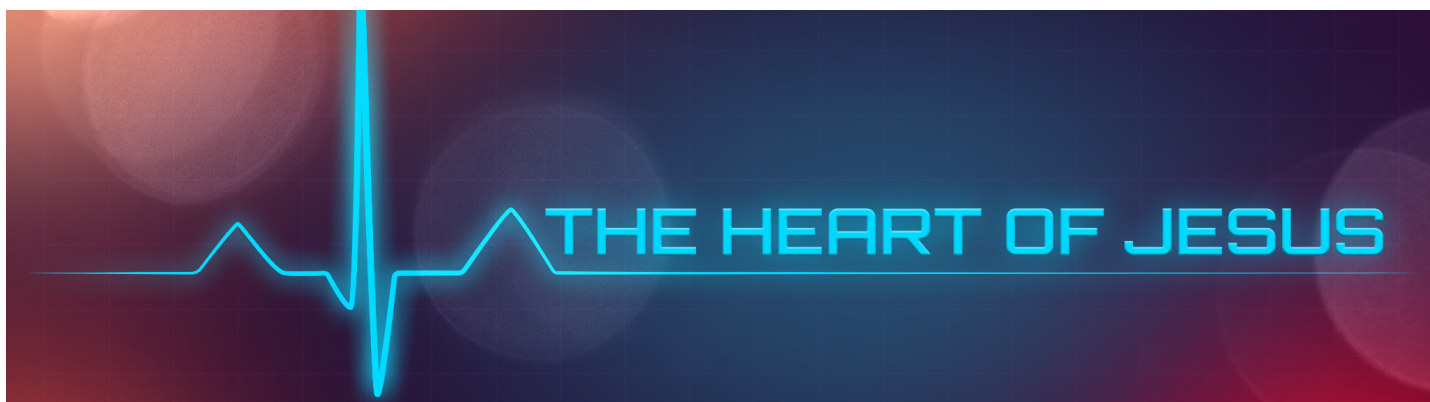




The Heart of Jesus – Part 1

Introduction

As we begin this new series on The Heart of Jesus, Pastor Matt reminds us that when Jesus opens up His heart, He describes Himself as gentle and lowly. This picture of Christ challenges many of our misconceptions and invites us into a deeper relationship with Him. These study questions are designed to help us reflect on Jesus' true heart, how it meets our deepest needs, and how it shapes the way we live out our faith. Let's take time to share openly, listen deeply, and allow God's Word to reveal His rest and compassion to us.

Study Questions

1. When those who know us best describe us, what do we think they would say about our "hearts"?
2. Why do we think Jesus only describes His own heart in one place in the Gospels (Matthew 11:28–30)?
3. What does it mean to us that Jesus calls Himself "gentle and lowly in heart"?
4. How have our past experiences (family, church, struggles) affected the way we view the heart of Jesus?
5. Pastor Matt said that Jesus' "posture toward us is open arms." How does that image impact our relationship with Him?
6. What burdens are we carrying right now that Jesus invites us to bring to Him?
7. Why do we often assume that Jesus looks down on us or is disgusted with our sin, rather than seeing Him as approachable?
8. In what ways do we need "soul rest" (peace, freedom from guilt, release from worry) in this season of our lives?
9. How does the story of Jesus touching the leper in Matthew 8 illustrate His gentle and lowly heart for us?

10. How can reflecting on Jesus' true heart change the way we treat others who feel unworthy, outcast, or burdened?

Summary of the Message

Pastor Matt begins the series by asking what defines our hearts and then turning that question toward Jesus. While people often describe Jesus through their own experiences, the Bible records only one place where Jesus reveals His own heart—in Matthew 11:28–30, where He says He is “gentle and lowly.”

Pastor Matt explains that gentle means meek, humble, and not harsh, showing us that Jesus' posture is one of open arms, not condemnation. Lowly means humble in position, approachable, and accessible, reminding us that we don't have to clean ourselves up to come to Him; our burdens themselves qualify us.

Jesus offers not just physical rest but “soul rest”—relief from guilt, fear, and the weight of sin. His yoke is “easy,” meaning kind, and His burden is light, like a life preserver to the drowning. Many of us wrongly assume Jesus tolerates us reluctantly, but Scripture reveals He delights in reaching out to sinners with compassion.

Pastor Matt illustrates this with the story of the leper in Matthew 8, who experienced not just healing but also human touch and acceptance from Jesus. Just as Jesus reached out to the leper, He reaches out to us in our uncleanness.

Ultimately, the message emphasizes that the exalted Christ is also the approachable Savior who longs to give us rest for our souls.