

The Heart of the Matter

Part 1

By
Boyd Yahn

Hello everyone, it is May 31 as I sit down to record this message for Pentecost in this year of 2022. The title of the message today is called, "The Heart of the Matter."

0:18

On this day, Pentecost, many years ago now a great miracle occurred and the lives of many people were changed in a dramatic way. The tongues of fire sitting upon those assembled, miraculous abilities being imbued from on high, was an amazing thing for them to see.

0:43

To say this would be an attention getter would be a vast understatement. This day has been observed as Judah submitted to God's statutes, but this one in this particular year was unique. In response to a display begging for an explanation, the apostle Peter stood up in a sermon format and he gave one.

1:05

Let's pick up a part of that explanation in Acts 2:22; Acts 2:22 Peter was speaking to the crowd assembled. They had seen some pretty crazy things; they were stunned by what they saw and he sought to give them some answer.

²²"Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God (The Father) to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know—²³Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; ²⁴whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it. ²⁵For David says concerning Him: 'I foresaw the Lord (Yahovah) always before my face, for He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken.

2:16

Speaking of God the Father.

²⁶Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; moreover, my flesh also will rest in hope. ²⁷For You will not leave my soul in Hades, (The Grave) nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

2:30

David understood there was a day that would change. And speaking of Christ He said:

nor will You allow Your Holy One (Christ) to see corruption. ²⁸You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of joy in Your presence.'

2:56

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The “you” here is a reference to God the Father.

²⁹“Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you (both) of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.

³⁰Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, ³¹he, (David) foreseeing this, (He knew about this) spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in (the grave), nor did His flesh see corruption. ³²This Jesus, God the Father has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. ³³Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.

³⁴“For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: ‘the Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, ³⁵(until) I make Your enemies Your footstool.’” ³⁶“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified,

4:20

So he is laying down who this actually was.

both Lord and Christ.” ³⁷Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what (will) we do?” ³⁸Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

4:48

So here is a duality to the meaning of the Holy Spirit, it also, it’s a gift from God the Father, now that we know who He is. He is the Holy Spirit and we receive a gift from Him, the imparting of His Holy Spirit into each and every one of us individually.

³⁹For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”

5:22

So we get an affirmation here that it is God the Father that calls.

⁴⁰And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.” ⁴¹Then those who gladly received his word

5:40

That’s interesting; maybe there were some who weren’t so glad about it.

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were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

5:51

I want to pay some attention, specifically, to verse 37 today. Upon hearing what they individually were part of, there was a reaction that is mentioned here, and perhaps it is a reaction all of us can relate to as we live our lives in this flesh.

6:13

It refers to them, or describes them as being, “cut to the heart.” What’s a heart? We learn in verse 39 of the calling of God. Were the ones who heard uncalled also cut to the heart? Or were they the scoffers to the whole event?

6:40

Why is it some were, quote unquote, “cut to the heart”, whatever that is, and some were not? Others it seems, had a far different reaction in their hearts; and we read of that in acts 4, verses 1 – 3.

¹ Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, ²being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. ³And they laid hands on them, and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening.

7:24

Well, why is it that some were cut to the heart and why were there some who didn’t even want to entertain it and were highly offended by the message? The answer it would appear, would be given to us in Romans 5, verse 5.

7:49

We can see that there was a wide variation in how they responded to what was going on. If we look in Romans 5:5, it says:

⁵Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God (Instead of the dislike or hatred of God) has been poured out (Where?) in our hearts (Huh) by the Holy Spirit (God the Father, whose presence) was given to us.

8:25

Well, if one doesn’t love God, then why would they care what happened to Christ; God’s son? And we can see that there was clearly some in Acts 4 who couldn’t have cared less; they just wanted these guys to shut up.

8:44

If one did love God, and they came to realize what they had done to His son, would they be cut to the heart? Why, of course they would, and therein lies the difference. Did God

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make that change such that a given response would occur? That they would be moved by something deep inside to do something, to be actually motivated when they realized, who and what they were.

9:23

Did they get a vision of the real them and realize the need to fix that? We need to consider that. And has God ever done anything similar to cause a deep seated desire and a response? Can we find some other places in scripture where we see a similar type of action where God is attempting to elicit a response that some share and others do not?

9:59

Well, if you turn with me to the book of Exodus; Exodus 9, we get to verse 14. And there is something in there that I ever paid any attention to. The plague of the blood and the frogs, lice and flies and the boils had already occurred. And in light of that verse 14 is very interesting. Where God says:

¹⁴for at this time I will send all My plagues to your very heart, (Huh) and on your servants and on your people, that you may know that there is none like Me in all the earth.

10:52

There is another level of effect here. What's a heart? If we go to Exodus 7; Exodus 7 and we look at verses 1 – 4. We see something else here.

¹ So Yahovah said to Moses: "See, I have made you as God to Pharaoh, and Aaron your brother shall be your prophet. ²You shall speak all that I command you. And Aaron your brother shall tell Pharaoh to send the children of Israel out of his land. ³And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt. ⁴But Pharaoh will not heed you,

11:41

That's why He was hardening his heart.

so that I may lay My hand on Egypt and bring My armies and My people, the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments.

So God was directly involved in hardening Pharaoh's heart, whatever that is. And He did so to multiply His wonders and signs in Egypt.

12:08

Does or can God make an adjustment to peoples heart, to accomplish His will? Well it seems that is one of His prerogatives. If we go to Revelation 17; Revelation 17 and verses 15 – 18 we see an affirmation of this. Let's pick it up, Revelation 17, verses 15 – 18.

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¹⁵Then he said to me, "The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, (The false religious system) are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. ¹⁶And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. (Notice) ¹⁷For God has put it into their hearts (This beast secular power) to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled.

13:20

So here we see God reaching down into the deepest part consciousness of these people so they, whether wittingly or unwittingly, perform and do His bidding. What's this heart? As usual if one is going to seek an answer on something; well why not look up the original Hebrew and Greek to see if that is of some help to us.

13:50

In Hebrew the most common word translated heart, are numbers H3820 in Strong's and H3824. H3820 is leb, it's the heart. I am going to read that, it's a form of H3824, the heart. It's also used very widely for the feelings, the will and even the intellect; likewise for the center of anything. Oops, this is a lot like spirit. We are actually going to have to think.

14:33

To care for, comfortably, consent, considered, kindly, mind, unawares, understanding, willingly, wisdom; oh no, we are going to have to think. And H3824 is lebab, or labob, sorry; the heart as the most interior organ, and used also like H3820 which we just read.

15:07

In the midst, the mind, understanding; oh, oh, we are going to have to think when we come across this term in scripture just exactly like with spirit. Well can we get some help from the Greek? The Old Testament is quoted in the New by Christ Himself.

15:32

In Matthew 15; Matthew 15 and verse 8. Where again we are focusing on this concept of heart. But Christ speaking, He said:

⁸These people (He was quoting the Father in the Old Testament) 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me.

16:01

Huh, I guess there is a difference between what we say and what we are really like under the cover. We see the same thing in Mark 7; Mark 7 and verse 6. Similar situation; I'll read 6.

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⁶He answered and said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, (And we looked at that recently) as it is written: ‘This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me.

16:36

That is quoted from the book of Isaiah; Isaiah 29:13 where we read:

¹³Therefore the Lord said: “Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths and honor Me with their lips, but have removed their hearts far from Me, (Huh) and their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men,...

17:09

Well, that’s interesting to say the least. David was also cognizant of this and we see in Psalm 78; Psalm 78, verses 35 – 37; Psalm 78, verses 35 – 37.

³⁵Then they remembered that God (The Father) was their rock, and the Most High God their Redeemer. ³⁶Nevertheless they flattered Him with their mouth, and they lied to Him with their tongue; ³⁷for their heart was not steadfast with Him, nor were they faithful in His covenant.

17:55

What it seems to be showing up as a common problem. The Greek word for Heart, that we looked at in Matthew 15:8 and Mark 7:6 is G2588. The word is kardia; that shouldn’t be a surprise to all of us, but when we look that up it means; thoughts or feelings, or the middle.

18:26

And there is another word used in Greek, G4641 and we see that in Mark 10; Mark 10, verse 5. Let’s take a look at that. Mark 10, verse 5:

⁵And Jesus answered and said to them, “Because of the hardness of your heart

18:50

See the same word again and it’s sklerokardia.

he wrote you this precept.

And we see this same word, this sklerokardia, ah, in Mark 16, verse 14.

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¹⁴Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen.

19:23

When we look up sklerokardia it means, destitution of spiritual perception, hardness of heart. Well that's interesting because if we have a hardness of heart; we don't have any spiritual perception. And I thought, well that is really quite interesting; it looks like the eleven here obviously had a problem.

19:50

Do we also, you and I, refuse to believe God because of the hardness of our heart? Could that even be a thing? Does the imbibing of Satan's way have something to do with the hardness of our heart? When God tells us something, do we always listen?

20:17

What's Satan's heart like anyway? Or does he have one? Why would he need one? He's a spirit being isn't he? Well, if we go to the book of Job we find something that I think is really worthwhile taking a look at.

20:37

In Job 41:1 where God is speaking to Job and kind of giving him a glimpse of what His world actually looks like, He brings up the topic:

¹ "Can you (Speaking to Job) draw out Leviathan with a hook, or snare his tongue with a line which you lower?"

20:58

And He goes on with a description of this Leviathan. Notice the Leviathan's role, or what he's like in verses 33 and 34 of Job 41.

³³On earth there is nothing like him, which is made without fear.

So here we have a being that has not fear.

³⁴He beholds every high thing; he is king over all the children of pride."

21:28

We might know who that is; but what I want to point out is what is revealed about this beings' heart. And we see a little bit about that in verse 24; talking of this Leviathan, it says:

²⁴His heart is as hard as stone, even as hard as the lower millstone.

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21:56

Well, I guess this Leviathan, king of the children of pride, does have a heart. And it is as hard as stone. We can see a little bit about that in Ezekiel 28, verse 17. Speaking of Satan specifically, it says:

17“Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor;...

Well I guess Satan does have a heart. And it's incredibly hard and it's lifted up; and Satan's once perfect heart, the seat of wisdom given to him at his creation.

22:47

Go back verse 12 of Ezekiel 28, it says:

12... “You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

This being became corrupt; Satan by his own free moral agency unwrote what God had wrote and put in place in his heart. And folly replaced wisdom; spiritual perception was replaced by a total lack thereof and all of this by his own choosing.

23:28

He did in his own heart, built a value system that is the very opposite to the one God had installed. His spirit, his free moral agency, determined what would dwell in his heart. And he effectively unwrote what God wrote in there at his creation.

23:59

What's a heart? The great mandate that pervades the bible from one end of it to the other is given by Christ in a totally unambiguous way. He was asked directly about it and he answered directly about it.

24:20

Well, that's Matthew 22; Matthew 22 and we'll look at verses 34 – 37, Matthew 22, verses 34 – 37. He had been having it out, Christ had been with the, ah, Sadducees and then the Pharisees showed up to the game, and:

*35... one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying,
36“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” 37(And) Jesus
said to him, ““You shall love the Lord your God, (Yahovah) your God*

25:06

He was not talking about himself, Christ made it clear that His God and the people's God was the same God and it wasn't Him. And you can read about that in John 20.

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“You shall love the Lord your God, with all your heart,... (Huh)

25:24

Do you suppose Satan would have a problem with that directive? Might he seek to muddy the waters? Would he try and confuse folks with who it is they are supposed to love? Would he seek to hide the meaning of heart? What is a heart anyway?

25:47

Why is it that we might not know? Would he seek to ridicule the very idea of giving ones heart to the Lord, Yahovah? Would he try to pawn that off as some form of emotional fluff; to ridicule and disparage the very idea? Would he attempt to use people as useful idiots to accomplish that goal to, and you know, don't look here, look there.

26:27

Well, how's your, yes sir, that probably is exactly what he would do, answer working. This account of Christ's answerer is also found in Luke 10; Luke 10:27 and Mark 12, verse 30. The question was in verse 25:

²⁵And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, (Well) “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

27:00

Well that is kind of important, don't you think? Maybe that's salvational?

²⁶He said to him, “What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?” ²⁷So he answered and said, (Well) “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,’ and ‘your neighbor as yourself.” ²⁸And He said to him, “You have answered rightly; do this and you will live.”

27:27

Well I kind of think that is reasonably important, wouldn't you? Well, let's take a look at Mark 12; Mark 12 and we see another rendition of this, and it's important when similar texts are in place that we look at parallel accounts, for they give us additional details if we have the eyes to see.

27:56

In Mark 12, verse 28 – 34, let's have a look at that.

²⁸Then one of the scribes came and having heard them reasoning together, perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, “Which is the first commandment of all?” ²⁹(So) Jesus answered him, “The first of all the commandments is: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord (he) is one.

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³⁰And you shall love the Lord (Yahovah) your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment.

28:36

You notice He didn’t say, “And you shall love me.”

³¹And the second, like it, is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

28:50

Well you don’t suppose Satan would have a problem with that first commandment?

³²So the scribe said to Him, “Well said, Teacher. You have spoken the truth,

So this guy actually knew the drill.

for there is one God, (There is one supreme Being.) and there is no other but He. ³³And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one’s neighbor as oneself, is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.”

29:25

Let’s get to the heart of the matter shall we.

³⁴Now when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, He said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” But after that no one dared question Him.

29:41

The answer doesn’t change. And you know, it’s interesting to look at Hebrews 1; Hebrews 1 and verses 1 – 3 just as we kind of pause at this point, where we read a statement that is continuous through the bible. Hebrews 1:

¹ God, (The Father) who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,

30:17

So did God the Father speak through the prophets to the people? Yes!

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² has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; ³who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,...

30:50

Well, God never changes; Malachi 3:6; and Christ doesn't change, in Hebrews 13:8. Does it make sense then that the prime directive, the numero uno, commandment ever changes?

31:09

Is it a continuous thing through the bible or does the message ever change? Well, let's have a read of Deuteronomy 6, verses 4 – 6 and see if maybe we have heard this some place before. Picking it up in Deuteronomy 6, verse 4.

*⁴ "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, (Yahovah our God) Yahovah is one! ⁵
You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.*

31:49

Doesn't that sound vaguely familiar to the same message to the prophets as it was through Christ? Isn't that what we would expect? The more we look, the more this New Covenant, Old covenant thing just melts away because the prime directive is to love the Lord your God with all your heart. It does not change.

32:16

Has Satan them; seeking to be God, wanting to be God, written his ways into the heart of men? If God would be in the process of writing His heart, His ways into the heart of men; do you suppose Satan would preempt that and seek to do exactly the same thing?

32:44

Well, let's take a read and see what we can see. Mark 7, verses 20 – 23. Has Satan been successful? Christ was teaching, He said:

²⁰And He said, "What comes out of a man, that defiles (him). ²¹For from within, out of the (brain of men, no, no, out of the spirit of men, no) out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, ²²thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. ²³All these evil things come from within...

33:32

Out of our hearts, out of men's hearts and they defile us. Well how about that?

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Has Satan been successful in writing his ways into the hearts of men? Who do you suppose wrote those things in men's hearts, yours and mine? Satan did!

34:07

Do you suppose God would seek to unwrite them using our spirit, coupled with His, to do so? And in the process make our heart, whatever that is, pure? Would we think that would be kind of, ah, a rather important thing to do? Would that be the heart of the matter?

34:35

Well, it turns out if we read Matthew 5:8 it says:

⁸Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Huh! You don't suppose Satan would seek to oppose that?

34:59

Are hearts being purified? Can we find someplace in scripture, the very thing that God is actually up to? To affirm why that must be so, those things that are in the heart of men have to be replaced. Well, it isn't a great surprise that, yup, sure is

35:36

Let's go to Proverbs 3, and we will read verses 1 – 8. Where there is an admonition here.

¹ My son, do not forget my law, but let your heart

The center of your being, remember those definitions.

keep my commands; ²for length of days and long life and peace they will add to you. ³Let not mercy and truth forsake you; bind them around your neck, (and) write them

36:15

You write them.

on the tablet of your heart,

If you are going to write on something wouldn't it be nice to have some kind of piece of paper, or substrate of some kind? Well here we have a human heart being referred to as a tablet. Huh?

⁴and so find favor and high esteem in the sight of God and man. ⁵Trust in Yahovah with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶in all

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your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. ⁷Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear Yahovah and depart from evil. ⁸It will be health to your flesh, and strength to your bones.

37:07

The heart here is referred to as a tablet. And you can look that up in the concordance, the word for tablet is *luach*, it means a tablet, a board, a plank, or a plate. I thought well why is it that I haven't seen that before, at least taken the time to consider that?

37:34

We all might ask ourselves that very question. If we turn to Proverbs 7 and we take a look at verses 1 – 4.

¹ My son, keep my words, and treasure my commands within you. ²Keep my commands and live, and my law as the apple of your eye. ³Bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart. ⁴Say to wisdom, "You are my sister," and call understanding your nearest kin,

38:11

Is it unusual maybe that we, I can't believe, why that I didn't look at heart. I read the word; I did not stop to consider what it was actually saying. Because these passages show us that we are to write God's ways in our heart; our deepest sense of being.

38:44

And we can see this, where a heart, a human heart; whatever that is, is referenced to as a tablet. It's not a one off, but it's there in Proverbs 3 and also in Proverbs 7; it's just not. In Jeremiah 17, verse 1.

¹ "The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron; (With the point of a diamond, it's engraved) on the tablet of their heart, and on the horns of your altars, ²while their children remember their altars and their wooden images by the green trees on the high hills.

39:28

We see another reference to the heart being a tablet that is written on. Well, how about that? What is that? What is that tablet? II Corinthians 3:3, I'd never seen this before, never paid any attention to it. II Corinthians 3:3; Paul speaking, he said:

³clearly you (The Corinthians) are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.

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40:19

God is writing in our hearts the things of His way. Pentecost is all about both the process of having God's ways instilled in our hearts, put into the very center of our being, and the end result of Him doing so participating in a resurrection to life.

40:52

I am going to give you a couple of more scriptures to ponder because this can't help but be a series of things that we, maybe we need to just, ah, take the time to consider some of these things, that perhaps we have never considered before.

41:14

Notice Galatians 4, verse 6. It's giving you something here that a little bit of time to, to ponder this. And it says:

⁶And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts,...

41:43

So He sent forth the spirit of His Son, and He didn't put it under your left toenail, He put it in your heart. What's a heart? And it says in Romans 8. (verse 9)

... if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

42:08

God the Father specifically places the Spirit of Christ in our heart. He doesn't put it in a brain, He doesn't put it in our spirit; He puts it in our heart. What does that actually mean?

42:34

If we look up the Greek word for tablet where it is referred to, and we saw that in II Corinthians 3:3, we see that the tablet of our heart, it's G4109, the word is *plax*. It is a flat stone, a flat surface. What did God write the 10 commandments on?

43:07

Was it not tablets of stone? Is a human heart, affected by Satan, exactly that and God is trying to do that? Will our spirit, our free moral agency allow us to do that? I want to give you a mechanism to think about; when we were initially called, and we came to the knowledge of the Sabbath day, our spirit allowed us to think about that, to process that, to parse that, to consider the ramifications of keeping God's Sabbath day. \

44:01

And at some point we internalized that part of God's law and the keeping of the Sabbath is part of God's law, and we put that deeper into our system, to our heart and it became a way of life. It doesn't stop with the Sabbath day.

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44:28

That's a process that you can begin to think about as we look at Pentecost. The actions of the Spirit of God and what it's trying to do and its ultimate fulfillment, because we do understand that one of the harvests of mankind is very likely to occur on a future Pentecost; but only if God has written and you and I have allowed God to write His ways in our hearts. Whatever that is?

45:15

There is going to be much more to learn about that. I haven't given anything for awhile because I wondered is there a difference between heart and spirit? What is the connection and what is the difference? And there is over a thousand scriptures to sort through and chew through to begin to get some idea of the difference between the two and yet how they are actually related because they actually do work together.

45:56

So I would like to leave you with some of those thoughts. Maybe this is something we should look into, this heart stuff; maybe just a bit more and look past the activities of Pentecost, the receiving of the Holy Spirit, from the Holy Spirit, through Christ, who is a holy Spirit and consider the ends of that. What is He trying to do?

46:26

And He is trying to write His laws, His statutes and His ways into our very hearts and that's extremely interesting, so it becomes part of us. In the future we will look a little bit more on this heart stuff.

Have a wonderful Pentecost everybody, our best wishes to you all.