

BIBLE VERSES

Question 1

John 1:35-42 NLT - 35 The following day John was again standing with two of his disciples. 36 As Jesus walked by, John looked at him and declared, "Look! There is the Lamb of God!" 37 When John's two disciples heard this, they followed Jesus. 38 Jesus looked around and saw them following. "What do you want?" he asked them. They replied, "Rabbi" (which means "Teacher"), "where are you staying?" 39 "Come and see," he said. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon when they went with him to the place where he was staying, and they remained with him the rest of the day.

Question 2

Luke 15:13 NLT - 13 "A few days later this younger son packed all his belongings and moved to a distant land, and there he wasted all his money in wild living.

John 4:13-15 NLT 13 Jesus replied, "Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again. 14 But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life." 15 "Please, sir," the woman said, "give me this water! Then I'll never be thirsty again, and I won't have to come here to get water."

John 10:10 NLT 10 The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.

Question 3

Philippians 1:9-11 NLT - 9 I pray that your love will overflow more and more, and that you will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding. 10 For I want you to understand what really matters, so that you may live pure and blameless lives until the day of Christ's return. 11 May you always be filled with the fruit of your salvation--the righteous character produced in your life by Jesus Christ--for this will bring much glory and praise to God.

Luke 10:25-28 NLT 25 One day an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus by asking him this question: "Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?" 26 Jesus replied, "What does the law of Moses say? How do you read it?" 27 The man answered, "'You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind.' And, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" 28 "Right!" Jesus told him. "Do this and you will live!"

John 13:35 NLT Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples."

"You Are What You Love"

Hidden Heart week #1

INTRODUCTION

What is it that truly shapes us and defines us? The book of Proverbs tells us that our heart above all else determines the course of our lives. In this study we will examine what it is that we love and how the rhythms and patterns of our lives not only reflect but also shape what we love. We end with a challenge to put the lesson into practice.

Ice Breaker (Optional—8 min)

Did you ever "win" something that was actually not something you wanted?

STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)

What do you want?

Q1. Read John 1:35-39

a) List the three most important things in your life. Did the amount time and resources you spent over the past 24 hours reflect the same priorities?

b) Most of us know what our highest priorities should be, but if we are honest, we allow other things to overshadow them. In the first chapter of John, Jesus asks two would-be disciples following him "What do you want?" and then He invites them to "Come and see." With respect to your Christian faith, how would you summarize what it is that you want?

"You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you." - from St. Augustine's Confessions

Defining the Good Life

Q2. Read Luke 15:13

a) As long ago as the 4th Century, Augustine recognized that our heart is restless until it rests in God. This is a condition of longing for and hungering after God that resides deep within the heart of us all. But we don't always seek out God to satisfy that hunger. In the parable of the prodigal son, what did the son seek out to satisfy his longings (Luke 15:13)?

b) Most of us have our sights set on some distant goal that will fulfill our deepest desires. You might call it the “good life.” What would constitute the “good life” for you? Has your definition of the good life changed over the years?

c) Read John 4:13-15; John 10:10

In John 4, Jesus offers the Samaritan woman ‘Living Water’. What was the source of this water? How might you characterize the ‘good life’ that Jesus came to give us?

We are shaped by our Desires (our “Loves”)

Q3. Read Philippians 1:9-11

a) Look closely at Paul’s prayer for the Philippian believers. What was the first thing he stressed in his prayers? What might you say is the source of that love? Did Paul expect them to grow in knowledge and understanding before or after their love overflowed?

b) Read Luke 10:25-28; John 13:35

What did Jesus say was the greatest commandment (Lk 10:27-28)? What is the distinguishing sign of the disciple of Jesus (Jn 13:35)?

God wants to capture our hearts first and foremost so that our desires become rightly ordered to His desires, and our hearts would find rest in Him. Even though we know God should be our greatest love, we may find other things competing for first place in our hearts. The result is a life that may not fully reflect Him, at least in certain areas. The challenge is to dig a well deep enough into the water of Life that we won’t stray from it.

c) Knowing the right thing to do doesn’t always result in doing the right thing. The best example of this might be a bad habit. Have you ever had a bad habit that you successfully changed? What was it like to make the change? Did you substitute a good practice in place of the bad habit?

THE BOTTOM LINE

If we want to make God our highest priority and our greatest love, we need to develop practices in our lives that help shape our love for Him. We need to dig a deep well into the source of living water. To do this, we need to be in His presence and listen to His voice spoken through the Scriptures. And as our God-pursuing habits develop, we will find

our love for God growing deeper and being reflected more and more in our lives.

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

How can you dig deeper? This week choose to spend time each day committing Proverbs 4:23 to memory. Even when other things fight to take priority, don’t give up. Repeat it, meditate on it, and practice it daily. Then share your progress with others including your small group. Allow God’s word to begin to shape your desires, and your love of God will develop deep roots and grow ever stronger.

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 journal writing in the memory verse along with reflections on its content and what God is speaking to you through it.