

Monitoring My Heartbeat

(Adapted from Raymond Woodward's *Life Course 301*)

“Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart”
(Psalm 37:4).

The dictionary defines the word “HEART” as:

- the organ that pumps your blood
- your emotional constitution or disposition
- the vital force or driving impulse

The Bible uses the term “HEART” to represent the center of your motivation, your innermost desires and your natural inclinations.

Physiologically, each of us has a unique heartbeat; each person has a slightly different pattern. Likewise, God has given each of us a unique emotional “heartbeat” that races when we encounter activities, subjects, or circumstances that interest us. We instinctively feel deeply about some things and not about others. This God-given motivation serves as an internal guidance system for our lives. It determines what our interests are, and what will bring us the most satisfaction and fulfillment. It also motivates us to pursue certain activities, subjects and environments.

My heart determines ...

- **Why I say the things I do.**
“The mouth speaks what the heart is full of” (Matthew 12:34).
- **Why I feel the way I do.**
“The Word of God ... examines the thoughts and motives of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12).
- **Why I act the way I do.**
“Guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life” (Proverbs 4:23).

Why has God given each person a unique heartbeat?

God had a wonderful purpose in giving you your inborn interests. In fact, your emotional heartbeat reveals a very important key to understanding God’s design and intention for your life. The Bible makes very clear that your heart was designed by God, but you make the choice to use it for good or evil, for selfish purposes or for service.

You may have ...

“selfish ambition in your heart” (James 3:14).

Or you may ...

- “serve the Lord with all your heart” (1 Samuel 12:20).
- “do the will of God from your heart” (Ephesians 6:6).

I can only accomplish God’s will in my life by letting my heartbeat motivate me for ministry.

“It is quite true to say that a man who sets his heart on becoming a church leader has a laudable ambition” (1Timothy 3:1).

TAKING A SPIRITUAL EKG

If you are like most people, you have never taken the time to identify the things you are good at and highly motivated to accomplish. As a result, it is unlikely that you currently use these talents as completely or effectively as you could.

The key to understanding your heartbeat is to look at your past accomplishments.

This exercise is adapted from the book *Finding A Job You Can Love* by Ralph Mattson and Arthur Miller. It will enable you to determine your emotional heartbeat by listing your past accomplishments and then helping you to identify some of the motivating factors behind them.

STEP 1: LIST THINGS YOU HAVE DONE WELL AND ENJOYED SINCE CHILDHOOD (NOT SIMPLY PLEASANT EXPERIENCES, BUT SPECIFIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS YOU FEEL WERE HIGHLIGHTS IN YOUR LIFE).

DURING YOUR GRADE SCHOOL YEARS ...

AS A TEENAGER OR IN SECONDARY SCHOOL ...

IN YOUR TWENTIES OR IN COLLEGE ...

IN YOUR THIRTIES OR AS A PARENT ...

AND UP TO THE PRESENT ...

STEP 2: DISCOVER YOUR PERSONAL MOTIVATION BY MATCHING YOUR HEARTBEAT WITH THE LIST BELOW.

Examine your achievements for a common motivational thread (for example, you might find a key phrase repeated). Then match that trait with one of the “heartbeats” below. Remember, these are all God-given motivations; they are only sinful when used selfishly. Each of them can be used in effective ministry, so don’t be embarrassed to identify a heartbeat that doesn’t seem spiritual. Almost all of them can be identified in the ministry of one of the twelve Apostles.

I LOVE TO ...

- DESIGN OR DEVELOP** - I love to make something out of nothing. I enjoy getting something started from scratch.
- PIONEER** - I love to test and try out new concepts. I am not afraid to risk failure.
- ORGANIZE** - I love to bring order out of chaos. I enjoy organizing something that is already started.
- OPERATE OR MAINTAIN** - I love to efficiently maintain something that is already organized.
- SERVE OR HELP** - I love to assist others in their responsibility. I enjoy helping others succeed.
- ACQUIRE OR POSSESS** - I love to shop, collect, or obtain things. I enjoy getting the highest quality for the best price.
- EXCEL** - I love to be the best and make my team the best. I enjoy setting and attaining the highest standard.
- INFLUENCE** - I love to convert people to my way of thinking. I enjoy shaping the attitudes and behavior of others.

- PERFORM** - I love to share my talents in music or drama. I am not nervous being on stage.
- IMPROVE** - I love to make things better. I enjoy taking something that someone else has designed or started and improving it.
- REPAIR** - I love to fix what is broken or change what is out of date.
- LEAD OR BE IN CHARGE** - I love to lead the way, oversee and supervise. I enjoy determining how things will be done.
- PERSEVERE** - I love to see things to completion. I enjoy persisting at something until it is finished.
- FOLLOW THE RULES** - I love to operate by policies and procedures. I enjoy meeting the expectations of an organization or boss.
- PREVAIL** - I love to fight for what is right and oppose what is wrong. I enjoy overcoming injustice.
- OTHER** - I love to ... _____

- OTHER** - I love to ... _____

There are basically 3 types of HEARTS – some like to work with PEOPLE, some with THINGS, and some with INFORMATION. Which type are you?

Study Questions

1. List the three (3) points in the dictionary definition of the word “heart.”
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____

2. How does the Bible use the term “heart?” _____

3. List the three (3) basic types of HEART.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____

4. List the three (3) things the “heart” of a person determines about him. Support your answer with Scripture.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____

