

Preparation Guide for February's Devotionals



I love the hymn Connie Smith chose to build this month's devotionals around, No. 358 in the blue hymnal "Give Me Thy Heart."

This is a most important concept—this giving our hearts to God. The condition of our heart will over time affect everything we do.

Yes, never doubt if everything we do and become flows from this center we call our heart, for it truly is **"the center of everything."**

That is why when asked what the greatest commandment was, Jesus replied:

Matthew 22:36-37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment.

It all starts in the heart. If we truly love God with all our hearts everything else will fall into line with what is in our hearts.

That is why it is so important to protect our hearts.

The patriarchs of the church gave us a great challenge when they asked us to consider the statement "Am I without guile?"

The root word for guile takes us back to such words as "deceit, decoy, subterfuge, deception."

In other words, we appear to be something that we are not. On the surface we may profess to be a "Good Christian," but in reality, we are not so good. In other words we are full of guile—we are not who we profess to be. We have an outside façade that we hide behind.

To have guile means on the inside **“in our hearts”** we have hidden sin.

Sin comes in so many different ways too numerous to list: pride, hate, greed, lust, evil desires, evil thoughts. These can and will bear fruit, if we don't repent of them and remove them from our hearts.

Helaman 2:29 And in the fifty and first year of the reign of the Judges, there was peace also, save it were the pride which began to enter into the church; not into the church of God, **but into the hearts of the people who professed to belong to the church of God; and they were lifted up in pride, even to the persecution of many of their brethren.**

Helaman 5:31 Yea, your hearts are not drawn out unto the Lord, but they do swell with great pride, unto boasting, and unto great swelling, envyings, strifes, malice, persecutions, and murders, and all manner of iniquities.

That is why God tells us over and over again to repent and to watch our hearts.

That is why we need to have on the armor of God. This armor will protect our hearts. We must be very careful for Satan can get a hold in our hearts if we do not keep our armor on.

Helaman 2:31 Nevertheless, they did fast and pray oft, and did wax stronger and stronger in their humility, and firmer and firmer in the faith of Christ, unto the filling their souls with joy and consolation, yea, **even to the purifying and the sanctification of their hearts, which sanctification cometh because of their yielding their hearts unto God.**

If you want a pure heart, without guile, you must be mighty in prayer and fasting.

You must repent often and have the word of God dwelling in you from your daily reading of the word.

Let us all become real followers of Jesus Christ, having hearts pure and sanctified. No more façades!! Let us be the same inside and out, with no guile.

May we ever strive to become “The Bride of Christ” who has a heart that is faithful and true.

Fifth thing listed in the guide prepared by the Patriarchs of the church:

Am I without guile?

For even hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps; Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth.
1 Peter 2:21-22

Action: Let your every action and word reflect the truth of who and Whose we are, with no deception whatsoever.

This month I plan to look at my heart and to remove from it any sin I find there. I will also ask God to reveal to me the hidden sin in my heart that I may not even be aware of. I will come down into the depths of humility and repent. I will seek to purify/sanctify my heart through study, fasting and prayer. I will make a conscious effort to put on the whole armor of God. I will do all I can to become a Bride of Christ who has no guile or deception within my heart.

My Plan to Accomplish this Change:

Week #1

Week#2

Week #3

Week#4

My Partner to Assist Me & Help Me Be Accountable Is: _____

Self Evaluation:

How Am I Doing & What Do I Need to Do to Be More Successful:
