

Henricks, HowardTeaching to Change Lives

8. The Law of the Heart

Hendricks argues that teaching which truly changes people is heart to heart, not head to head. In the biblical sense, 'heart' means the whole person—mind, emotions, and will. Real teaching engages all three, and learning has not happened until all three have changed.

Key takeaways

- The Law of the Heart: impactful teaching is heart to heart, and 'heart' means the total person—intellect, emotions, and will (Deuteronomy 6).
- Socrates' three pillars map onto teaching: ethos (character) builds the learner's confidence, pathos (compassion) builds motivation, logos (content) builds perception.
- Teaching is causing people to learn, and learning is change. If the student hasn't changed, you haven't taught.
- All learning begins at the feeling level—people accept or reject a message based on how they feel about the teacher. 'No one cares what you know until they know that you care.'

- Content still matters: what you believe shapes how you behave, and Christianity rests on historical fact (Christ died, was buried, rose, appeared).
- To be a person of impact: know your students, earn the right to be heard (credibility precedes communication), and be vulnerable about your own struggles.

Passages worth keeping

"No one cares what you know until they know that you care."

Sums up why the feeling level comes first in all learning.

"You can impress people at a distance. But you can impact them only up close."

The case for pouring your life into students, not just teaching them.

How it connects

The chapter ties the teacher's own transformation by grace to the teacher's power to transform others—you can only pour into others the mold Christ has poured into you.

Scripture referenced

- **Deuteronomy 6:4-6** -- Defines 'heart' as loving God with the whole person.
- **John 1:1,14** -- The Word (logos) became flesh—God wrapped his message in a person.

- **Romans 8:29** -- Conformed to the likeness of Christ—learning as being poured into his mold.
- **Romans 12:2** -- Don't be squeezed into the world's mold; be transformed by renewing the mind.
- **1 Corinthians 15** -- The gospel rests on four historical facts, showing content matters.