

“A MATTER OF THE HEART”

Lesson 10 ☐ For week ending December 6, 2014

Everyone has a story. Everyone feels the need to serve—or not to serve—the Lord on a different level. “If your head wants to know what is in your heart, let your ears listen to your mouth, for out of the heart the mouth speaks.” That not only applies to us—the one who is talking, but to others as well. You can tell what is in someone’s heart by the words that they say. – **Minister Margie Funk**

KEY TEXT: “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ” (I Corinthians 11:1 NIV)

1. Jesus lived His life here on earth as an example for us of how to imitate the heavenly Father (Ephesians 5:1,2). We never see Jesus down, discouraged, or refusing to do what He needed to do. Discuss Jesus’ comments in Luke 9:58,59. Do you think Jesus was complaining or simply stating a fact? In His heart, Jesus knew He was here to obey the will of the Father—and that is all He wanted to do (John 4:34). What was Jesus’ attitude even when He came face-to-face with the Cross (Luke 22:42)?

- **Ephesians 5:1,2**

1 Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.

2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

- **Luke 9:58,59**

58 And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.”

59 Then He said to another, “Follow Me.” But he said, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.”

- **John 4:34**

34 Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.”

- **Luke 22:42**

42 Saying, “Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.”

2. Oftentimes we have feelings or beliefs from our past that have become obstacles in our path. We become set in our ways. Change does not come easy for us. Discuss what Jesus tells us in Matthew 18:3. Discuss the importance of having a childlike faith that completely trusts in the Lord to know what is best. If we do not trust, we do not change. If we do not change, we do not grow in the Lord. What promise does He give us for trusting Him in Psalms 37:5,6? Consider Jehoshaphat’s heart as you read II Chronicles 19:3. Discuss the importance of preparing your heart for change before it even comes.

- **Matthew 18:3**

3 And said, “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”

- **Psalms 37:5,6**

5 Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass.

6 He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, And your justice as the noonday.

• **2 Chronicles 19:3**

3 Nevertheless good things are found in you, in that you have removed the wooden images from the land, and have prepared your heart to seek God.

3. There are times when our hearts are in the right place but our flesh just cannot go on. With the business of life, we find ourselves tired and in need of rest. This was the case with the disciples who had come to pray with Jesus in the Garden (Matthew 26:40-45). According to Matthew 11:28-30, where can we find rest? What did God say to Jerusalem when they were offered a way to have rest, but refused (Jeremiah 6:16,19)?

• **Matthew 26:40-45**

40 Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "What! Could you not watch with Me one hour?"

41 Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

42 Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done."

43 And He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy.

44 So He left them, went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

45 Then He came to His disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners.

• **Matthew 11:28-30**

28 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

• **Jeremiah 6:16,19**

16 Thus says the Lord: "Stand in the ways and see, And ask for the old paths, where the good way is, And walk in it; Then you will find rest for your souls. But they said, 'We will not walk in it.'..."

19 Hear, O earth! Behold, I will certainly bring calamity on this people—The fruit of their thoughts, Because they have not heeded My words Nor My law, but rejected it.

4. There are times when we are tempted to sit back and make excuses rather than pushing forward and doing what we know we need to do for the Lord. Consider what the Apostle Paul had to say on the subject (Philippians 3:13-16). God does know and understand our weaknesses. If we seek Him, He will give us the strength we need to press on! When we have a pure heart, we are able to do God's will and He will help us no matter what the circumstance (Psalms 51:10). It is a matter of the heart!

• **Philippians 3:13-16**

13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,

14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

15 Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you.

16 Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.

• **Psalms 51:10**

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.