

Illustrated Message; The Heart of Man

Actors

Evangelist

Jeremy, Joey and Ed - three co-workers

Gabriel – an Angel

Description of the Evangelist – He’s preaching at an outdoor crusade.

Description of Jeremy – A good person, he has a good heart, a real leader, and people admire his good character, a high achiever.

Description of Joey – He’s not self righteous nor is he wicked; he’s a middle of the road guy; he believes ‘that each to his own’, is the way to go; doesn’t want to rock any boats.

Description of Ed – A rebel, non conformist, disrespectful, no initiative to do good, for the most part does more bad than good and knows it.

SCENE

THREE CO-WORKERS, JEREMY, JOEY AND ED, ARE IN A FIVE STAR HOTEL AT A COMPANY CONVENTION.

Jeremy

Man that was a long day but I sure learned a lot! I’m a high achiever and I know I’ll benefit from all of it.

Joey

I don’t know how I’m going to remember half of what was said. I hope my manager gives me time to assimilate everything.

Ed

Ya, you two are all about position and title! What I learned today ... is not to do half of what they told me to! (he laughs heartily) I’ll never conform to their image of success. I say we forget about everything that was said....and let’s enjoy MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL!

Joey

I like where your heads at Ed.

THEY TURN THE TV ON AND ARE BREAKING OUT THE SNACKS AND BEER, ONLY TO FIND OUT THAT THEY CAN’T GET THE GAME DUE TO ELECTRICAL STORMS. THEY CAN ONLY GET ONE CHANNEL SHOWING A COMMERCIAL.

Ed

WHAT!!! No way, no Monday Night Football! How messed up is this! We only have one channel to watch guys.

ACROSS THE BOTTOM OF THE TV IS A SCROLLING MESSAGE FROM THE HOTEL APOLOGIZING TO GUESTS SAYING THAT THERE IS A PROBLEM WITH THE CHANNELS AND THAT THEY’RE WORKING ON GETTING IF FIXED.

Joey

Ah, just leave it on the channel that’s working. There will be some entertainment I’m sure.

AFTER THE COMMERCIAL, AN EVANGELIST COMES ON.

Evangelist

Tonight please turn in your Bibles to the book of Jeremiah 17:9. We have heard many times and have often said ourselves, that this person or that person, that young man or this old lady has a good heart, giving them praise for the good things they have often done. However, we deceive ourselves and others when we praise them for having a good heart, for in **Jeremiah 17:9** we read the following, *“The heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it.”*

Ed

What! We’re not watching this preacher.

Jeremy

Well, if anyone’s got the good heart in this room, that’d be me. Everyone always says I’m a good hearted guy!

Joey

Hey Jeremy..isn’t that short for Jeremiah? (He laughs) Didn’t he just say that the heart of man is desperately wicked above all things?

Jeremy

Guys, just listen, can’t hurt us. Besides, there’s nothing else to watch.

Ed

Probably just another money hungry preacher.

Evangelist

Please turn to **Psalms 51:10**. Now before we read this, I want you to bear in mind that this portion of Scripture was written by King David, a man who loved God with all his heart, soul and mind. David, here in Psalm 51, is repenting of a royal sin against God, and in verse ten he cries out to God saying, *“Create in me a clean heart and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”* Please again keep in mind that David was a man after God’s own heart, a man who pleased God. King David saw that in spite of his dedication and love for God that he indeed had a heart that was wicked and deceitful, and realized his need for his inner man to be cleansed and renewed. There are probably people here tonight, who may very well have been praised by others for the good heart they have, based upon the good things they have done or said. However this next portion of Scripture is going to deflate the pride you’ve taken in your good works, that which you have trusted in to receive approval and praise of others, including the preconceived ideas of God’s approval and praise on your good works. In **Romans 3:10** it reads as follows, *“There is none righteous, no not one, there is none who understands, there is no one who seeks after God, they have all gone out of the way and have together become unprofitable, there is no one who does good not even one.”*

Ed

Hear that guys...there is no one who does good, not even one. You think I’m the only bad guy! Hear that Jeremy, Mr. Good Guy?

Evangelist

No matter how good you are tonight, your good works will not grant you a relationship with an all Holy God, for it is written that anyone who keeps the whole law, (Ten Commandments) and breaks one of these laws, is then guilty of breaking all Ten. Tonight, be honest and sincere with yourselves, if I were to quote the Ten Commandments, they would very well illuminate a few areas in your life that you don’t quite have a handle on. You know that you’ve done things doing wrong, without having total control either.

This lack of self-control is the heart of man, and it is revealed with evidence in the end times we are living in. For in **II Timothy 3:2-5** it reads; *“For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of*

good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!” Some of you here tonight may have fallen into a few of these categories listed, and have tried covering up or correcting these actions, realizing that somewhere down the road that old wicked heart presents itself in some way, shape or form within your character.

Joey

Well, I don't know. I think my character is pretty good. I've always believed, that each man to his own. I like riding the middle ground, don't want to offend anyone, neither good nor bad.

Ed

No, that's all of me! All of those words describe me. That Bible verse he read there describes me ... 100%!!

Evangelist

Now on the other extreme there may be people here tonight that don't need anyone to show you that you have a wicked heart, and have lost total control, drawing closer to the deep end, and there isn't much good in you to boast about, being possessed with more evil intentions than good. And tonight you figure there's no way God could accept you in your present state and condition, you've written off society, they've written you off, therefore you figure God must have written you off as well. Well I have good news for you. In **Matthews 9:12-13** it reads as follows; *“Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. But go and learn what this means, ‘I desire mercy not sacrifice’. For I did not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.”* God is a merciful God towards you tonight, and you are ill with sin, but Jesus is the Great Physician and He'll heal you, if you're willing to repent.

Tonight there may be a middle group of people here, you're not self-righteous, and you're not bent on wickedness, and seem to handle life quite well, no real worries, figuring that the middle road is kinda comfortable. You're not stepping directly on anyone's toes, keep to yourself and when you blow it; you figure well, 'big deal, I'm not perfect'. You probably take responsibility for your mistakes, just kinda crusin' through life trusting that if there is a God, He'll accept you into heaven based upon your relatively good life. Well, I personally believe you're in a hotter spot than the person who trusts in their good works to get to heaven or those who are bent on evil and know they're going going to hell. You people on the middle road tonight are walking in serious deception, and need to be set free more, if not as much as the good, good man and the evil man.

Ed

Ya Joey, that's you. Your middle ground mindset doesn't work either. Can't please everyone you know. He says; “you're in serious deception”! Who would have thought, eh!

Joey

God...apparently!

Evangelist

All three types of people here tonight which I mentioned are fighting a losing battle, for your enemy is not the government, army, IRS, welfare, jail system, psychiatric doctors, drugs, mother, father, brother, sister, wife, etc. For the Bible says in **Ephesians 6:12**; *“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”*

I want to bring to your attention an individual whose name in satan and his band of evil angels, whose whole purpose is to rob, kill and destroy you from entering into relationship with God Almighty. The Bible says in **John 8:44** that if you're not a Christian, *“that your father is the devil and the desires of your father you want to do.”* Satan has deceived you tonight, he's tempted you and you've given in, he knows the state of your heart, and he purposes to fill your life with everything to keep you within the boundaries of sin. If God were to weight your sins individually on a scale tonight, you would all have the same reading, for it is written in **Romans 3:23**; *“For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”* No matter how good you are, God is holy, therefore we are to become holy before we could ever live with an all Holy God.

Whatever case you maybe tonight, you need a Saviour, someone to set you free, someone to create in you a clean heart, someone to give you victory over those bad habits you don't have control of. God so loved you, that He gave His only begotten son, Jesus, that whosoever would believe on Him would not perish, but have everlasting life. Jesus loved you so much, and knew your need for Him, that He left His heavenly home and died on a cross, giving way for mankind to be free from sin and death eternally. **Hebrews 9:22** says; "*For without the shedding of blood there would be no remission for sin.*"

Ed

Looks like we're all on the same page boys! You might want to give up some of those good works Jeremy, it's not going to get you into heaven. And playing the middle ground Joey doesn't cut it either.

Jeremy

This preacher is too heavy. All three of us can't be on the same page with God!

Ed

Stop talking, let's hear him out. Maybe we are all on the same sin page?

Evangelist

All Jesus requires of you tonight is to repent and turn from your own ways which lead to death, for it is written in **Proverbs 14:12** that; "*there is a way that seems right unto a man but the end is death.*" Jesus died, rose from the dead and is now in heaven, for He's gone to prepare a place for His children; however He is here tonight in the form of the Holy Spirit. In **Revelations 3:20** it says that Jesus is standing at the door of your heart knocking, and if you will open your heart to him he will come and live inside of you. Jesus wants to create in you a clean heart, so open up those ancient doors of your hearts and let the King of glory come inside.

In **Psalms 103:12** it says; "*As far as the east is from the west so far has he removed our transgressions from us*", and therefore God will not remember your sins against you. Also in **Isaiah 1:18** it says; "*that though your sins are red like scarlet, they shall be white as snow.*"

If you choose to harden your heart and leave this meeting without having received Jesus as your Lord, and you died, God would have no choice but to send you to hell, for He's a Holy God, and the only way to become holy is by making Jesus Lord of your life and obeying his Word. You see, hell wasn't made for you and me, hell was made for satan and his angels and as long as you are a son or daughter of the devil, you'll spend an eternity separated from the love of God.

Matthew 16:24 says; "*if any man wants to follow me he must pick up his cross*" and may I add, 'die to everything that exalts itself above the Lordship of Jesus and what is written in the Word.' So if you want to follow Jesus you must be willing to repent, and it's not by any might or strength of your own that brings true repentance, it's only by His Spirit, therefore if you are willing, Jesus is willing to give you the grace and strength, and will empower you to repent this night and live for Him. Those who are willing this night to repent and receive Jesus Christ as Lord, then please step out of your seats and come to these altars and with the help of the Holy Spirit, I will lead you in a prayer of salvation."

Jeremy

What!!

Joey

(Looking at Jeremy) Well, maybe he's right? We're not getting in by our good works here! And we know for sure Ed's not getting in 'cause he has no good works to show and prides himself on being bent on evil.

Ed

(With a sense of conviction) Ya, but what part of, "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God", didn't you understand?

Jeremy

I am so out of here, I'm going to the bar. Who's coming with me? We've got to shake this off, chase it back with a few beers!

Joey

I'm with ya man. Ed, come on. Turn that preacher off, let's get out of here. Let's go party.

Ed

Na, go ahead.

ED TURNS OFF THE TV, JOEY AND JEREMY LEAVE. AFTER THEY'RE GONE, ED TURNS THE TV BACK ON AND SEES HUNDREDS GOING TO THE ALTER TO PRAY THE PRAYER OF SALVATION.

Ed

(Bows his head and repeats the prayer of the salvation with the Evangelist)

Jesus, forgive me of my sins. I know I'm a sinner who needs to be saved. I receive you into my heart to be my Lord and Saviour. Thank you for the eternal life you're giving me and by the Holy Spirit, you'll help me to live a holy life now. Amen.

NEXT DAY THEY'VE BOARDED THEIR PLANE AND ARE TAXIING OUT ON THE RUNWAY. THEY TAKE OFF AND ARE IN THE AIR FOR ABOUT 2 MINUTES AND SUDDENLY BOTH ENGINES LOOSE POWER AND THE PLANE CRASHES. ED, JEREMY AND JOEY ARE KILLED.

ALL THREE ARE STANDING IN FRONT OF AN ELEVATOR. THEY'RE DEVASTATED LOOKING AT EACH OTHER.

Joey

How did we get out of that plane wreck? I had a bad feeling today about this flight.

Jeremy

Man, this is crazy. I just saw both of you dead in that crash. No, this is a dream, it can't be for real.

Ed

This is for real guys. We died in that crash. I don't know where we are at right now, but I do know that I will be going to heaven. I prayed with the preacher last night and confessed my sins and received Jesus as Lord of my life.

ELEVATOR DOOR OPENS

Gabriel

Hello Ed, Jeremy and Joey. I'm Gabriel and I'm taking you to the judgement seat of Christ Jesus, where you'll be judged individually and to see if your names are in the Book of Life.

Jeremy

(Looking at Joey) Ah man, I didn't quite see it happening it this way. We should have listened to that preacher last night too. I don't know if this is going to go well.

ELEVATOR DOOR OPENS

Gabriel

(Pointing to another angel who is there when the doors open)

This is Michael, he'll take you right ahead to those doors, and thru them you'll see Jesus Christ and He'll judge you.

Joey

Ah Jeremy, it will go well, we did good in life. We've got good hearts. Our names are in that book, I'm sure of it. Only Ed needed a Saviour.

LATER, THEY ALL COME BACK TO THE ELEVATOR AND GET ON.

Gabriel
Hello Jeremy, Joey and Ed

Ed
(Talking to himself) Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter into your rest!

Jeremy
(Looking at Ed) What!! You're a good and faithful servant; you get to enter into your rest? No way, that's not fair!

Joey
What's up with that? I don't get it. Both of us have lived better lives than him? We're going to hell and Ed's going to heaven? This ain't right!

Ed
It had nothing to do with good or bad, it was all about the prayer of salvation that I prayed to believe and receive Jesus into my life. I was born again when I prayed. Jesus gave me eternal life with him because He washed my sins away as far as the east was from the west!

ELEVATOR DOOR OPENS TO HEAVEN

Ed
Wow, this is beautiful. Better than my wildest dreams!

Gabriel
Well, you have eternity to enjoy it!

HE STEPS OFF ONTO STREETS OF GOLD SEEING HIS BEAUTIFUL MANSION AHEAD.
THE ELEVATOR DOOR CLOSES AND GABRIEL DESCENDS WITH JOEY AND JEREMY IN A FLASH.

Joey
(Looking at Jeremy) Eternity in hell?

Jeremy
I can't believe he made it into heaven.

THE ELEVATOR DOOR OPENS. WITH THE STENCH OF BURNING SULPHUR AND BRIMSTONE, OVERWHELMED AND IN STARK TERROR BY WHAT THEY SEE, THEY START SCREAMING AS THE FLAMES LICK AT THEM AND THEY HEAR THE TORMENTING SHRIEKS OF PEOPLE IN THEIR AGONY BY THE UNQUENCHABLE FIRE. GABRIEL CASTS THEM OUT OF THE ELEVATOR INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE. JOEY AND JEREMY ARE VERY MUCH ALIVE, BUT SEPARATED FROM GOD ETERNALLY.

(This is a fiction script based upon the Bible scripture)
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Review and Recap of Illustrated Message by Marjorie

“For ALL have sinned and come short of the glory of God” in Romans 3:23 isn’t really popular. We don’t like talking about sin and we certainly find it difficult to believe that we’re ALL on the same page when it comes to standing before

Christ Jesus and giving an account for our life. We want to be unique, different, special, important, distinguished, educated, a cut above and so on. We have self-help, self-improvement, self-esteem and many other ‘self’ courses, classes, conventions for everything imaginable. The reality is; our ‘self’ is contaminated with sin. We always want to find a way to cover up our sin nature, just like Adam and Eve did in the garden of Eden. So instead of calling our issues, ‘sin’, we seek to try to make it better, cover it up, give it a new medical term, or say its genetic, inherited or a propensity and so on.

Our fallen sin nature puts us ALL in the same category, regardless if we consider ourselves good, middle of the road or bad, as our characters are portrayed in the message. Not even saying that the ‘good hearted’ person is better than another holds water. One person does not outweigh another; we’re all on equal terms. We have sinned and come short of God’s glory. Only Jesus can forgive us of our sins and blot them out. Only He can change our lives and give us a future filled with hope, love, direction and purpose.

There are many Bible verses mentioned in our message today, but I’d like to just leave you with a few more to meditate on.

Ephesians 4:22-24; “that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.”

Luke 9:23; “And He was saying to them all, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.”

Romans 12:1-2; “Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

The Heart of Man is a strong evangelistic message. If you’re not quite sure how to witness to someone, you can easily use it as a guideline as there are many Bible verses which will lead people into the truth. If you haven’t received Jesus as Lord of your life or asked him to forgive your sins, please pray the prayer that Ed prayed with the Evangelist. Let Jesus give you a new heart!

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