

October 19, 2025 Presented by Rev Kath

Written on My Heart

Jeremiah 31:27-34, 2 Timothy 3:14 – 4:5

Who has ever said, “Cross my heart?” It says to the person you’re talking to that you really mean what you are saying – crossing our heart speaks to honesty and sincerity. The heart represents love.

Written on my heart are all the things I believe, the things I know to be true, the things that I can share sincerely and with love. Written on my heart is God’s perfect and consistent Word.

In the Jeremiah passage, we hear of a new covenant with the Israelites that would be realized in Jesus Christ. Jeremiah looked forward to a future when Jesus would come to establish this covenant – this promise, this pledge, this agreement – with His people.

He didn’t understand how or when his Savior would arrive, but Jeremiah believed that the promised Savior would come to fulfill the covenant. Jeremiah had this truth written on his heart, along with God’s law.

This covenant involved more than Israel and Judah, it included the Gentiles, too. At the time, they didn’t get that. But we now know that God intended each of us to be members of His family; He planned for all of us to accept Jesus as our Savior. God calls to each and every one of us to accept our place in His promise.

When we turn our hearts over to God, when we accept the Holy Spirit into our hearts, the desire to obey Him, to be the people God calls us to be – becomes a natural part of who we are. We begin to understand the law that should guide our decisions, thoughts and actions.

We understand that these rules are meant to protect us. We know right from wrong, without fail, because God’s commandments are written on our hearts.

In 2 Timothy we heard that Timothy was surrounded by false teachers. They were trying to make a comfortable life for themselves, so they took the Words of Scripture and even the Words of Jesus and they distorted them to fit their own needs. Then they ignored what didn’t fit into their lifestyle.

We are still surrounded by these false teachers! There are men and women in our world that call themselves ministers, but they preach a message that doesn’t match God’s Word. They create new laws as they see fit and ignore what they don’t like about God’s Word.

Haven’t we all heard of people who will say that all we need to do is pray certain words and we will be blessed with all these amazing things? How about those who preached years ago that handicapped children were born as punishment to sinners, or, if we TRULY believed in Christ, we will receive great wealth.

Certainly, God may choose to bless us here on earth. We may be blessed with earthly possessions, good health and a great job. But these “blessings” can come to the most evil people on earth, too. God never promised that by accepting Jesus as our Savior, we would receive physical possessions and happiness. We are told that we will receive **abounding joy**, which isn’t the same as happiness. We are told that **the Holy Spirit will be with us through our trials**. We are told that we will receive our **reward in heaven**, which means we may go without all the extras here on earth.

Do we really believe that God punishes the innocent, infant child because of our sins, or that we are plagued with this or that sickness because of God’s judgment?

True, God can choose to punish us in any way He wants. But our actions, as well as those who have come before us in this world, have created an environment that can allow a child to be born with handicaps, our actions allow us to become sick with the flu, with cancer, with diabetes – it’s usually not God’s actions, but our own.

We live in a world of chemicals, cigarette smoke, poor eating habits, lack of exercise. We don’t take care of our world as we should and there’s consequences.

We need to be aware of what our Bible teaches us. When we look to the Book of Job – he was asked what sin he had committed that God would punish him by taking away all of his possessions, taking his wife and his children. Job said that he had committed no sin. God allowed Satan to plague Job to test Job’s faith. As a result, Job drew closer to God as a God-fearing man. God used Job’s misfortunes for Job’s good.

Troubles can, indeed, be the punishment of God on the sins of unbelievers. God may use their hardships to call them to repentance. But does God punish His children with misfortunes when we possess the forgiveness of our sins through Jesus Christ?

In John Chapter 9, the disciples happened upon a man born blind. They asked Jesus who had sinned for him to be punished with blindness ... did he sin, or was it his parents. Jesus said, *“Neither this man sinned nor his parents, but he was born blind in order that the work of God might be revealed in him.”*

As we endure hardship, we have to be aware of these Words so that we know we don’t walk through darkness alone, that our struggles could be blessings in disguise, which Jesus uses as the opportunity to open our eyes to see His light of life and salvation.

We need to spend time everyday in God’s Word so that we remember God’s truths. In 2 Timothy 3:15 we hear that Timothy was taught the scripture from infancy. His mother and grandmother, Eunice and Lois, taught him the Old Testament, which allowed Timothy to come to his belief in Jesus as Lord.

We have a huge responsibility to teach our children God’s truths – to invite them to the understanding and acceptance of Jesus as their Lord. We need to share the Words so that they can be written on **their** hearts.

The words in our Bibles are not myths – they are the inspired Words of God. The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of this book to put these messages on paper. Yes, the writers wrote from their own personal, historical and cultural context – that were different than ours, but they wrote what God wanted them to write. Scripture is completely trustworthy because God was in control of its writing.

The Bible is our model for testing everything else that claims to be true. It’s our defense against false teachings. We need to read it regularly so that we have confidence in our faith and the way we live our lives.

We need to find a plan that works so that we can study the whole Bible, not just the passages that are familiar, comfortable and easy for us to accept.

My sore spot was always Revelation. I found it difficult to understand, as do many people. I even had a personal superstition about reading it that, through prayer, I’ve overcome. One of my classes at Colgate was on Revelation and I was amazed by the beauty of the writing, of the promises I found in that book. If you have a stumbling block in the Bible, find a way to work through it – choose that passage as the next one you spend time on so God can bless you with His Word.

We need to be able to write Scripture on our hearts. We need those truths within easy reach to protect us from fear, from false teachers, and to equip us to do good and live like Jesus, as chapter 3:17 reminds us.

We shouldn’t study our Bibles just to increase our knowledge, but so we will know how to do Christ’s work that God has designated for us personally. Our knowledge of God’s Word should strengthen our faith and lead us onto the path God has set before us.

Because of people like Timothy who have preached the gospel, we have our faith today. As we take our turn at spreading the gospel, the Christian faith spreads throughout the world and others know of God’s love.

It is not always easy or convenient to share the message of Jesus Christ. Sometimes we’re ridiculed, laughed at, stared at. Sometimes we don’t want to appear “a certain way” ... we don’t want to be labeled as a Bible thumper or Jesus freak, so we avoid opening our mouths, but it is our responsibility. By the way, I don’t mind the title “Jesus Freak!”

There are more people who do not know Jesus Christ in this world than who do know and have accepted Him as their Savior. Jesus wants ALL of us to be ready when He returns – so we need to be prepared and courageous whenever the opportunity arises to share the Good News.

I know I've said this before, but we need to be ready, whether it be in sharing our own experiences with Jesus, by introducing someone to a Christian friend, inviting a friend to a Bible study, or by bringing a friend to church. Our lives must tell the truth of our faith, each and every day, not only on Sundays.

As 2 Timothy 4:2 says, *be prepared in season and out of season*. In other words, be prepared whether it is convenient or inconvenient.

When the promises of salvation through Jesus Christ are written on our hearts, we can readily and easily come up with the words to share.

If you have never memorized a single word of Scripture, vow this week to memorize John 3:16: *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

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Written on my heart is God's Word and His love.