

IT'S WHAT'S ON THE INSIDE THAT MATTERS

Luke 6:45

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: Everybody is an actor at one time or other with the definition of an "actor" being a person who is not being his/her actual, real self, but pretending to be different. Everybody puts on "fronts" covering up what the person is really thinking not wanting to reveal his/her real, true self. Jesus could see through the false impressions people would give for He knew everyone's heart. Nobody at any time has ever come close to know what goes on inside a person's mind/heart, but Jesus does.

I. JESUS TEACHES THAT TRUE GOODNESS COMES FROM WITHIN A PERSON

1. *Text (Luke 6:45); Mark 7:15*

- The Pharisees kept and obeyed every law and tradition to the exact letter.
 - They fasted twice a week, tithed, but Jesus said they neglected mercy and truth, the more important matters of the laws they so carefully kept.
 - They were trying to cover up what was really in their unchanged hearts.
- Real goodness lies within one's heart.
- If just a drop of water is examined under a microscope, a whole new world opens up for there are all sort of life unseeable with the naked eye but is there nevertheless.
 - Thus Jesus teaches that a human being is like that drop of water, there are countless things inside a person that is not seen/heard by another.

2. Jesus said that the commandment says not to kill but He adds to it.

- *Matthew 5:21-22.*

- The law forbade killing but Jesus forbids the desire to kill.
 - The law forbade the murder, but Jesus forbids the anger.
 - One strikes at the fruit, Jesus goes to the root.
 - One strikes the blow, Jesus sees the hatred in the heart.
- What lies inside one's heart? Resentment? Hostility? Desire for revenge? Bitterness? Lack of forgiveness and love?

3. Jesus pointed out another commandment of not committing adultery and says not to even look lustfully at a person/woman.

- *Matthew 5:27-28*

- Lust destroys true love and undermines the home.
- Lust begins on the inside of a person, his/her heart by impure thoughts.
- Lust will enslave a person.
- Take a good look at your own country at what is happening to the teenagers, homes broken, marriages broken, all starting in the heart and growing.
- It's what goes on in one's heart that brings eventual sin.

4. Jesus points out that if a person's heart is right, then he/she doesn't have to take an oath.

- *Matthew 5:33-37*

- If a person speaks the truth from his/her heart, then there is no need to add any other support to his/her words.

II. GOODNESS IS GROUNDED IN TWO BASIC VIRTUES SAYS JESUS

1. The foundation of all goodness is humility and love.
 - Humility is the opposite of pride, the core of sin.
 - Jesus came into the world to put pride back where it belongs in subordination to God.

2. **Philippians 2:5-8** reveals the humility of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - Came from heaven but was born physically, humanly in a lowly stable.
 - Worked with His hands and lived as a servant, not doing His "own thing" or standing on His own rights but humbled Himself, even died for others.
 - Look at Jesus' humility and then look at YOURSELF.
 - What would being humble change in YOUR life?

3. Humility is to be joined/united with love.
 - Love is the royal law of God.
 - **"...Love the Lord God with all your heart and your neighbor as yourself..."**
 - **"...Love one another as I have loved you..." (John 13:34)**
 - The ultimate test of true Christianity, a right relationship with God and obeying the Holy Spirit is love in one's heart.
 - **"...He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love..." (1 John 4:8)**
 - Jesus wept over Jerusalem, He wept at the tomb of His friend Lazarus, Jesus cares and His followers (believers) need His love deep in their hearts.

4. The nature of Jesus' love is revealed by His death.
 - **"...Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends..."**
- John 15:13
 - His disciples deserted Him, even denying knowing Him, left Him to suffer alone.
 - He stood before His enemies, falsely accused, mocked, railed, tortured, staggered under the load of the cross, great nails driven through his hands and feet, heard jeering shouts and ugly words hurled at Him by the multitude, THEN He lifted His eyes toward heaven and said,
"...Father, forgive them for they know not what they do..."
 - Jesus was held on the cross, not by the nails, but by His love for others.

5. Jesus says that goodness comes from God, that it cannot be achieved by one's efforts, but it is a gift from God's hand.
 - What changed Peter from his weakness to a good, strong person? Jesus found him, forgave him, restored him and filled him with the Holy Spirit
 - Any person who has known the forgiveness of God and restoration to fellowship with Him should want to be like Jesus, the one who redeemed him/her.
 - It is only when the Lord Jesus lives within a person that he/she is good.

CONCLUSION:

1. Everyone pretends, hides his/her real inside person but Christians don't have to if they are letting the Holy Spirit guide their lives.
2. Jesus is the example of living by what is in one's heart for He makes one's heart good.