



LESSON 1 // THE HEART OF WORSHIP

Big Idea: Christmas is a wonderful season that should call and inspire us to worship. Jesus made it clear in Mark 12:28-31 that this worship begins with the heart. God longs for our heart to love and worship Him, so we need to pay careful attention to our heart's condition and health.

Mark 12:28-31 (NIV) *One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"²⁹ "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.'³⁰ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'³¹ The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."*

Discussion Questions:

This weekend we learned that God cares about and longs for our hearts. Using the list on our notes (trust, transformation, allegiance, etc.) what are some tangible ways we can give Him more of our hearts?

Reflect on the different heart conditions (hard heart, hopeless heart, etc.). Think about your relationship with God and people. Which heart condition have you dealt with most recently and why?

What things continually affect (or influence) our hearts? (What we see, hear, etc.)

What can we do to limit negative influences and increase positive influences?

Pastor Dale shared that our heart can be deceptive and as a result needs continual attention. What are some things that you can do to regularly be aware of the condition of your heart?

Prayer Focus:

We learned that our hearts need continual attention. Can we commit, as a group, to praying Psalm 139:23-24 for ourselves this month? Let's seek awareness of our true heart condition and invite God's healing into these areas.

Leader Tip:

Encourage group members to do an "inventory" of their heart using the acronym in point number four. Additionally, you can ask the group to share which step(s) they currently need to focus on. Be ready to share where you are in this process and encourage group members as they open up.