

# Enlarging Our Hearts - Part 3

by Zac Poonen

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*Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of enlarging our hearts by overcoming a critical spirit and embracing humility through trials.*

**Duration:** 9:23

**Scripture:** Proverbs 4:23, Matthew 7:1

**Topics:** "Spiritual Growth", "Humility"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of having a large heart filled with love and compassion rather than a narrow heart that is critical and judgmental. It discusses the dangers of being overly critical, jealous, and proud, which can lead to a miserable life and hinder spiritual growth. The story of Job is used to illustrate how pride and self-righteousness can narrow one's heart, while humility and a willingness to learn from God's tests can lead to spiritual enlargement.

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## Transcript

How does your heart get enlarged when you can love somebody who doesn't love you? When you stop looking at people with those critical eyes to find fault with anything you see. Do you think people with large minds who know all the doctrines can be critical in their attitude? Sure. The Pharisees were like that.

They had more knowledge of the scriptures than anybody in Israel. But their hearts were so narrow, they were so critical in any little thing they'd find fault with people. In fact, they looked at people to find fault with them.

They looked at Jesus to find fault with them. I remember the years when my eyes were like that too. I'd look at a believer and all I'd look for is to find something I could criticize.

And my life was miserable. I don't know if their life was miserable, but my life was miserable. And I decided I'm not going to be like that anymore.

Why should I waste my life? I've got only one life on earth and I'm not going to be miserable anymore. I'm not going to look at people to find fault in them. It's just changing your view.

There's an expression in English called tunnel vision. It's a sort of a medical condition maybe. Tunnel vision means you can only see in a narrow, you can't see everything.

You know, it's like looking through a tunnel. When you're inside a tunnel, creation can be so full of beauty, the birds and the flowers and the sky and everything, but you can't see anything inside a tunnel. All you can see is that little light at the end of it.

That's tunnel vision. Yeah, you can see a little bit of sky there and a little bit of grass at the end of the tunnel. And that's the way a lot of Christians are.

It's because they've made their vision like that. Their hearts are like that. And despite all their knowledge of scripture, they're so critical of others.

Critical, critical, critical, critical. You know that passage in scripture where it says the Pharisees watched him closely to see if there was something he would say that they could latch on to, to find fault with him. God allows that.

God allows us to see sometimes a fault even in the most godly man on earth. I've met some very, very godly men whose lives have challenged me tremendously. And then God will allow me to find one little fault in them.

And then the Lord would test me. One, are you going to be taken up with that one fault and miss out on what a blessing that man can be to you? Or you can go one step further. Are you going to talk about that one fault to other people that you see in that person? And you are not even one percent of that man, spiritually.

But there you are, finding fault. I did that in my younger days. And I can tell you, don't do the stupid foolish things I did.

I never had a spiritual father to tell me all these things. You have somebody. You folks are lucky.

I'll advise you, if you want to make good use of your life, get out of this tunnel. Stop looking at this narrow little thing and have a larger view. And remember, God is testing you when he allows you to see some mistake in somebody who is a thousand times more spiritual than you.

He sees whether you will concentrate on that mistake. It's a test. Many of you have been tested in past years.

And you know that you failed the test because you concentrated on that one thing. And the reason for it could be that you were a bit jealous of that person. Do you know one of the greatest sins among believers, which narrows their heart and keeps it narrow, is jealousy? I'm convinced of that.

I've watched believers for 48 years. And I've seen a tremendous amount of jealousy in very, very good people who are otherwise very good. They can't have a joy in somebody being able to do something better than them, somebody having something better than them.

It's a matter of taking up the cross. This is the cross. You know, we can talk about taking up the cross.

But when God allows you to see somebody who is better than you, more spiritual than you, richer than you, and he's a believer, he sees what your attitude is going to be towards that person. And you won't know it for a long time when God is testing you. That's one of the things I learned in the book of Job.

You know, in the book of Job, you can see something about what I've been saying here about having a narrow heart or a large heart. Job was a wonderful man, but because he was so proud of his own righteousness, his heart became very narrow. See, that's another thing we got to remember.

You can be a very godly brother or a godly sister, and you are very conscious of it, that I am much better than everybody else, and I am more spiritual, and I'm more humble, and that makes your heart narrow. You've destroyed all that you accomplished with just your little pride in the fact that you feel you're a little superior to others in whatever it is that you think you're superior in. That was Job's problem.

God himself said that there was nobody better on the face of the earth than Job. For God to know it, it's okay. The trouble was Job also felt like that.

There's nobody better than me on the face of the earth. Now, if you are the best person on the earth, it's good that God knows it, but it's better you don't know that. That'll destroy you.

And that's what Job, God wanted to do in Job. God wanted to get rid. I mean, he was already a man who feared God.

Imagine, he was, in his day, 4,000 years ago, he wasn't even lusting after women. Imagine that. And we've got people today who read Matthew chapter 5 who still do it.

Here was a guy who did not have Matthew 5, who did not have the Bible, who didn't do it 4,000 years ago. Can you imagine what a man he was? He had no Bible, and he did almost everything that Jesus taught us to do. You read Job 29, 30, 31, how that guy lived.

It's absolutely amazing. But in spite of all the good that he did, his heart was narrow because he was proud of it all. He was conscious of it all.

He kept a mental record of all the good that he did. I did this, and I did this, and I did all this to this other person. That narrowed his heart, and God said, this man is so good, I can't leave him like that.

I've got to do something to enlarge his heart and make him a really spiritual man. And the only way God could do it was by taking him through unimaginable trials. And in the book of Job, I see these other three preachers who came to preach at him who had very narrow hearts.

And their hearts never became large. Even at the end of the story, it remained narrow, and they probably died like that because God saw that their attitude was not right. You know, I'll tell you something, if God sees that you're basically a very sincere person who's very sensitive to immediately respond to what the Holy Spirit is saying, you hear a word, and you listen to it, and you humble yourself, God will do amazing things for you.

But if he sees that you're one of those who's watching other people closely to find fault, and you feel that everything's okay with yourself, he'll probably leave you alone. See, Job was a man with mistakes, and these other three preachers were also people with mistakes. Why did God pick out Job and take him through trials and enlarge his heart and leave the other fellows alone? You know, live a comfortable life and die in your pathetic, narrow-hearted state.

Because I see God saw a difference. God looks at all of us today. He sees all of us eagerly coming Sunday morning to listen to the meeting, to the message.

But I don't think he sees that all of us are equally sincere. He knows those who have a hunger after him or really longing to be like Jesus, and the others for whom they just want a good reputation or something like that.

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