I am so anxious to talk to you about the heart I've decided to back up so far to get there that I'm not going to rush this. I've got tonight; I've got from now to eternity. I didn't hear one remark, but I said amen anyway.

I'm just going to start way back in the twilight and keep going on, and then tonight, we're going to take a look at something in the book of Matthew. Then on Thursday night, we'll go back to some of the other matters, but tonight, I want to impress you with the progress of what the Lord wants to do in your heart and how important the heart is. My only burden tonight is to show you how important that heart is. You may not learn a thing about it; if you learn it's important, that'll be enough.

Genesis 1:11 - *Then God said, 'Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit after their kind with seed in them on the earth,' and it was so. And the earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit with seed in them after their kind, and God saw that it was good.*

Alright, here is seed, and you plant it, and it brings forth *after its kind*. Did you get that? The seed is in the earth; it comes up, and there's *after its kind*. It falls in the soil, and then what comes up is after its kind. If it comes up, it's after its kind. You plant it, it'll come up, and what comes up will be after what's planted. It'll be like what's planted. Just consider that. I'm going to repeat it. If the seed is planted, if it's the proper seed, if it goes in proper soil, if it gets proper treatment, and it comes up, it'll be just like that seed you just planted. Praise the Lord. The seed is important, isn't it? The soil is important, isn't it? The growth is important, isn't it? Then, when all that's correct, you'll have what? *After its kind.* That's heavy.

Genesis 1:29 - Now then, God speaks to man. *God said, 'Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth and every tree which has fruit yielding seed, and it shall be food for you.'*

Genesis 1:30 - …*and I have given every green plant for food, that is to man, and it was so.*

In this verse, you not only have the seed being planted and the vegetation coming up after its kind, but now God comes to man and says to man, "I give you the seed, and I give you the fruit that comes up from the seed. So I have given you the vegetation for food to eat. I have given you that which is after its kind for you to feed upon." Man was given the seed to eat, and from that seed he himself would be established in life. God gave the seed; the seed was planted, and what came up was after its kind, and God gave it to man. God has ordained the seed to be something very important. The seed is very important. The seed goes all the way through Scripture. Are you aware of that? All the way through Scripture is the seed. What is that seed? Jesus Christ.

In Genesis 1, there is fruit yielding after its kind. Then, brothers, according to all that we understand about the Word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ became a seed. In Genesis 3:15, Jesus Christ became the seed of what? The seed of the woman. Then in Genesis 12, He became the seed of Abraham. The New Testament repeats and confirms this for us in Galatians 3.

In Galatians 3 and Genesis 12, Jesus Christ starts as the seed of the woman; He becomes the seed of Abraham; and then, in 1 Samuel 7, He becomes the seed of David. That's not where he stopped. I want to go a little further. In Genesis 3, He's the seed of the woman; in Genesis 12, He's the seed of Abraham - in Galatians 3, it's verified. Then in 1 Samuel 7, He is the seed of David. And that's not all.

Well, what do you do with a seed? You plant it. What comes up? *After its kind.* Then what do you do with it after it's come up? You eat it. I'm going to put in something else before that: you harvest it. After you harvest it, you eat it. Okay? Did you get all that? Gene, that's so simple. Why don't you go on something else? Because this is important; really important.

God gave a seed, and that seed had life in it, and where it is properly planted and properly brought out, it will produce after its kind. Then, after it is brought out, brothers and sisters, it is harvested. After it is harvested, it is eaten. After it is eaten, it produces in the eater *after its kind*, brothers and sisters.

Now the Lord Jesus Christ is a seed to you and me. Jesus Christ is a seed to you and me, and the Lord Jesus Christ has got to be planted. Then after he's planted, something's got to happen. What happens? He's got to come up. After He comes up, what happens? He's got to grow. I'm just going to tell you this: He has to have proper nourishment. Proper this, proper that. Can you tell me what a seed needs to grow? Water and light. Fertilized soil; good soil. Let's go through that.

You've got to have the seed. The seed has to be planted. Then it's got to have proper soil. Then it needs water, light, and air, and it will come up. You harvest it. You eat it, and God ordained that man would never eat anything except that which bears life after its kind.

Now, Scripture has the principle of "first mention." The principle of first mention is in Genesis 1. God ordained that man never eat anything except seed that bears after its kind. The only food I am supposed to eat is food capable of bearing seed and producing life. You want to live a good, healthy life? Then don't ever eat anything unless it's got life in it. Sisters and brothers, you were ordained to eat nothing unless it had life in it. It is a seed, and it can produce after its kind. You aren't supposed to eat anything except something that produces after its kind; that's all you're to eat.

There are beginning books. One is Genesis; another has got to be the book of John; another has got to be Matthew. And I would agree without question that the book of Acts is a beginning book. All of them have first principles. I would say if it's not in Genesis, don't bother with it. If it's not in Matthew, don't bother with it. If it's not in John, forget it. And if it's not in Acts, I'll tell you where it is: it's in Babylon. There is progress in the Scripture. If you notice, a seed is planted in Matthew, and that seed grows. That seed grows in Acts. In Matthew, a seed was planted. Now then, in the book of Acts, it begins to grow, brothers. Then, in the epistles, it matures. You've never heard this before:

Revelation 14:1-4 - *And I looked, and behold the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with him, 144,000 having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven with the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. And the voice which I heard was like the sound of harps playing, harpists playing on their harps. And they sang a new song*

before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. And no one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been purchased from the earth. These are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they are celibates. And these are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. And these have been purchased from among men as firstfruits to God, to God, and to the Lamb.

I don't want to go into this a lot, but brothers, the seed was planted in Matthew. It grows in Acts; it matures in the Epistles, and it's harvested in Revelation 14. Praise the Lord. There is the planting of the seed. Then the seed grows; the maturing of the seed, and there's the harvest of the seed. I'm just going to... all of this has got to do with the heart. The heart is really, really important. Well, a seed is planted. It grows up, matures, and is harvested. That seed is the life of the Lord Jesus Christ, and it produces after its kind.

Now then, we're going to take the book of Matthew today, tonight, as the…it's the seed. It's the seed. We'll talk about Acts sometimes; we'll touch on the Epistles sometimes, but tonight, Matthew as the seed that grows up in life and produces after its kind. I want to read a passage or two of Scripture about the heart. Last night, I mentioned two or three things about the heart.

Anything that goes into the heart will flow out. What else? It is the very entrance of man and the very exit of man. Our treasures are stored in the heart. What we really treasure is in the heart. We always, ultimately, will speak from our hearts. Proverbs 4.23 says, "Guard your heart, for out of it flow the springs of life." The heart needs to be guarded, for it is the entrance and the exit of man's being.

Alright, we're going to deal with just a little bit of the book of Matthew because it talks about the heart so much. It really talks about the heart a great deal. It talks about the heart in relation to a seed, and that's why I had to talk about the seed. Brothers and sisters, let's turn to Matthew 5:3-8, which we're all so familiar with. *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the pure in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*

Now, is there a relationship between these two verses of Scripture? You must be poor in spirit, and you must be pure in heart. If you are poor in spirit, what do you get? The kingdom of heaven. And if you're pure in heart, what do you get? You get to see God. Praise the Lord.

What does it mean to be poor in spirit? I like the word bankrupt. That's just perfect. You've got to have a bankrupt spirit. When you're bankrupt, how big is your bankroll? Zero. You need to have... I'm going to use another word. In one word, you need an absolutely empty spirit. It's got to be empty. Or even better, it's got to be blank, because the Lord Jesus Christ wishes to fill it. *And it cannot be filled with anything else.* If it is, you'll have problems. Your spirit needs to have nothing in it but the Lord, and for that to happen, it first needs to be crushed and broken. Everything else is let out and poured out. When you break a wineskin, everything pours out. You need an empty spirit.

Gene, why would you mention the spirit in relation to the heart? For this reason*: they are closely related to one another.* Therefore, I would say you've got to have an empty spirit. Now then, you also must have a pure heart. I think it's going to take just a moment for me to make some of this very clear. So, I would like for somebody to read for us, please. 1 Peter 3.4. This will help us to see the relationship of the spirit and the heart.

1 Peter 3:4 - *But let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.* Praise the Lord, brother. Now then, I want you to tell me, according to this passage of Scripture, would you read it again? *But let it be the hidden person of the heart.* There's a hidden person…somebody hidden in the heart, okay? With the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God. Does anyone have another translation besides this one? *…let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit…in the sight of God*.

Here, then, is a heart with a hidden man in it. Who's the hidden man? Jesus Christ is hidden inside the heart. Where does He dwell? He's hidden in the heart. Where does He dwell? In our spirit. Wow. In Colossians, it says, letting Jesus Christ be where? Dwelling in you, where? Dwelling in your heart, that you might be what? That you might be rooted and grounded in love.

Now, brothers, all I want to say is that Paul admonishes that Jesus Christ get out of your spirit, grow into your heart, and that there be some rooting and some grounding. I want to say to you that Christ is in the spirit that is in you. He's there as a seed, and he wishes to grow into the heart. He wants to grow into your heart. He's a seed. Where has he been planted? In your spirit. Now, why is the heart so important? Because it is the nearest thing to your spirit. The seed can only grow as the heart makes room. Only as the heart makes room can the spirit grow.

Ephesians 3:17 - That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, and that you being rooted and grounded in love. That Christ may make home in your heart; that you might be rooted and grounded in love. Christ wants to make a home in your heart; He can't do it if you have an impure heart. So, first of all, I would say you've got to have an empty spirit. Empty your spirit of everything except the Lord, and then purify your heart. Let the heart be pure. How can you purify the heart? That's what we're here for tonight. We're here to learn that the heart has to be pure of everything. The Lord has to purge our hearts.

Brothers, when we got saved, we did not have a pure heart. We got Christ in our spirit, but we did not get a pure heart. The Lord's going to have to work in us some to get a pure heart. But anyhow, you've got to empty your spirit; you've got to purify your heart right now so that the Lord Jesus Christ may make a home in your heart.

Would you all turn with me to Matthew 6?

Matthew 6:20-21- *But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will*

be also. Now, where should your treasure be? Where is your treasure? Where should your heart be? The heart has to be in heaven. Now you ask, how do you get your heart through? Take it to heaven. Get it to where the heavenlies are, so that we have nothing to do with the earth. Our hearts were made for heaven and heavenly things, and we ought to have no interest in earthly things.

Matthew 11:29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you shall find rest for your souls. The Lord Jesus Christ has a humble and gentle heart. If you have a haughty heart, the heart is improper, and the spirit is damaged in its effort to put Christ into your heart. Do you see this? You must turn from a haughty heart, but can you recognize it? Can you recognize a haughty heart? It's so simple: just arrogance, tough-mindedness. I can handle this. Just stand back. Just watch me. John Wayne. Tough. Strong. Brothers and sisters…but a humble heart. A humble heart. I'm not sure I'll make it. Very meek. Very tender. The Lord has got to have a tender heart in us. The heart's got to get tenderized.

I know we are so…I've said this before…in this country we are so proud of the man who's strong. That is a badge in this country. We really look up to the strong man. We don't like the weak man. We really don't like the weak man, and quite frankly, neither one of them is worth a toot. The strong man and the weak man come from the same tree. They come from the same seed, and that seed produces after its kind. The weak man and the strong man come from the same source, but a strong man broken – wow, the world can't deal with him. A strong man broken.

Well, who is the strongest man who ever lived? The Lord Jesus Christ. He could have done anything. He did one day; He grew a fig tree, and He said, "I don't like that fig tree." And it withered. In other cases where he could have done so much, he was just... He gave in. He lost. He gave up. You deal with Him, and sometimes you have to encourage Him along. He's just very humble about the whole thing. The Lord has got to have such a humble heart in us—a really humble heart.

We're going to get a little clearer as we go along. Matthew 12: 34 - *Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.* Now, all of that brings us to the most important chapter that we have to consider. Here is where we're going to look. I'm going to read you something, brothers. This is where it's at.

Matthew 13:1-9 - *On that day, Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea, and a great multitude gathered about Him, so that He got into a boat and sat down, and the whole multitude stood on the beach. And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, 'The sower went forth to sow, and He sowed. Some seeds fell beside the road, and the birds came and devoured them. Others fell upon the rocky places where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, because there was no depth of soil. And when the sun was risen, they were scorched, and because they had no root, they withered away. Others fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them out. And others fell on the good soil, and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty.* He who has the Bible to read, let him read this. No. *He who has ears to hear, let him hear.*

By the way, he quotes a verse of Scripture in verse 14, where he begins moving toward his point. I believe the quotation is out of the book of Isaiah. *In their case, Isaiah's prophecy is being fulfilled: You*

will keep on hearing, but you'll not understand. You'll keep on seeing, but you'll not perceive. For the heart of this people has become dull, and with their ears they scarcely hear.

Brothers and sisters, the heart is in front of the ear. The heart is in front of the eyes. The ear is not the outer organ; the heart's the outer organ. The eyes are not the outer organ; the heart's the outer organ. If you've got the heart, you'll hear; if you've got the heart, you'll see, but if the heart is dull, you're not hearing, you're not seeing, and you're not perceiving. *For they have closed their eyes, lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn again.* All of these are principles.

I want to say again, Matthew is just a seed. The whole book of Matthew is a seed. We're talking about seeds, but there are seeds within seeds; Matthew is a seed. Acts is a growing; the epistles are maturing; Revelation is a harvest, and here is a seed of a principle about the heart. The heart must turn. *The heart must turn.* The principle of the heart is that it has to be turned.

…and I will heal them. *But blessed are your eyes, because*... Let's say amen to all this. We're going to take this. *But blessed are your eyes, because they see, and your ears, because they hear. For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see and did not see it. And to hear what you heard and did not hear it. Then hear the parable of the sword. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart.*

Here's the verse. Where is the seed sown? Well, that's why, that's why I read that passage. Is the seed in the heart or in the spirit? I'll tell you, it's in the spirit, in the heart, because the spirit is the seed. The spirit is the seed that gets sown…where? Into the heart. Now you got it? *The spirit is sewn into the heart.* What is the spirit? The seed. And what is the seed? The Lord's Spirit. Wait a minute, you've got a problem. If the seed is the Lord Jesus Christ, then who is the sower? The Lord Jesus Christ. According to this parable - now perhaps not according to another one, but according to this parable - I believe the Lord Jesus Christ is the sower. He is also the seed.

Now then, I want to ask you something. What do you do with a seed when you plant it in the ground? You bury it, you water it, and it comes up. Do you teach it? No. Do you come down in front of the little seed and say, "Grow?" No, you do not. You nourish it. You take care of it, and you nourish it. Brothers and sisters, *the Lord Jesus Christ is a seed that has been grown into you.* And in that seed is everything. That seed will come up if you give it a chance. Do you know what's in that seed? I'll tell you what's in that seed. Trunks are in that seed. Roots are in that seed. There's a leaf in that seed. There's a limb in that seed. There's a branch in that seed. There's bark in that seed, and there is fruit in that seed. All you've got to do is nourish the seed. Don't teach it; grow it. Nourish it. Let it grow. Better pay attention to the seed and to the heart.

And the one of whom the seed was sown on the rocky place, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy. You've got to pay attention to the word joy. *Yet he has no firm root in him, but it is only temporary, and when affliction and persecution arise because of the word, he has no*

firm root in him. Immediately, he's called to stumble. And the one on whom the seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. And the one on whom the seed was sown on the good ground, this is the man who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and brings forth some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty, and I would add one last phrase, after its kind. *After its kind.*

I'm not going to stop here. I really, really want you to notice that there are other parables in here, and each one does the same thing. In verse 31, a man sowed seed in the field, and he sowed a mustard seed, and a plant came up. Then in verse 33, the kingdom of heaven is like a woman who took three pecks of meal, which were all leaven, and she made flour out of it. Then he explains another parable in the rest of this passage: the parable of the tares. This is where the man sowed, and the wheat came up.

Now please get the order of this. First, the sower comes and sows seed on the good soil, the rocky soil, and so forth. Then there is another one about the sower and the tares, who plants wheat and the wheat comes up. Then there is another one about a woman who makes bread. And then, one more parable here. The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid, and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

Now then, in this one we have a treasure hidden in a field. And finally, there is another parable. The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking a fine pearl. When he finds one of great value, he goes, sells all he has, and he buys it. So there is another parable: the parable of the pearl, and the pearl is what the man sells everything for.

The kingdom of heaven is what existed when the Lord Jesus Christ spoke this, because in reality, the kingdom of heaven had not yet come to earth. The kingdom of God is the kingdom of God in heaven and on earth, but if God does not have the earth, He only has the kingdom of heaven; but when men see the kingdom of heaven, they do what is done here. There's the message of the kingdom of heaven - it is being brought to earth. Do you follow this? Then a man finally gets it, and when men get it, it's the kingdom of God. When men get it, it's the kingdom of God.

When did the kingdom of God come to earth? Really come to earth? On the day of Pentecost, the kingdom of heaven came to earth. On that day, the kingdom of heaven was established on earth, and you are seeing only the firstfruits of the kingdom of heaven upon this earth. You are seeing the kingdom of God. What is the church? It is the firstfruits of the kingdom of God on earth…and the soil is so soft on the top. If you know anything about farming, the closer a seed is to the top, the faster it will spring up, and it will be the fastest growing of all. But it grows so fast on top, it doesn't grow on the bottom. And soon... The sun hits. What happens? It withers away under the blast of what? Heat of the what? Not persecution. Tribulation of the what? Of the word.

Do not misunderstand that passage. That doesn't mean that because you got saved, people persecute you and you drop. I tell you, that is the tribulation the word causes you. You put a seed in the soil, and it's going to start breaking the soil up to get out. It's going to move some things around, and the soil is

going to go, “Mmm.” Brothers and sisters, when the Lord Jesus Christ comes into you, He hurts. Please get this clear. If you want the Lord to grow in you, it's going to hurt. The Lord is going to hurt you. We have to survive the joy stage and get into the hurt stage. Otherwise, the soil is no good.

I have tried to talk to you all as though we were just young Christians, a new beginning. I don't know if you still remember that. I would say to you, pretend you're a new Christian. You've got to have good soil, a heart that will not only receive the seed with joy but let it hurt you. Let the Lord Jesus Christ hurt you. Are you ready to let the Lord Jesus Christ hurt you? The Lord Jesus Christ is going to hurt you, brother. The more He makes room in your heart, the more He's going to hurt, and if you're not ready, you rejoice in the Lord of salvation—glory, glory, glory. Then, when the word hits you with heat, you're going to scream. You're going to scream.

I've been trying to tell the brothers and sisters here for two and a half years: Jesus Christ hurts. He's not all fun and ice cream. The Lord is tricky. He'll come to you in love and life, and he'll just be so good to you, and you'll enjoy him so much. Then one day he says, “I want a seed that bears after its kind. I want a seed that bears after its kind. I want to break through your heart. I want you in my image. It depends on the heart whether or not we survive. We need to bring this heart to the Lord, and say, “Lord, hurt the heart. Lord, hurt the heart. Get me past the joy stage, and hurt me if you want to, Lord.”

Okay, then the third group where the seed fell; what is it? The thorny soil. What does the thorny soil do? What is the thorn? Not just the world. It's the world, its cares, and its riches. Some people get past the hurt stage, and the seed actually comes up. For a while, there's just a beautiful growing plant there; it's made it. Praise the Lord, it's up, and it's there. But then, somewhere down the line, you come to the point where you may have lost a little of the joy of the Lord…and here are the pleasures of the world, the riches, and soon we take the Lord…*and* our riches. Or the cares begin to come: the cares of making a living, and we go, and we give our first attention to the cares of the world. Or what's the third one? It's just the world itself. The world just gets us.

Let me tell you something: that's not what causes it. That's not what keeps the plant from making it. What keeps the plant from making it is the choking. It’s the choking. I don't know if you see this or not, but the parable is trying to say the Lord wasn't given enough room. You see, the Lord can begin to move into the heart, but if He's got to step over a chair and a table and a house and an automobile, and if all of these things are also stuffed into the heart, there's more than just the Lord in the heart. The heart is just piled full of other things. Do you see? Then the heart is not pure, and He cannot grow. *He cannot grow.* The seed can't get out through the soil because there's so much in the soil.

Alright, are you following me? The fourth group falls on good soil. He who has an ear to hear, hear. He who has an eye to see, see. What happens in the fourth group? It grows. It grows how much? To maturity. And it does what? It grows up to produce…what does it produce? A harvest.

There's a harvest there…and some seed produces how much? 100. How much is others? 60. 30. Well, does that have anything to do with soil? I don't know. I just don't know. I can tell you one thing: I look at that and say, Lord, if you want rich soil, if that's what it takes, I'll be happy with 30. I'll be so

rejoiced at 60, but Lord, I want a 100; I want a hundredfold…a hundredfold of your seed growing up out of me after your time. Alright, brothers and sisters, all of this depends on the heart.

In the first group, the heart was just too hard to receive it. The second group are those who receive the Lord, but receive Him in their emotions and will not let the Lord work in their will and mind. You've got to let the Lord get past the emotions and deal with you in your will and in your mind. The third group has so much in the soil besides the Lord Jesus Christ. The soil has got to be purged until there's room for nothing but the Lord.

Good soil will not grow anything but Christ! Do you see? Good soil can't grow anything but Christ. It can't grow thorns. It can't grow thistles. It can't grow weeds. *It can only grow Christ.* I say to you, go to the Lord and say, Lord, give me a heart that won't grow anything but Jesus Christ. Nothing but the Lord Jesus Christ.

That's not the end; that's not where the Lord takes us. Those parables are not wasted. The Lord had a purpose in them. I want to tell you about the other three parables right quickly. The next parable is the parable of the sower who went to sow, and the tares and the wheat came up, and with it came up tares. Now, I'm not going to talk about this. Tares and wheat look very much alike; the wheat came up, but alongside it came up those who were not wheat at all. They look like wheat, they taste like wheat, but they weren't wheat. They're poison…but the wheat came up.

The next parable is the parable of a woman making bread. And the next parable is the parable of a treasure hidden in the ground. And the next parable, brothers and sisters, is the parable of the pearl. Now, brothers and sisters, the book of Matthew is a seed. It is, too, a seed. There is progress here, brothers. There is progress here, sisters. First, a seed is planted in the ground, then it comes up. The second parable: we have the wheat, and the wheat has come up for harvest. It has now fully matured despite the tares. Then, when it has come up out of the heart of the believer, what happens to it? It's harvested. And what does the woman do in it? Makes bread.

I'm going to skip over all the Plymouth Brethren teaching about the yeast and all that. Please get the main point because this is beyond that. What does she do with it? She makes a loaf of bread. Why would the Lord want, brothers and sisters…why would the Lord Jesus Christ want…why does He want you to grow up a seed? So we can be a loaf of bread together, brothers and sisters. *The heart eventually will bring you to the body of Christ.* I tell you: here is the test of the heart. Does it bring you to the body of Christ? Praise the Lord. Then, after you get to the body of Christ, in the next parable, what is your attitude toward the body of Christ?

Here again, you still see the heart. The heart is still being seen here. Here's the heart. Sisters and brothers, I will give you a measurement of your heart. I will give you a measurement of your growth in the Lord. What is your attitude toward the church of the Lord Jesus Christ? The man found the field, and what was in it? Treasure. Where was the treasure? It was buried. It was buried. Of course, it's buried…in the heart. What is that treasure?

That treasure is not the Lord Jesus Christ…*that treasure is the church*. Because buried in the Lord Jesus Christ *is the church*. There is the Lord, there is His Spirit, and there is His church in His Spirit, and it is buried in your heart. And not everybody finds out the treasure is in the field. Not everybody knows that the treasure is in the soil, but when you find it, what do you do? You sell everything you've got, and you go…and you buy it. You buy the treasure that's in the soil.

Now then, this is the transforming work of the Lord. This is where the seed begins to bear an image after its kind. For the treasure that is in that box, hidden in that soil, is in the image of the seed that was planted. And now, and now, praise the Lord, when you open the box and you look at it, what is it? Praise the Lord. *It's a pearl.* The merchant found the pearl. Now there has been a complete transformation. I don't know what you know about the Bible, but if you know anything about the Bible, you've got to know that *that pearl is nothing less than the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field, which when a man hath found it, he hides it, and for joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant man seeking a fine pearl, and when he found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and he bought it. And again, the kingdom of heaven is... Sister, it isn't heaven. It isn't heaven…*it's the kingdom of heaven.*

And this is a man on earth. I know; I got taught the same thing you did. I'm going to go to heaven someday, and for heaven I'll sell everything. Sister, the Lord Jesus Christ is not interested in my going to heaven. I opened a book once published by Dallas Theological Seminary, and it said there is no teaching anywhere in Scripture...now, this is the very pillar and citadel of orthodoxy... No Scripture anywhere in the Bible teaches that man goes to heaven.

Here's the end of the Bible, and this is the very end. Here it is. You're going to go to heaven, and we're going to live in the New Jerusalem. Right? You know, a city. You've heard people talk about heaven and the golden street and the pearl and all that. Oh, here it is. *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea. And I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared for a bride adorned for her husband.*

The New Jerusalem comes down out of heaven and rests upon this earth…and there it stays for eternity. The most amazing thing in Scripture is that God originally planned to have His throne on earth…this dumpy-looking place that just stinks and smells really was ordained above the heavens. It fell and was corrupted, and then God said, "I'm going to have my throne where it belongs." And God sent man to take the earth back from His enemy, and God wants to move heaven to earth. It's going to be a new earth, and if you're in heaven, sister, I know this came to me as a great shock one day to find out that if I'm in heaven, I'm going to be all alone. And I'm going to be in a dinky spot because God will have moved out of heaven and moved to Earth. And He will be one with man.

In my Father's house are many abodes; that house is nothing but the new Jerusalem. And the new Jerusalem is nothing less than you and me and Jesus Christ and God the Father all made one.At this

moment, a kingdom is in heaven where the Lord God Almighty rules and reigns, and that is the kingdom of heaven. God will have it on earth, and He has brought its first fruit as a seed in Jesus Christ, who came upon this earth and ruled over man and fallen angels. Then on the day of Pentecost, the kingdom of heaven came upon man, and that is a foretaste of the kingdom of God reigning in the universe. The church is, according to Ephesians, nothing less than the foretaste of the kingdom of God on the earth. Praise the Lord.

When a man saw this treasure hidden in the earth, he bought it, and the church of the Lord Jesus Christ is the hidden kingdom of God. It's a pearl. Now, sisters and brothers, a pearl is something transformed. It was a little grain that damaged an oyster, and the oyster formed a pearl. Brothers and sisters, that pearl is something of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. That pearl is heavenly. There is no question about it. The church of the Lord Jesus Christ doesn't have one earthly thing. It is utterly and totally heavenly…and so are we, and our spirits have not yet touched ground. Our spirits are still in the heavens. That's the kind of incredible thing.

Gee, we're covering an awful lot here tonight. Brothers and sisters, I only have one other thing to say to you, and that is: gauge where you are by two or three things—the tenderness of your heart for the Lord to grow out of your spirit into your heart. Brothers, I really say: where are you in relationship to the kingdom of God? And you can know where your heart is.

What have I been talking about here? The importance of the heart. The heart is no less than the very soil in which Jesus Christ must grow. I got one other verse to share with you, and you ain't never heard nothing like this. I am going to read you a verse of Scripture which you've probably heard before.

Revelation 3:20 - *Behold, I stand at the door and knock, and if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I'll come into him and will feast with him, and he with me.* Now, brothers and sisters, the word dine is just no good. The word should be *feast*. The Lord doesn't dine; when the Lord comes along, it's a banquet. It's a festival.

Alright, brothers and sisters, everyone in this room could quote this verse of Scripture whole and complete. I want you to notice that there is, here again, the speaking voice. The speaking voice. Brothers, may the Lord give the church in Goleta, California, the heart to hear, to respond to the voice, to loosen the soil, and to let the Lord grow in the heart.

This verse of Scripture says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." Everybody in this room knows that this passage of Scripture was not written to unconverted people…and it is not written to the church. It is written to those within the church. *Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hears my voice and opens the door, I'll come in to him and sup with him, and he with me.* Praise the Lord. All my life, I saw the picture of the Lord Jesus standing out there trying to get in, trying to get into the man's heart. Oh, open the door and let me in. Brothers, that's not the way it is at all. It's not that way at all. The Lord Jesus Christ is deep inside, and He's knocking, and He's asking, *"Let me out!"* And you respond, and you open the door.