

Preparing Our Heart to Seek the Law of the Lord

Introduction

Ezra 7:10 For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel.

1. **In this verse we find an interesting comment given concerning Ezra.**
 - A. **Ezra was instrumental in bringing a remnant back from Babylonian captivity to the city of Jerusalem - to carry out a series of religious reforms (458 B.C.)**
2. **Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord.**

Preparing Our Heart

1. **We don't wake up one morning and decide to start serving the Lord. We have to prepare our heart.**
 - A. **The young are instructed**

Ecclesiastes 12:1 Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, "I have no pleasure in them":

- 1) **We must prepare now to do that which is right.**

- B. **Parents are instructed:**

Ephesians 6:4 And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

C. Timothy was reminded

2 Timothy 1:5 when I call to remembrance the **genuine faith that is in you**, which dwelt **first in your grandmother Lois** and **your mother Eunice**, and I am persuaded is in you also.

1) All of these refer to a conditioning or preparation for serving the Lord.

a. A series of preparation.

2. But how does one, who did not have the benefit of being raised by Christian parents, **prepare his heart?**

A. First, one must recognize that their heart is as “soil” that needs to be prepared for the planting of the seed.

1) This lesson is taught by the parable of the sower **Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23**

2) If the soil has not been properly prepared....

a) The seed lies on top of the ground and is eaten up by the birds (*Satan*).

b) The roots fail to grow deep and the sun (*persecution*) scorches and causes him to wither and die.

c) The thorns and the weeds (*cares of the world*) choke the life out of him.

B. Secondly, we prepare ourselves by not involving ourselves in materialism and immorality.

1) These influences can suck us under their power.

2 Timothy 3:13 But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

2) Some are captivated by materialism and immorality because they don't receive the love of the truth.

2 Thessalonians 2:10-12

C. A third method in preparing our heart is to develop a "delight in the law of the Lord" by meditating on it day and night (Psalms 1:2)

Philippians 4:8

1) Solomon advised his son

Proverbs 4:23

2) The way that we prepare our heart will determine how we approach everything else in our life!

D. Finally, we need to prepare our heart by recognizing that there is a "warring" going on between the spiritual man and the physical man within.

1) Paul describes this conflict

Romans 7:22-23; 8:5-9

2) We cannot please God unless we live according to the spirit and not according to the flesh. (2 Peter 1:1-10)

Galatians 5:16-18, 22-23

a) Is our physical man being fed more than our spiritual man?

To Seek the Law of the Lord

1. To **seek the law of the Lord** means to study. Paul told Timothy:

2 Timothy 2:15 Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, **rightly dividing the word of truth** (KJV).

- A. **This involves more than what we generally think of in the “school sense” of studying. It suggests the idea of being “diligent” in this seeking process.**
- B. **The approved action is described variously as “asking”, “seeking”, and “knocking”.**

Matthew 7:7 Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

- 1) **Even our faith is based on a recognition that we will be rewarded when we seek him diligently.**

Hebrews 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

- C. **We are promised that if we seek his Law diligently and with an honest heart we will find it!**

To Do it

1. **Unless we are willing “TO DO” the will of God then the knowledge of it will not do us any good.**
 - A. **Jesus describes the scene at the judgment when he will have to condemn some who had knowledge but didn't use it properly.**
Matthew 7:21-27
 - B. **Knowing without doing is likened to one who looks into a mirror and goes on his way without making the needed corrections.**
James 1:22-25
 - C. **After teaching his disciples to be servants, by washing their feet, Jesus said:**

John 13:17 If you know these things, **blessed are you if you do them.**

To Teach it

1. **Ezra was involved in teaching** “statutes and ordinances in Israel.” He was a “skilled scribe in the law of Moses.” (Ezra 7:6)
2. **He was an** “expert in the words and commandments of the Lord and of His statutes to Israel.” (Ezra 7:11)
3. **He was given the charge to** “set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that are beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God; and teach ye them that know them not.” (Ezra 7:25)

- 4. Are we acceptable if we are not teaching? The people to whom the words of Hebrews 5:12-14 were written were not!**
Hebrews 5:12-14

- A. Let us not break the chain of 2 Timothy 2:2:**

2 Timothy 2:2 And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, **commit these to faithful men** who will **be able to teach others also**.

- 6. But, before we can teach effectively we must prepare to do so.**

- A. The contents of what we teach MUST come from the law revealed by God.**

Ephesians 3:3-5 how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:

- B. And before I can teach it, I must show that **I am living it.****

IF YOUR HEART IS READY

There are many people who hear God's word,
Then carelessly toss it aside.
They don't want to know what the Lord has to say,
Their hearts are too filled with pride.
They say in their hearts, there is no God,
They walk down the path that the world has trod.
They go through life and proudly say,
Look at me, I did it my way!
They only believe what man can prove,
All Godliness from life they try to remove.
Alas, one day they'll realize,
But it will be too late.
They should have walked where saints have trod,
And gone in the way that is strait.
So please listen with care to what God has to say,
Don't harden your heart, don't turn away.
Become like a child and be willing to yield,
Before it's too late and your fate is sealed.
If you'll just take hold of his outstretched hand,
The things you've denied you'll begin to understand.
Because God's word is sharper than a two edged sword,
If your heart is ready for the law of the Lord.

--- Ellen Kyle

Conclusion

1. **Won't you prepare your heart to seek the Law of the Lord?**
 - A. **By knowing what it says by **studying it diligently.****
 - B. **Be determined to **be a doer** and not a hearer only!**
2. **Once you have done so, help prepare the hearts of others by showing them that they must **deal honestly with God's word.****
 - A. **Share with others what His Word has done for you.**
3. **Your reward will be worth all the effort you put into **preparing your heart to seek the Law of the Lord** and showing God's word to others!**

