



DISCUSSION GUIDE

Summer Reading Series – Part 5

Unfollow Your Heart

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Main Idea – To follow God – and to realize the destiny He has declared over you – you must allow God to do His part. You must avoid the temptation to integrate your own resources and reasoning into places God has reserved for Himself.

The error of the idea of self-sufficiency

- You cannot take authority in the worldly realm when you continually try to take control of situations by your own means.
- Contemporary philosophy encourages you to “follow your heart.”
- However, your heart will lead you away from God unless it is aligned with Jesus. The story of Achan in **Joshua 7** is an example of someone who allowed his heart to become corrupted by the hoarding desire.
- Our heart is part of our flesh. We should not over-value what our heart expresses. Our hearts are temporary vessels for this lifetime. We should have control over what they influence in our lives.
- If we have aligned our hearts with Jesus, our hearts have been circumcised from the world and its desires.
- When you put Jesus first, and let Him lead, then He will protect your heart from wrong desires.
- **Proverbs 28:26 – He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but he who walks wisely will be delivered. (NASB)**

The three temptations

- The story of Satan tempting Jesus is told in **Matthew 4: 1-11, Mark 1: 13, and Luke 4: 1-13.**
- In this story, the devil tempted Jesus in three different ways:
 1. He tempted Jesus to use external objects to finish an internal process. He was tempting Jesus to use a temporary fix for an eternal assignment. (Turn the stones to bread.)
 2. He tempted Jesus to try a quick fix for a long process. (Worship me and I'll give you what you want.)
 3. He tempted Jesus to prove the legitimacy of his support system: that his support system really would work when it was important. (The angels will lift you up.)
- In the first temptation Satan was hoping Jesus would think, “I am not enough, I

don't have enough of what it takes, I need food to survive.” He was hoping Jesus would attempt to accomplish the long-term spiritual objective by satisfying a short-term physical sensation.

- In the second temptation Satan was hoping Jesus would consider himself not qualified (imperfect) for his assignment. In reality, Jesus already had dominion over the earth.
- In the third temptation Satan was tempting Jesus to prove His authority, as if He needed to demonstrate something to Satan.

The “I Am Not Enough” temptation

- Satan uses the same tactics on us that he used on Jesus. Just as he tempted Jesus to satisfy his temporary hunger pains, he also tempts us to quench a temporary desire in order to feel adequately equipped for a longer term objective.
- Satan might use the “I Am Not Enough” temptation when:
 - we have become offended by something. In **Genesis 13** Abraham and Lot came into a series of disagreements. Lot succumbed to the temptation to solve the problem by taking what appeared to be an attractive opportunity to live near Sodom.
 - we rely on our own inventories. In **Genesis 18: 1-15** Abraham and Sarah are visited by three men (angels) through whom God spoke. Sarah laughed when the angels restated God’s original promise because she saw no physical evidence of how the promise could become reality.

God revisits His original promises

- In **Genesis 18** God re-spoke the same promise He had originally declared back in **Genesis 12** in order to evaluate the condition of Abraham’s and Sarah’s hearts.
- Similarly, God wants our hearts to rely on what we know internally rather than what we observe externally. God knows what we observe externally can overpower what we already have understood internally.
- God expects us to think, act, and proceed according to His promises by faith – not by what our own external inventories are telling us about a situation. God became angry with David for ordering a census because it revealed David’s reliance on visible resources and not on God’s promises (**1 Samuel 24**).
- We must lay our insecurities and inadequacies before God. His promises to us are not contingent on our own evaluations of resources or abilities, but on offering to God the acknowledgment of inadequacy. That is when we become strong. **2 Corinthians 12: 9-11 – But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest**

on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in results, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong. I have made a fool of myself, but you drove me to it. I ought to have been commended by you, for I am not in the least inferior to the "super-apostles," even though I am nothing. (NKJV)

We are perfectly incomplete

- God made us perfectly incomplete so we will leave space for Him in our souls as we go through life.
- We must continually be conscious of the fact we ourselves are not adequate to accomplish what He has promised will be done through us.
- In order to walk with God we must have a necessary sense of vulnerability and inadequacy.
- We should not bring in external resources, or perceived solutions, to take the place of what God has reserved for Himself. He wants a place of intimacy with us that we should not attempt to fill with our own resources.
- We win or lose in life based on how we perceive God's role.
- We must break up the hardness of our hearts in order for them to be controlled by Jesus. **Hosea 10:12 – Sow for yourselves righteousness; reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the Lord, till He comes and rains righteousness on you. (NKJV)**
- When we give our hearts to Jesus, He completes us and makes us whole.
- We are not enough, but God is more than enough. **2 Corinthians 9:8 – And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. (NIV)**

Reflective Questions for Unfollow Your Heart

1. Can you give an example of how, in your own life, following your heart resulted in something good? In something not good?
2. Why are we less likely to make mistakes if we have committed our hearts to Jesus?
3. Why is it a blessing – in the long term view – that God has created us perfectly incomplete? What are some short term consequences we may have to endure in order to preserve the long term objective?