

## INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Mark 7:20-23**.
- B. Proverbs 4:23 says, "Keep thy heart...out of it are the issues of life." Our heart can lead us to God, or it can lead us away from Him.
- C. It is important then to realize that sin begins in the heart and then becomes the deed.

## I. THE THOUGHT BEHIND THE DEED.

- A. The word 'heart' can also mean the 'mind.' Jesus said evil thoughts come out of the heart.
- B. Heart can also exclusively mean the emotions (Mk. 12:30).
- C. When one speaks about the 'heart of man' he is referring to the intellectual/emotional part of his being.
- D. Jesus, in His sermon on the mount, spoke about the thought behind the deed:
  - 1. Stop hating and you stop the murdering.
  - 2. Stop lusting and you stop committing adultery.
  - 3. Love your neighbor and your enemy; give to them who asks.
- E. Very often the heart will dictate what the mind thinks, and sometimes it is the other way around (the mind dictates the heart). Example: we want (love) certain foods but our mind says they are not good for us, what do we do?

## II. THE FIRST SIX EVIL ACTS.

- A. There is some rationale to seeing the first six (because they are in the plural) as evil acts, and the last six (because they are in the singular) as vices.
- B. First and second is **"fornication and adultery"**:
  - 1. Fornication is any kind of sexual perversion including bestiality, homosexuality, as well as sexual relationships without marriage.
  - 2. Adultery is fornication by married individuals with someone other than their spouse.
  - 3. As we have already seen in Jesus' sermon on the mount, these acts of sin begin in the heart.
- C. Third, **"thefts"**:
  - 1. There are two words in the Greek for theft, and the one used here denotes the most petty and the tiniest acts of thievery.
  - 2. Judas can be termed as a petty thief.
  - 3. It goes without saying that we plan in our mind to take something before we do it, but it can become such a habit we may not even realize we're doing it. Example: taking pens from the office.
- D. Fourth, **"murders"**:
  - 1. No one will kill another person or animal without reason. There has to be some thought behind the act before the act can be done.
  - 2. Remember again the sermon on the mount.
  - 3. Jesus also includes anger and insulting language with murder.
- E. Fifth, **"covetings"**:
  - 1. This was forbidden also under the OT and is classified as idolatry in Col. 3:5.
  - 2. Coveting has the sole passion of gaining and getting (with no thought as to others loss).
  - 3. This means that gambling is covetousness and is sinful.
- F. Sixth, **"wickedness"**:
  - 1. This is referring to a pattern of behavior, which undeniably comes from the mind premeditating the actions.
  - 2. The term can be all inclusive of any kind of ungodly conduct (2Tim. 3:13).

### III. THE SECOND SIX, EVIL VICES.

- A. A vice is an evil habit, action, or characteristic of an individual. Vices are so bad that people are usually identified by them.
- B. First, **'deceit'**:
  - 1. This is referring to being cunning, crafty, the ingenuity of deception, and is the opposite of Christian sincerity.
  - 2. Satan uses deceit constantly to get people to sin, it is his 'number one' tool.'
  - 3. Shakespeare said, "Oh, what a tangled web we weave, when we practice to deceive."
- C. Second, **"lasciviousness"**:
  - 1. This is the undisciplined soul, who uses no restraint, and lives without regard to any decency or honor.
  - 2. This is decided in the mind or heart, because there is, with this lifestyle no planning at all (1Pet. 5:8).
- D. Third, **"envy"** or **"an evil eye"**:
  - 1. This is to look down on the good fortune of others as to want to curse with an evil spell if they had the power.
  - 2. Since there is almost no outward action here, this is a sin of the heart.
- E. Fourth, **"slander"** or **"railing"**:
  - 1. This is blasphemy which means to "speak against."
  - 2. More specifically if it is speaking against men it is "slander" and if it is speaking against God it is "blasphemy."
- F. Fifth, **"pride"**:
  - 1. This is the glorification of self, and is the first of the seven deadly sins of Prov. 6:16.
  - 2. To have pride in the heart is to have the absence of God there.
  - 3. Self (pride) must be crucified (Gal. 2:20).
- G. Sixth, **"foolishness"**:
  - 1. This is not referring to the man who does not have proper (average) mental abilities, but to the one who does and will not use them appropriately.
  - 2. This individual is not working up to his/her potential.
  - 3. Jesus called the 1-talent man wicked because he was foolish with the talent he had.

### CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. Jesus said that all of these things are what will defile man. He can lose his soul by practicing these evil acts and vices.
- B. Luke 6:16 is applicable here, "out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks." Truly our heart does control our actions.
- C. By following the great commandment (love with all of your heart) many sins can be avoided.
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.