

Fellowship of the Heart

Material taken from "Waking the Dead" by John Eldredge

- How is your heart doing, spiritually?
 - We often pay attention to what's going on in our mind, but our hearts are often neglected
 - This is by Satan's design
- "The story of your life is the story of the long and brutal assault on your heart by the one who knows what you could be - and fears it."
 - We are at War
 - Gandalf sums it up in LOTR:
 - "Fate has chosen him. A Fellowship will protect him. Evil will hunt him."
- Satan's primary target is our heart
 - He has convinced us to believe our hearts are bad/evil
 - "The devil has more temptations than an actor has costumes for the stage. And one of his all-time favorite disguises is that of a lying spirit, to abuse your tender heart with the worst news he can deliver: that you do not really love Jesus Christ and that you are only pretending, you are only deceiving yourself." –William Gurnall
- Jesus wants us to hear a completely different message:

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom to the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners. -Isaiah 61:1	God has sent Me on a mission. I have some great news for you. God has sent Me to restore and release something. And that something is you. I am here to give you back your heart and set you free. -John Eldredge
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- What can you do to find your true heart?
 - Are you too hard on your heart?
 - How can you set your heart free?
 - "We must exercise our authority in Christ. We must resist."
 - Learn to believe your heart is *good*
- Fellowships of the Heart
 - "All believers were one in heart." (Acts 4:32)
 - "Now the tale of Nine is filled." JRR Tolkein (FOTR)
 - The Nine broke down even smaller
 - Community is important, but intimate community is more powerful
 - Discuss small-group scenarios (couples and singles together)
 - "Community is no substitute for God"
 - Silent retreat
 - Designated prayer time at home
 - God intends that we treat our hearts as the treasures of the kingdom, ransomed at tremendous cost, as if they really *do* matter, and matter deeply.
 - Caring for our own hearts isn't selfishness, it's how we begin to love
 - How would you live differently if you believed your heart was the treasure of the Kingdom?
 - What does your heart need?

- We're at War
 - The Enemy will tell you taking care of your heart is foolish:
 - There are many more important things to do; you can get to it some other time; you're being selfish; this isn't even what you want anyway
 - Remember: *He fears you* - fears your heart's coming alive – full and free
 - Caring for your heart is an act of:
 - Obedience
 - Love
 - Faith
 - WAR
- Reflection questions:
 - Can you name something in your life that is probably unhealthy or even damaging to your heart?
 - Can you step away and create some distance from what is damaging?
 - Take a pause with God and ask *Him*: "What do You have for my heart?"
 - Think of one great "mythic" story – book/movie – that deeply stirs and rallies your heart. Make a plan to spend some time with it this week