

## **Week 3 - Jeremiah 17:9**

*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?*

So far this season, we have talked about our Creator. We learned about how God created everything and then created humans to have a special relationship with Him. People were meant to rule over creation and reflect the image of the Creator, but the problem of sin got in the way. Sin is anything we do, think, or say that goes against what God stands for, and He can not be in the presence of sin. Unfortunately, everyone has sinned and that causes us to have a broken relationship with God. We are all separated from Him because of our sin and we are unable to fulfill our purpose because of it. This week, we are going to talk about our hearts and the destructive nature of sin within us.

In our culture today, everyone is encouraged to look within themselves and follow their hearts. We are told that we deserve happiness and that we should seek it wherever we think we will find it. According to the majority of our culture, finding happiness is our purpose in life, but there is a problem with that idea: the Bible disagrees.

We know from the Bible that our purpose is to reflect who God is as we worship and serve Him. And the Bible also tells us that the advice of our culture is the absolute worst advice we could follow. In Jeremiah 17:9 the Bible says that “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?” Our enemy of sin is not just something we occasionally commit or encounter, but it is something that grows inside of us and clouds the truth.

Our hearts are sick and ruled by sin. It is not a problem that is easy to overcome. The deceitfulness of our hearts is often the driving force that causes us to disobey God and try to worship ourselves instead of Him. And the deceit makes it so we don't even realize we have this problem. We convince ourselves that we do not have a barrier that we need to overcome. We become content in living for ourselves above anything else. Sin is never satisfied and it enslaves us. And like the Bible says, it is not just a danger from the outside like many people suggest; the problem is inside and it never stops trying to deceive us.

Sin is the problem that ruins our relationship with God. It ruins our purpose and it separates us from our Creator. And worst of all, there is nothing we can do to fix our deceitful heart. We are hopeless without any chance to save ourselves. The outlook is bleak.

But God is not unaware of this problem. Soon after Jeremiah talks about the deceitfulness of our hearts, God revealed His plan through Ezekiel to fix our problem and give us a new heart. God promises to give us a pure heart of flesh in place of the current heart of stone that we have. This new heart will be able to honor Him. We will talk more about that promise in the weeks to come as we see the plan of redemption through history.

### Discussion Questions:

- What does sin do to us?
- Why is following your heart bad advice?
- Why is having a deceitful and sick heart a problem that we can't solve?