

"The heart is deceitful above all things,  
and desperately wicked: who can know it?"

JEREMIAH 17:9

But the LORD declares...

"I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins..."

JEREMIAH 17:10

He not only searches the heart with a piercing eye, but He tries the reins to pass a judgment upon what He discovers, to give everything its true character and due weight.

He tries the heart as gold is tried, whether it be standard or no; as the prisoner is tried, whether he be guilty or not...

Note our text on the heart's hidden depths,

"The heart knoweth his own bitterness;  
and a stranger doth not intermeddle  
with his joy."

PROVERBS 14:10

Even with empathy---there is incapacity of one soul to sound out the depths of another. There is such a peculiarity in the constitution and circumstances of each one of us, that one can never fully understand another...

The poet explained it best: "But the beating of my own heart was all the sound I heard." God alone sees the heart; the heart alone sees God.

The word STRANGER in our text means: A stranger to God can neither understand the bitterness of a sin-burdened conscience nor the joy of a forgiven heart.

Here is our conscience; [look at it carefully], it is God's preacher placed in our bosom! And the torture of a bad conscience is the hell of a living soul: for sin; sins, make such sad convulsions in our innermost being, our conscience. We are heart-sick!

LET US ALSO REALIZE THE HEART HAS HIDDEN DEPTHS OF JOY...

"A stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy." Although joy is less self-concealing than sorrow, yet it has depths unknown to anyone but its possessor and its God.

The JOY that rushed into Abraham's heart when Isaac descended with him from the bloody altar on Mt. Moriah...

The JOY of the father when he saw his wayward son a great way off and running, pressed the prodigal to his bosom, reconciled.

The JOY of the widow of Nain when her only son raised himself from the death bier at the command of Christ, and returned home to gladden her heart...