



## Stewardship Motives of the Heart Lesson 1 1Q 2018 The Influence of Materialism presented Dr. Tim Jennings

### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

**New Blogs**—If you don't follow us on Facebook, then be sure to visit our website we are posting new blogs again, the go up every Tuesday, recently we posted:

Jerusalem, Christians and End-Time Methods  
Suicide and the Myth of Lost Salvation  
What is Biblical Justice?  
Is God Punishing the World with Natural Disasters?

**January 10,11, 2018:** Dr. Jennings will be conducting a two day seminar at Fort Leonard Wood, MO for military mental health professionals and law enforcement.

**January 19,20, 2018:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Tacoma Central SDA Church, Tacoma, Washington.

**March 24, 2018:** Dr. Jennings will be doing two presentations at the California Baptist University in San Bernadino CA, in conjunction with the AACC

**May 4-5, 2018:** Dr. Jennings will be doing two presentations at Grace Fellowship, York PA, in conjunction with the AACC

**July 27-28, 2018:** Dr. Jennings will be doing two presentationat New Life Church, Colorado Springs CO, in conjunction with the AACC

**September 27-29, 2018:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Mega National Conference of the American Association of Christian Counselors in Dallas, TX

### Correction/Clarification:

From an online listener we received the following email:

*In the discussion of lesson 11 [4<sup>th</sup> Q 2017] it was stated that the reason for the existence of Black Conferences in the North American Division dates back to 1863 when the Church was organized in a social environment that prohibited Blacks and Whites worshiping together or a Black pastor preaching to Whites. However it was not until 1945 (82 years later) that Black Conferences were organized. The reason was not racial prejudice and segregation in society, but in the SDA Church itself. The first Black pastor ordained in the Church was Charles M. Kinny in 1889. At the ceremony many Whites left the auditorium in disgust to protest the ordination of a Black man.*

First thank you for this clarification—I didn't do my research on history and made the assumption the conference setup happened at the time of the church organization. I am very appreciative of this information because I always want to update my understanding with the



most accurate evidence.

So, it wasn't until 1945 that the separate conferences, based on race, were founded—why? Even though we had the dates of when this happened wrong, are we wrong about the reasons?

What were race relations like in America in the 1940's? Would it have advanced the gospel or caused more tension to try and integrate the churches in the southern states during the 40's, 50's and 60's?

So, we still conclude this was an adaptation by the church, based on the heart attitudes of people in society, not because the Bible promotes segregation by race.

## **SABBATH**

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What do you think of the Study Guide title and subtitle?

Very insightful—do you usually think of Stewardship as a heart issue?

It is really about integrity, honesty, fidelity, reliability, trustworthiness—isn't that what stewardship is about?

If you were looking for a steward for your properties, or perhaps your children, what would be the qualities or qualifications you would look for?

What do you think God is looking for in His stewards?

What prevents people from being good stewards?

- Could it be failure to recognize they are stewards?
- Do you think differently if you are managing your car, money, resources, than when you are managing your employers? What is the difference?
- Are there things you will spend your money on that you won't spend your employers on?
- Are there things you will spend your employers money on that you won't spend your money on?
- What does this reveal? That you are aware of different values, goals, plans between you and your employer.
- Should we have mindsets that think about God—His values, plans and goals?
- What should we think of as being ours and being God's?
- To what are we to be a steward of in God's cause?
  - Money?
  - Property?
  - Talents?



- Time?
- Energy?
- Ourselves?

Can you think of any parables of Jesus that relate to Stewardship? The parable of the talents—why do you think the one who invested their talents received more while the one who buried his talent had it taken away?

Was this imposed rules or design law at work?

What happens if you have a natural talent for art, or music, or math, or languages, or whatever, and you apply yourself, practicing, educating, challenging and using your ability—what happens? Do you expand and strengthen your ability? Do new abilities you previously didn't have occur?

What if you don't use it? You lose it—what kind of law is this? Design law, the law of exertion.

If we are to be good stewards must we apply ourselves to develop the abilities, talents, and gifts God has given us?

And for what purpose, why do we develop these abilities, to do what with them?

To fulfill God's purposes, which is what? Love for God and others, which is also healing, restoring, saving, benefiting, to not only those who we are loving, but to those who are doing living in love.

Here is an historic quote from a work called *The Southern Worker*:

The World's Redeemer clearly defines what our duty is. To the lawyer who asked Him how he should obtain eternal life, He said: "What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?" Then Jesus related the parable of the good Samaritan, and clearly showed that he is our neighbor who most needs our charity and help. We are to practice the commandments of God, and stand true to the relation which God has designed shall exist between man and his fellow man. It was never God's purpose that society should be separated into classes, that there should be an alienation between the rich and the poor, the high and the low, the learned and the unlearned. But the practice of separating society into distinct circles is becoming more and more decided. **God designed that those to whom He entrusted talents of means, ability, and gifts of grace, should be good stewards of His beneficence, and not seek to reap all the advantages for themselves.** God does not estimate man by the amount of wealth, talent, or education that he may have. **He values man in proportion as he becomes a good steward of His mercy and love.** {SW 37.1}



Have you considered mercy and love a commodity over which you are to be a steward?

1John 4:19: “We love because he first loved us.” It is His love that we first receive, are renewed by and it is this love we share.

Why is it important to share the love of God we receive?

The law of love, or giving, the more you give the more you will receive. Why?

Consider the garden hose on your house and the fire hydrant on the street, if you turn both on full, which gives away more water? Which receives more water to it?

What if you turn off the taps in your home and don't let any water run for a year, would you drink the water in the taps when you first turn them on? Why not? It is likely stagnant!

We are not the source of pure love—God is. We are to receive that love and let it flow through us to other, in so doing our capacity for love increases and we become more and more like Christ. However, if we try to hoard love, if we refuse to open our hearts to love others, then no matter how pure the love we received into our hearts was, our hearts will stagnate with selfishness.

This is design law—we must love others in order to grow in love.

So as we explore this quarter's lessons let's keep in mind that as God's stewards we are to develop our abilities for the purpose of love, of being God's agents, witnesses, hands on earth.

But we can only fulfill God's purposes effectively and successfully if 1) we actually know God and 2) we daily surrender to Him and are empowered by His Spirit.

The title for this week's lesson is Materialism—the lesson states in the first paragraph, “but the lure of materialism, the inordinate desire for wealth and for what we think wealth can bring, is powerful.”

So let's start with this definition of Materialism—which is basically greed, the love of stuff, money, property, houses, cars, and the pursuit of what money can provide.

Is money evil?

Is the love of money evil? Why? What is the root to the love of money? Fear and selfishness—if one loves money they love it because of what they perceive it does for them—makes them feel valuable, worthwhile, powerful, secure, fulfilled, achieved, enabled. In other words, the love of money is all about promoting the survival and protection of self.

Does this mean then, that one has to be penniless to be saved?



Does one have to be, not penniless, but not wealthy to be saved? No! Abraham, Job, Joseph of Arimathea, Solomon, David, wealthy—and saved.

Why did Jesus tell the rich young ruler that in order for him to be saved he had to sell all he had and give it to the poor?

From where did the rich young ruler derive his spiritual security, his sense of being righteous, his spiritual strength? From his wealth, which man him feel like he, in himself, was good as he was. Is there a problem in deriving spiritual security from wealth? What?

If you need wealth to ensure you are right with God, what will that motive cause you to do with your wealth? Increase the likelihood of sharing and giving, or hoarding? So, love of wealth, including the love of wealth because you believe that means you are right with God, doesn't result in an actual change of heart. He leads to the same place the rich young ruler lived, wealthy, but still not at peace—because he was still dominated by fear and selfishness as his heart had not been changed.

Is there an OT story that sheds light on this?

Have you ever wondered why David was instructed not to take a census of Israel?

If you were the ruler of a nation that had a military, wouldn't it be sensible to know the size of your nation, for many reasons, to know:

- the number of people to call upon in times of war
- how many boots and uniforms to order
- how much food to prepare
- how much money to budget for salaries
- how many horses to house for the chariots
- how many spears and swords and sheaths to order

Wouldn't a good steward need to know these things in order to use the resources of the nation wisely and not waste resources?

Then why was David instructed not to take a census?

From where did Israel's strength come? Was it from self, from their own might, their own power? What would counting up the military do? 50,000 bowman, 100,000 spearmen, 40,000 chariots, etc.?

Would it tempt David, and the people, to rely on self and not on God, to be filled with pride?

We don't have personal armies today we have savings accounts, stock portfolios, mutual funds, properties—could we be tempted to put our futures and our securities into wealth instead of God?



Why did 70,000 die?

Who was their strength? Who held back the waters at the Red Sea? Why did the Egyptians die in the Red Sea? Because God let go what He restrained.

Why did many in Israel die of serpent bites in the desert? Where did the snakes come from? Where were they before that? So God was holding back the serpents that naturally live in the environment, like He did the waters of the Red Sea. Then what happened that God stopped holding back? They rebelled and chose to go their own way.

From where did Israel's success and strength come? From God, but what was the pursuit of the census about motivationally? About self-reliance and pride. So, God gave David a choice:

- 3 years of famine—the Lord turns the weather over to them—they can't bring rain
- 3 months of being destroyed by enemies—the Lord turns their safety over to them—they can't stop their enemies
- 3 days of the sword of the Lord, pestilence in the land—the Lord turns their health over to them, they can't stop diseases

This was not the infliction of some judicial punishment, but a powerful therapeutic intervention, to remind them that disconnected from God and breaking His designs there is only death.

Did this intervention work? Did they, after that, stop relying on self and afterward only rely on God? What does this reveal? Can God get what He wants, trust and love, by using power and force?

Then why did He do it?

Why do parents discipline children who are unruly? But does there come a time when the parent has to let the child go their own way?

What would have happened to the entire nation if God didn't intervene in this way? Even with the interventions from God, here, at Sinai, at Carmel, with Elisha, the 70 year captivity—even with all these interventions to teach them their strength came only in reliance upon, trust in, and obedience to God—what happened? 10 tribes were gone by the time Jesus came—only two tribes remained. Do you think God intervened and disciplined too much?

The last paragraph states, "But money is one mask that Satan hides behind in order to secure our allegiance."

Does Satan hide behind other masks? What?

- power
- false science
- people



- religion
- proclamations of seeking to do good
- the dead/departed
- miraculous signs and wonders

How good are you at recognizing where Satan is moving versus where God is moving? Are you confident you can discern, see, identify Satan's activities and not get caught up in them?

In preparation for today's lesson, I came across this in a book entitled *Christian Education*:

There are two classes of educators in the world. **One class are those whom God makes channels of light, and the other class are those whom Satan uses as his agents**, who are wise to do evil. **One class contemplates the character of God, and increases in the knowledge of Jesus, whom God hath sent into the world.** This class becomes wholly given up to those things which bring heavenly enlightenment, heavenly wisdom, to the uplifting of the soul. Every capability of their nature is submitted to God, and their thoughts are brought into captivity to Christ. **[This is the type of teacher I desire to be]** The other class is in league with the prince of darkness, who is ever on the alert that he may find an opportunity to teach others the knowledge of evil. If place is made for him, he will not be slow to press his way into heart and mind... {CE 70.2}

**It is true that in the writings of pagans and infidels there are found thoughts of an elevated character, which are attractive to the mind. But there is a reason for this. Was not Satan the light-bearer**, the sharer of God's glory in heaven, and next to Jesus in power and majesty?.. {CE 72.1}

**Everything in nature comes from God; yet Satan can inspire his agents with thoughts that appear elevating and noble.** Did he not come to Christ with quotations of Scripture when he designed to overthrow him with his specious temptations? **This is the way in which he comes to man, as an angel of light disguising his temptations under an appearance of goodness, and making men believe him to be the friend rather than the enemy of humanity.** It is in this way that he has deceived and seduced the race,—beguiling them with **subtle temptations, bewildering them with specious deceptions.** **[What do you think this author describes as the subtle temptation, the specious deceptions of Satan?]** {CE 73.1}

**Satan has ascribed to God all the evils to which flesh is heir. He has represented him as a God who delights in the sufferings of his creatures, who is revengeful and implacable.** **[Which in Christian doctrine would be what? The evils of human flesh—how sinners operate, imposed rules, with imposed punishments, to inflict suffering, to pay for sins and without mercy—in other words the penal substitutionary theory of atonement]** **It was Satan who originated the doctrine of eternal torment as a punishment for sin, because in this way he could lead men into infidelity and rebellion, distract souls, and dethrone the human**



**reason.** {CE 73.2} [How does the doctrine of eternal torment dethrone human reason? –God is love, love can only exist in an atmosphere of freedom, it cannot be coerced—yet God will torment people in hell for all eternity. Further, how is it fair, for a person to be born in sin, who never had the opportunity to know Christ, maybe died violently at 15 from a warring tribe, to be sent to torment for all eternity? Such a teaching causes people to say things like, “Well God’s ways are not my ways, I just take that on faith.” Which means they don’t think about it, i.e. have shut down reason. When we believe things that are contradictory and refuse to pursue truth we damage the faculty of reason!—the doctrine of eternal torment does this.]

Heaven, looking down, and seeing the delusions into which men were led, **knew that a divine Instructor must come to earth.** Men in ignorance and moral darkness must have light, spiritual light; for the world knew not God, and he must be revealed to their understanding. **Truth looked down from heaven and saw not the reflection of her image; for dense clouds of moral darkness and gloom enveloped the world, and the Lord Jesus alone was able to roll back the clouds; for he was the light of the world.** By his presence he could dissipate the gloomy shadow that Satan had cast between man and God. Darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. **Through the accumulated misrepresentations of the enemy, many were so deceived that they worshiped a false god, clothed with the attributes of the satanic character.** {CE 73.3} [Do we find this same problem today? Yes, and what is the final message to go to the world to prepare the world for Christ’s return? The truth about God’s character of love. What obstructs that message? The subtle lies of Satan in regard to God’s law, such that people teach God functions like Satan, imposes rules and then punishes people for breaking those rules. We are called to take a message to the world to worship the Designer, Him who made the heavens, earth, sea and come back into harmony with Him!]

**The Teacher from heaven, no less a personage than the Son of God, came to earth to reveal the character of the Father to men,** that they might worship him in spirit and in truth. **Christ revealed to men the fact that the strictest adherence to ceremony and form would not save them; for the kingdom of God was spiritual in its nature.** Christ came to the world to sow it **with truth...** [Where is the field into which truth is sewn? So what did Christ come to do? Change the hearts, minds, characters of humans, displace the lies and methods of Satan and restore the truth and methods of God into the hearts/minds of human beings] **He presented to men that which was exactly contrary to the representations of the enemy in regard to the character of God,** and sought to impress upon men the paternal love of the Father, who "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." [John 3:16.] {CE 74.1}

**Christ declares the mission he had in coming to the earth.** He says in his last public prayer, "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I **have declared unto them thy name,** and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." [John 17:25, 26.] When Moses asked the Lord to show him his glory, the Lord said, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee." [Exodus 33:19.] "And the Lord passed by before him, and



proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty. . . . And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped." [Exodus 34:6-8.] **When we are able to comprehend the character of God as did Moses, we too shall make haste to bow in adoration and praise.** Jesus contemplated nothing less than "that the love wherewith Thou hast love me" [John 17:26.] should be in the hearts of his children, that they might impart the knowledge of God to others. {CE 75.1}

O what an assurance is this, **that the love of God may abide in the hearts of all who believe in him!** O what salvation is provided; for he is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him. In wonder we exclaim, **How can these things be? But Jesus will be satisfied with nothing less than this.** Those who are partakers of his sufferings here, of his humiliation, enduring for his name's sake, **are to have the love of God bestowed upon them as it was upon the Son. One who knows, has said, "The Father himself loveth you."** [John 16:27.] One who has had an experimental knowledge of the length, and breadth, and height, and depth of that love, has declared unto us this amazing fact. This love is ours through faith in the Son of God, therefore a connection with Christ means everything to us. **We are to be one with him as he is one with the Father,** and then we are beloved by the infinite God as members of the body of Christ, as branches of the living Vine. We are to be attached to the parent stock, and to receive nourishment from the Vine. **Christ is our glorified Head, and the divine love flowing from the heart of God, rests in Christ, and is communicated to those who have been united to him. This divine love entering the soul inspires it with gratitude, frees it from its spiritual feebleness, from pride, vanity, and selfishness, and from all that would deform the Christian character.** {CE 75.2} Review and Herald, Nov. 17, 1891.

Do you agree with this?

Are we being good stewards of the truth and love God has bestowed upon us?

## **SUNDAY**

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The lesson asks us to read 1John 2:16,17:

For all that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.<sup>17</sup> And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. NKJV

What does this mean?

What is the root motive or principle in the world? Selfishness, which is motivated primarily by what? Fear...where did this fear and selfishness come from?



How did fear and selfishness get into humanity?

Have you struggled with fear and selfishness? Did you choose to have these motivations and feelings?

Adam and Eve were created in God's image with the ability to have children in their image. They were created with the ability to choose and change themselves based on their choices, thus when they chose to break trust they changed themselves and infected themselves with fear and selfishness, and all of us are born with biology infected in this way.

1John is telling us that this infection has three primary avenues, sensualism, materialism and egotism. This means some people are born genetically more vulnerable to temptations of the senses, addictions, sexual temptations, others more toward arrogance, pride, ego, and others more toward greed, wealth, accumulation of stuff—but all three have at their root, selfishness.

Why will the methods of the world pass away?

Because they are out of harmony with how life is built to operate and cannot continue to exist—it would be like saying the grass that is not watered will wither and die.

Do not fret because of evil men  
or be envious of those who do wrong;  
<sup>2</sup> for like the grass they will soon wither,  
like green plants they will soon die away. Ps 37:1,2

Read last paragraph, “When Christ came to the...” Why were systems of religion losing their hold on people's minds?

Because they taught fable and falsehood—what about today? Are religions losing hold on people's minds? Why? Because they teach fable and falsehoods—any examples?

- God's kingdom is like human kingdoms
- God's justice looks like human justice
- God's law functions like human law
- Salvation is a legal process
- Jesus died to pay a legal penalty
- God will use His power to inflict suffering and death upon the unrepentant
- God will torture people in hell for eternity
- Sin doesn't harm people God does for sin
- The Bible must be read literally
- One must be baptized in certain water, in certain places, with certain words, by certain people with certain certificates of authority, in a certain way in order to be saved
- others?



What do such beliefs result in? In the belief in a god who cannot be trusted, a theology of arbitrariness that contradicts laws of nature and real life experiences, and thus causes people to reject religion and God.

## MONDAY

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The lesson asks us to read DT 8:10-14:

When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you. <sup>11</sup> Be careful that you do not forget the Lord your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day. <sup>12</sup> Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, <sup>13</sup> and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, <sup>14</sup> then your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. NIV

What is the message?

Is there any application to us today? What is the application to us today?

Israel was composed of real people, who had real histories, but they also acted out the plan of salvation.

- They were slaves in Egypt
  - We are slaves to sin
- Moses was born amongst them and the sinful ruler sought to kill him as a child
  - Jesus was born amongst us and the sinful ruler sought to kill him as a child
- Moses conversed with God directly and then went forth to confront the sinful power that enslaved the people
  - Jesus conversed with God directly and then went forth to confront the sinful power that enslaves humanity in sin
- Moses led the people through the waters of the red sea to a new life of freedom from the powers that enslaved
  - Jesus leads us through the waters of baptism to a new life of freedom from fear and selfishness which enslaves us
- The people were blessed with material possessions, houses, wealth as they followed God's instructions
  - We are blessed with spiritual possessions the wealth of wisdom, peace, joy, love, maturity, discernment, self-control as we trust God and apply His methods to our lives.
- They were warned if they forgot God's instructions they would lose their blessings and even be enslaved again—Babylonian captivity
  - We are warned if we forget to trust God and stop living in harmony with His design



protocols for life then we will lose our blessings and become enslaved to fear and selfishness all over again

So, if we move away from trusting God, to trusting in stuff, money, possessions, what happens to our hearts and characters? Do we have less fear or more?

## TUESDAY

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The lesson asks us to read Mt 6:22-24:

“The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light.  
<sup>23</sup> But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness! NIV

What does this mean?

Is it talking about the physical eyes? No, it is talking about the spiritual eye, the conscience, the honest heart seeking to be enlightened by the truth, even if the truth is unpleasant at first.

What would it mean if the eyes are bad? It would mean a seared conscience and a heart that doesn't want to see the truth, so will warp the evidence to avoid what it truly means.

When we do wrong our consciences convict of guilt, guilt is unpleasant so people want it to go away. There are only two ways to resolve guilt—God's way, which is repentances (real heart motive change) and restoration when possible.

But one can also avoid guilt by denial and distortion, self-deception.

Have you heard “he's bending or twisting the truth?” Truth cannot be bent or twisted, people can only bend their minds around the truth, but when they do they damage their ability to understand and perceive truth, thus their minds become darkened.

So, this passage from *The Remedy*:

<sup>22</sup> "Your eyes are windows into your mind. If your eyes are open wide and you are honest with the evidence, your mind will be filled with light and truth.<sup>23</sup> But if you view things through jaded eyes, tainted with selfishness, then you will distort the evidence and your mind will be darkened; then, even the light that enters will be warped into greater self-deception, and the darkness will be great!

The lesson also talks about the methods of modern marketing to use sensualism, sexuality to promote



materialism. Any thoughts about this practice?

## WEDNESDAY

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Read first paragraph, “God said...” What does it tell you that Lucifer said “I will be like the Most High” and then did what He did?

That he deceived himself in regard to God’s true character—if he really wanted to be like God what would he have done? He would have humbled himself for the benefit of others, not sought to promote himself—remember Philippians 2.

Read last paragraph, “Paul instructs Timothy...” Lovers of money is one manifestation of selfishness—are there others that are less noticeable?

What about those who love to be most modestly dressed—never wear make up, never use products on their hair—because they pride themselves in their modesty, would never wear jewelry and look down upon those who do.

What about those who are like this:

The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. <sup>12</sup> I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’ Luke 18:11,12

He’s giving his tithe, he’s not in love with money—is this guy righteous?

Why not?

Can self be the center in ways that are Christian accepted?

What is the most destructive forms of evil—the Satanist cult worshipper, or the Christian who professes Christ, but remains selfish in heart?

The book *People of the Lie* by M. Scott Peck, examines the question of human evil and exposes the evil that masquerades as righteousness among us.

## THURSDAY

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Read last paragraph, “Materialism is a form...” This is insightful—many people don’t realize how their self, their sense of self, gets caught up in what they possess.



The Bible states to guard the heart, why?

What is circumcision of the heart?

What are the affections?

Are material things the only thing that people tie their sense of self to in unhealthy ways?

What else?

- people—codependency
- jobs/careers/position
- nationality
- membership in groups like church organization
- lifestyle—vegetarian
- sickness—“I’m bipolar” rather than “I have bipolar disorder”

## **FRIDAY**

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read and discuss questions