



The Importance of the Heart

“As water reflects the face,
so one’s life reflects the heart.”

Proverbs 27:19 NIV

“Because of the increase of wickedness,
the love of most will grow cold, but the
one who stands firm to the end will be
saved.”

Matthew 24:12-13 NIV

Number of references in the bible according to chat GPT:

1. Love - 686 times
2. Faith - 336 times
3. Grace - 170 times
4. Forgiveness - 47 times
5. Salvation - 157 times
6. Hope - 130 times
7. Redemption - 106 times
8. Justice - 189 times
9. Wisdom - 234 times
10. Mercy - 261 times

The Heart - 826 times

Heart Verses:

- "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it." - *Proverbs 4:23*
- "The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." - *1 Samuel 16:7*
- "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding." - *Proverbs 3:5*

- Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." - *Mark 12:30*
- Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." - *Psalms 51:10*
- "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God." - *Matthew 5:8*
- For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." - *Matthew 6:21*

- “For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.” - *Hebrews 4:12 NIV*
- “A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.” - *Luke 6:45 NIV*

What is 'The Heart'?

- The heart is the centre of a person's being and the source of our thoughts, emotions, and actions. Your heart is you!
- A pure heart is desired by God and is a key for meaningful relationship with Him.
- Love is the most important aspect of the heart, and it is the foundation of all relationships, including our relationship with God.
- The heart is where faith resides and where God's word should be stored and meditated on.

What is 'The Heart'?

- A hardened heart is a barrier to the life-force of God and can lead to spiritual blindness.
- The heart can be a source of joy, peace, and comfort when it is aligned with God's will and filled with His presence.
- The heart is a reflection of a person's character, and it is through the heart that God judges a person's actions and motives.
- The heart is a battleground where spiritual warfare takes place, and it is important to guard it against the enemy's attacks.

Sometimes, God will offend our
minds to get to our hearts

“So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, and they are full of greed.”

Ephesians 4:17-19 NIV

Hardening of the heart



ignorance, darkened understanding



separated from the life of God



lose sensitivity



given over to sensuality and greed

Ephesians 4:17-19 NIV

Eric Clapton: Autobiography

'I stumbled through my month much as I had done the first time, Just ticking off the days, hoping that something would change in me without me having to do much about it. Then one day, as my visit drew to an end, a panic hit me, and I realised that in fact nothing had changed in me, and I was going back out into the world again completely unprotected. The noise in my head was deafening, and drinking was in my thoughts all the time. It shocked me to realise that here I was in a treatment centre, a supposedly safe environment, and I was in serious danger. I was absolutely terrified, in complete despair. At that moment, almost of their own accord, my legs gave way and I fell to my knees. In the privacy of my room begged for help. I had no notion who I thought I was talking to, just knew that I had come to the end of my tether. I had nothing left to fight with. Then I remembered what I had heard about surrender, something I thought I could never do - my pride just wouldn't allow it - but I knew that on my own, I wasn't going to make it, so I asked for help and, getting down on my knees, I surrendered.....

Eric Clapton: Autobiography

.....Within a few days I realised that something had happened for me. An atheist would probably say it was just a change of attitude, and to a certain extent, that's true, but there was much more to it than that. I had found a place to turn to, a place that I'd always known was there, but never really wanted, or needed, to believe in. From that day until this, I have never failed to pray in the morning, on my knees, asking for help, and at night, to express gratitude for my life and most of all, for my sobriety. I choose to kneel because I feel I need to humble myself when I pray, and with my ego, this is the most I can do. If you were to ask why I do all this, I will tell you ... because it works, as simple as that. In all this time that I've been sober, I have never once seriously thought about taking a drink or a drug.'

Russell Brand: Recovery

‘The 12 Step program, which has saved my life, will change the life of anyone who embraces it. I have seen it work many times with people with addiction issues of every hue: drugs, sex, relationships, food, work, smoking, alcohol, technology, pornography, hoarding, gambling, everything. Because the instinct that drives the compulsion is universal. It is an attempt to solve the problem of disconnection, alienation and tepid despair, because the problem is ultimately 'being human' in an environment that is curiously ill-equipped to deal with the challenges that entails. We are all on the addiction scale.’

The condition in extreme is identifiable but the less obvious version of addiction is still painful, and arguably worse, because we simply adapt to living in pain and never countenance the beautiful truth: there is a solution.

What does the want, want?

- We are looking for Connection. Attention. Love
- Addictions are a semi-successful attempt to address pain
- What we really want is connection with others and ultimately with the Father himself.
- How do we find that in the thrum and difficulty of daily life?
- 'Circumstances' are warfare that seek to make your heart question the goodness of God.

The Road Less Travelled – M.Scott Peck

‘What makes life difficult is that the process of confronting and solving problems is a painful one. Problems, depending upon their nature, evoke in us frustration or grief or sadness or loneliness or guilt or regret or anger or fear or anxiety or anguish or despair. These are uncomfortable feelings, often very uncomfortable, often as painful as any kind of physical pain, sometimes equaling the very worst kind of physical pain. Indeed, it is because of the pain that events or conflicts engender in us that we call them problems. And since life poses an endless series of problems, life is always difficult and is full of pain as well as joy.

Yet it is in this whole process of meeting and solving problems that life has its meaning. Problems are the cutting edge that distinguishes between success and failure. Problems call forth our courage and our wisdom; indeed, they create our courage and our wisdom. It is only because of problems that we grow mentally and spiritually. When we desire to encourage the growth of the human spirit, we challenge and encourage the human capacity to solve problems, just as in school we deliberately set problems for our children to solve.

It is through the pain of confronting and resolving problems that we learn. As Benjamin Franklin said, 'Those things that hurt, instruct!' It is for this reason that wise people learn not to dread but actually to welcome problems and actually to welcome the pain of problems.

Most of us are not so wise. Fearing the pain involved, almost all of us, to a greater or lesser degree, attempt to avoid problems. We procrastinate, hoping that they will go away we ignore them, forget them, pretend they do not exist. We even take drugs to assist us in ignoring them, so that by deadening ourselves to the pain we can forget the problems that cause the pain. We attempt to skirt around problems rather than meet them head on. We attempt to get out of the rather than suffer through them.’

The main problem with pain,
is that it is painful

Things to be on guard against:

- Resentment
- Bitterness
- Unforgiveness
- Unbelief
- Catastrophising
- Pity
- Hopelessness

Tips for keeping your heart soft:

- Thankfulness
- Forgive quickly - then forgive from the heart
- Vulnerability - before God and others
- Surrender
- Hope
- Prayer
- Fasting
- Learning to receive - not easy!
- Community
- Generosity
- Be an encourager

Wisdom from proverbs

- *Proverbs 3:3* - "Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart."
- *Proverbs 12:25* - "Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up."

“I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.”

Ezekiel 36:25-26 NIV