The Heart of a Champion

The mystery of the great commission is that Christ would choose to chase after the same people who deserted Him in the garden. He didn't write them off. He had a plan for them and He refused to cast them off as cowards and no-gooders. Why? Because we are the containers. God didn't recruit us to be somebody. He called us to contain Someone.

What does it mean to have a heart for God's purpose? In order for God to use us we first have to be wrecked! Our heart has to enter into the same pain and yearning that Jesus had when He chose to leave the glory of the heavenly throne to rescue mankind. We must be wrecked by this mission. It's a strange dichotomy. In order to put the pieces together we must be wreck.

What should wreck us in this story. Let's look at three things

▪*We should be wrecked by <u>injustice</u>*

We see a picture of one ordinary man who was wrecked. Nehemiah was an man in a place of authority and comfort when he heard about the state of his hometown. Let's read Nehemiah 1:2-4

I questioned them (the messengers from Jerusalem) about the Jewish remnant that had survived the exile, and also about Jerusalem. They said to me, "Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire." When I heard these things, ***I sat down and wept.*** *For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.*

Nehemiah 1:2-4

Nehemiah received a snapshot in these two verses of the

injuctice Jerusalem experienced and it broke his heart. What breaks your heart? If you really believe in Jesus, if you really believe that God is compassionate toward the helpless, and if you really believe that everyone spends eternity somewhere, your heart should be wreck. We all have different hearts that are wrecked by different things. Some believers are wrecked by poverty. Others are wrecked by those who struggle with addiction, loneliness and abandonment. God wants us to do something about what wrecks us. So what injustice wrecks you?

*note: In a small group setting you may choose to stop and allow groups to discuss this first question.

- ***Wrecked by <u>evil</u>***

The second area of brokenness a believer should be experiencing in his heart is an awareness of the impact of evil. The scourge of evil is all around us. It is incidious in the fallen world. When we have the eyes of our Champion we recognize evil that shows up on our journey. We can choose to hide from evil or we can make war against it. Another Old Testament picture of a wrecked heart is found in early on in the story of David. As a young man David way incensed by an ugly sneering giant screaming vulgarities at God's people and even God Himself. David enters the scene almost coincidentally but his reaction was much different that those around him who were cowering in fear.

[26] David asked the men standing near him, "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel? Who is this Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?"

1 Samuel 17:26

It angered David and out of that holy anger, God humbled an

entire nation with a stone and a sling. Just like David we aren't the most qualified and experienced warrior but God honors a heart doesn't melt under the futile threats of evil.

Idea: Share a time in your life when you were wrecked by the evil you faced.

▪*Wrecked by <u>rebellion</u>*

We see a picture of Jesus wrecked by rebellion near the end of his earthly ministry. Jesus wept over Jerusalem just like Nehemiah did centuries ago. But what wrecked Jesus was the rebellion of his own people. He had a deep desire to see God's people come to him and yet they refused.

> *37 "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing.*

Matthew 23:37

As we consider a world controlled by the forces of injustice, evil and rebellion, we are challenged to do something. Don't leave today thinking that you can just casually walk through the ups and downs, the highs and lows of life lived normally. God doesn't want you satisfied. Jesus, the King of Hearts, want your heart broken for a world that is lost, broken, hopeless, and doomed. He wants us to step up and do something about it.

Ask yourself the following questions:

1. What makes your <u>heart</u> beat faster?
2. What makes your heart <u>break?</u>
3. What are you going to <u>do</u> about it?
4. What will the <u>result</u> be?

Leave the “how” questions to God. Pray for “how” and He will direct you.

- **H**ear

Be open to listening to his voice. We have to shut everything down so we can hear him and if we are listening He’ll whisper through his word, through worship and through other believers the direction he wants you to take.

- **O**bey

The history books are filled with leaders who knew the answer but refused to act. Let’s not live our lives as a cautionary tale of a church that never took action. Let’s be obedient to the call He has place on our hearts.

- **W**orship

When we worship God clarifies the mission. As we truly worship our fears subside and our hearts open up.

Don’t question your passion!

Let’s remember the words of Gideon, a man who on the surface seemed to be a timid ferarful believer. God used Gideon and he will use you.

The LORD turned to him and said, “Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian’s hand. Am I not sending you?” “Pardon me, my lord,” Gideon replied, “***but how*** can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family.” Judges 6:14-16

Don’t side-step your mission!

Remember Moses and his call from God? There is one powerful moment when we understand what really angers God:

But Moses said, “Pardon your servant, Lord. Please send someone else.” Then the LORD’s anger burned against Moses.

Exodus 4:13

What angers God isn’t our lack of ability, our past, our flaws. What REALLY angers God is when we sidestep the mission He has called us to! So what is it that you can’t stand?

> *At some ideas you stand perplexed, especially at the sight of human sins, uncertain whether to combat it by force or by human love. Always decide, “I will combat it with human love.” If you make up your mind about that once and for all, you can conquer the whole world. Loving humility is a terrible force; it is the strongest of all things and there is nothing like it.*
> *– Dostoyevsky – The Brothers Karamazov*

The Big Message: Don’t waste your anger, your tears or your love.