



Sermon Notes: “The Heart Problem”

Heart Work: Pursuing Spiritual Growth — Week 1

Colossians 2:6–10

10.18.26

Big Idea:

Spiritual growth isn’t adding more to carry.
It’s training that strips off what slows us down.

Series Question:

Does this make me more like Jesus — or not?

AT THE HEART LEVEL:

1. No ritual on its own goes deep enough to clean a heart. Only Jesus does.
2. Following Jesus isn’t a moment we had; it’s a pursuit we continue.
3. Living in the gap between knowing and doing isn’t failure; it’s growth in progress.

So WHAT:

HEART CHECK 1: Does this make me more like Jesus — or not?

“Is this drawing me closer to Jesus — or just keeping me busy?”
“Why am I really doing this — to be seen, to feel safe, or to know Him?”
“Is it making me more grateful — or more tired and critical?”

Keep it. Change it. Set it down.

HEART CHECK 2: Name your baggage and hand it to Him.

“Jesus, what am I carrying into my relationship with You?”
“Where did I learn to see You that way?”
“What does Jesus show me about You instead?”

Life Group ICEBREAKER: What's something you trained for (or, trained an animal for) — a sport, a skill, a job — that you never could have pulled off just by trying hard on the day? What did the training actually look like?

REVIEW:

Review the sermon notes from Sunday. Was there a particular point that stuck with you? What was it and why did it resonate with you?

READ: Colossians 2:6–7

- Paul says, “Just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him.” Think back to your early days with Jesus. Has time fanned the flame hotter or let it smolder? What changed?
- Verse 7 says healthy growth overflows with thankfulness. Is your spiritual life making you more grateful, or more tired and critical? Why?

Read 1 Timothy 4:7–10 and Romans 7:15-25

- Why does it matter which part is God's work and which part is ours?
- Where do you feel the gap between what you know and how you live?

READ: Colossians 2:8-10 and Hebrews 12:1

- “Capture” means to be carried off as plunder. What “empty philosophies” or “high-sounding nonsense” tend to carry Christians off today? (Christian-sounding sayings, online arguments, identity myths, small-town talk.)
- Darin named four bags: the checklist, the wound, the suspicion, and the tired. Which one have you carried, now or in the past? (Share only what you're comfortable sharing.)
- Baggage distorts God's fullness. On a hard day, what does God “look like” to you? How does looking at Jesus (John 14:9) change that picture?

READ: Matthew 11:28–30

- Jesus says His yoke is easy, but a yoke is still for work. What's the difference between training yoked to Jesus and trying hard on your own?

DEPLOY: Two Reps This Week:

1. *The Heart Check:* Pick one habit, routine, or feed. Ask, “Does this make me more like Jesus — or not?” Then keep it, change it, or set it down.
2. *Name Your Bag:* Take ten minutes with God, a pen, and paper. Ask: “What am I carrying into my relationship with You? Where did I learn to see You that way? What does Jesus show me about You instead?” Then pray Matthew 11:28 back to Him.

This week: Come ready to share one thing you kept, changed, or set down.

Don't Forget:

- Today - Sunday, October 18 - All church Sunday School to discuss bylaws. Snacks are available in the foyer.
- Jerry Bridges' *The Pursuit of Holiness* – pick up the copy with your name on it at the Welcome Desk. Four extra copies are available on a first come first serve basis if you didn't put your request in last week.
- Saturday, Oct 24 – Women's Coffee Connection, 9:00 am – 10:30 am, @ECC

Prayer:

Father,

Thank You that we don't have to earn our place with You. In Jesus we see exactly who You are, and in Him we are already complete. Thank You for running to us when we were far off, and for coming out to us even when we were busy checking boxes.

We confess the things we've been carrying: the checklists, the wounds, the suspicion, the weariness. We set them down before You. Show us where we've been carried off by empty ideas, and draw us back to Jesus.

Teach us to train, not to earn. Let our roots grow down into You, let our lives be built on You, and let us overflow with thankfulness.

Create in us a clean heart, O God. Renew a loyal spirit within us.

In Jesus' name, Amen.