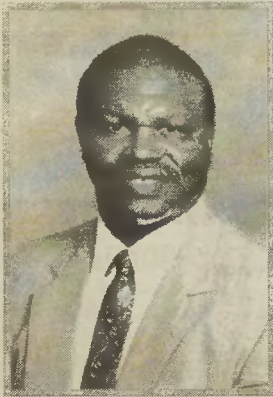


4/22 V Stamp RLV

In-Focus

Do You Have a Healthy Heart?



had a heart problem. Jeremiah described it in these words, "The heart is deceitful above all things."

This is why God promised, through the prophet Ezekiel, to give His people a "new mind and put a new heart within them."

The "new heart" becomes a reality through the process called the "new birth of water and Spirit." Prior to this time, we were blinded by the "god of this world." The new heart gives us a new lease on life — eternal life. Through it we are able to discern both good and evil.

Unfortunately, we can become separated from God because of heart disease. It is only through obedience to the gospel that "stormy hearts" are removed. On the Day of Pentecost, only those who were "pricked in the heart" were saved. Paul wrote, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

Our hearts play an essential role in maintaining our love relationship

with God. Jesus said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." Thus, we can't bypass the heart if we hope to be pleasing unto God.

Let's keep our hearts strong and healthy. Because only the pure in heart will see God.

James Jones Jr.

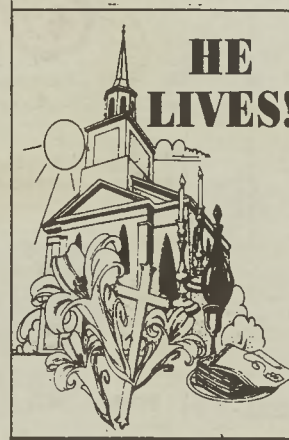
Most people realize the importance of having a healthy heart. We monitor our blood pressure, test our cholesterol level and check our pulse rate to ensure that all is well with the little pump that does such an amazing job in keeping us alive.

Spiritual health depends upon the condition of man's heart. No, not the pump inside our chest, but rather the heart that, according to the Bible, is composed of man's will, intellect, emotions, conscience and that which sometimes is called "the mind." It must remain healthy, which comes through spiritual exercise and partaking of God's word. (I Peter 2:1-3). A weak heart can lead to spiritual death (I Tim 5:6; Eph. 2:1).

The Bible has a lot to say about the heart. In the Old Testament, heart is used figuratively and generally refers to the central driving force of a man, which regulates his spirit and enables his inward man to function properly. The heart is referred to as:

1. The place of man's thought (Gen. 6:5; Isa. 10:7)
2. That which produces various emotional states:
 - a. Pride (Obadiah 3);
 - b. Joy and sorrow (Judges 18:20 and I Samuel 1:8);
 - c. Anxiety and fear (I Samuel 4:13)
 - d. Courage (2 Sam. 17:10);
 - e. Love (2 Sam. 14:1).
3. Determining man's disposition and character (I Sam. 16:7)

In the New Testament, the word heart is used similarly; II Corinthians 4:6; Eph. 1:18; Romans 1:12; II Corinthians 3:15. Since Adam and Eve's sin in the Garden, mankind has



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If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

- II Chronicles 7:14

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