some idols that need to be dealt with. Ask God to show you how to return Him to his rightful place in your life.

MEMORY VERSE

Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.
Proverbs 4:23 NLT

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you will apply this study in your life: _____

Pray for your group members’ needs:

*** GOING FURTHER ON YOUR OWN ***

Keep a record of the ways you have involved God in your daily habits. What practices are you changing? Has it gotten easier over the course of the week? If you were successful in memorizing Proverbs 4:23 last week, this week try Colossians 3:17 -And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.