

Life Change from the Heart
“Step 4, Part 2: Examining the Inside of the Cup”
Luke 6:43-45
For the Week of November 6, 2016
New City Church of LA

GROW & SERVE GROUP GUIDE AND HOMEWORK

Open in Prayer

Worship

Share one word or phrase for a characteristic of God that has been meaningful for you this week.

Sermon Reflection

“Life Change from the Heart” is a sermon series on how God changes us from the heart through the gospel. How does change from the heart happen? After we surrender our life to God, we start the process of cleaning the inside of the cup, our heart. We can’t change ourselves just by trying to clean the outside of the cup, meaning by trying to change our behavior. We have to first focus on cleaning our heart, which Jesus said is full of self-indulgence. So, step 4 is about examining our heart for self-indulgence so that we can start the process of cleaning our heart. It is critical to find the self-indulgence in our heart if we want to change our life. But, our spiritual blindness makes it difficult to find self-indulgence directly. There is an indirect way to find our self-indulgence, though. It is by looking for *resentment*, a more noticeable byproduct of our self-indulgence. So, one way we find self-indulgence is by examining our resentments and asking, “How might each of the following forms of self-indulgence be at the real root of the resentment: pride, self-pity, dishonesty, and self-centeredness?” As we do so, we will find self-indulgence. It is very important for us to take the time necessary to ask this question for every feeling of resentment we experienced. A lot of people find this too hard to do. But if you want real change, you should go through this process even if it takes months to complete. This is at the core of examining our heart.

Any questions or comments about the sermon?

Bible Study

Read Luke 6:43-45. The good tree represents worshipping God and abiding in God (John 15:5); the good fruit is the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22). The bad tree represents worshipping self and self-indulgence (remember Jesus told us in Matthew 23:25-26 that the dirty cup is full of self-indulgence); the bad fruit represents the fruit of the flesh: hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissension, and indignation (Galatians 5:19-21).

1. Why is finding the self-indulgence in our heart critical to getting rid of bad fruit in our lives?
2. How is the feeling of resentment easier to find in our heart than self-indulgence?

Self-Examination Exercise (Give about 10 minutes for group members to do questions 1 and 2 below on their own)

1. (On your own) Write down one recent experience of feeling resentful:
2. (On your own) Write down how one or more of these four forms of self-indulgence might be at the real root of the above resentment:
 - Pride:
 - Self-Pity:
 - Dishonesty:
 - Self-centeredness:
3. (Group) Share what you wrote with the group

We want to challenge you to do this exercise with other feelings of resentment you have felt and feel in your life.

Share how you are doing this week with one another

Pray for one another, the church, and our neighborhood