

“I incline my heart to perform your statutes forever, to the end. I hate the double-minded, but I love your law. You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in your word. Depart from me, you evildoers, that I may keep the commandments of my God. Uphold me according to your promise, that I may live, and let me not be put to shame in my hope!” (Psalm 119:112-116, ESV)

Over the course of history, God has used all types of people with all kinds of problems to do great things for His Kingdom. He used people like David, an adulterer; Moses, an exile; and Paul, a murderer of Christians. While there seems to be no limit to who God is willing to use, the one kind of person that God has consistently not used is someone who is living half-heartedly.

I don't know the current condition of your heart, but if you want to prepare yourself to be used by God, that is where it has to start. The writer of Psalm 119 seems to realize this and reveals three things you need to know when it comes to having a healthy heart.

1. Know What to Hate. *“I hate the double-minded, but I love your law.”* (Psalm 119:13)

Training yourself to hate the things that hurt you can be a powerful motivating force for change. For example, if you want to develop healthier habits, learn to hate the effects of the unhealthy ones. Learning what to love is crucial, but learning what to hate can be just as important.

2. Know Where to Hide. *“You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in your word.”* (Psalm 119:14)

When things get difficult, we all have a hiding place that we run to, but where you choose to hide makes all the difference. For some, their hiding place is harmful and creates even more damage. Things like drugs and alcohol, or even blame and bitterness, provide a temporary escape, but the relief is short-lived, and the damage it creates can be permanent. If you want to be able to weather the storms of life and keep your heart healthy, you'll need to find a healthy hiding place. God's Word, worship, or even the presence of people who build you up are good places to go.

3. Know How to Hope. *“Uphold me according to your promise, that I may live, and let me not be put to shame in my hope!”* (Psalm 119:16)

Knowing how to hope is often the difference-maker for keeping a commitment. Most of us hope incorrectly because we expect things immediately. We let our hope expire before the outcome we've been praying for even has time to develop. Over time, the disappointment from unrealistic expectations can sometimes train our hearts to stop hoping. If you want a healthy heart, don't put your hope in quick fixes. Anchor it in the bedrock of God's promises.