

Grace Mail

You hear it all the time. Someone is unsure what action to take or what direction of life to pursue. As they seek the council and advice of their elders and peers, they are told, “just follow your heart.” This kind of statement reveals a startling disconnect from reality.

Before we even examine what God’s Word says on this topic, experience has shown that following your heart can lead to some terrible places. History is filled with men and women who “followed their heart” right into the mistreatment of others.

As believers, we have a much better leader to follow than the dubious dictates of our sinful hearts. The Word of God has this to say, don’t follow your heart, follow Jesus.

Don’t Follow Your Heart, Follow Jesus – Jeremiah 17:9-10

“The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; who can know it? I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings.”

We need to understand that this is God speaking. This is God’s assessment of the human heart. His assessment is three-fold.

The Heart Is Deceitful

We cannot follow our heart because it deceives us! God says it is more deceptive than anything else. Our hearts lie. They will not lead us in the correct path; they will not move us toward Christ. To avoid deception, don’t follow your heart.

The Heart Is Wicked

The idea of this Hebrew word translated “wicked” is to be sick with an incurable disease. Our hearts are sick with the disease called sin! The nature of our heart’s sickness causes it to continually pursue what is evil. To avoid sin and evil, don’t follow your heart.

The Heart Is Unknowable

Because our hearts are deceitful and wicked, it is impossible to know your own heart. This means that if we were to “follow our heart” we would have no way of knowing which direction it would lead. To avoid the wrong path, don’t follow your heart.

In v. 10 God is still speaking and He declares His divine activity as a contrast to our hearts. His declaration is also three-fold.

God Searches The Heart

As the creator and sustainer of all things, God fully knows and understands our hearts. In His time on earth, Jesus declared Himself to be “the truth.” Therefore, to walk in the truth, follow Jesus.

God Tests The Mind

God examines our minds, testing the content of our thoughts. Therefore, we want to have minds that glorify and honor Him. Scripture reveals that our minds can be renewed (Rom. 12:2) and that we can have the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:16). To have a proper mind, follow Jesus.

God Rewards Accordingly

As He searches the heart and tests the mind God observes our motives, thoughts, and actions. He then gives to us the fruit of our actions (Gal. 6:7-10). To bear good fruit and have a good reward, follow Jesus.

May we guard our hearts and follow Jesus.