

Guard Your Heart Above All

(Heb. 13:9; Prov. 4:23)

Keep and guard your heart with all vigilance and above all that you guard, for out of it flow the springs of life (Prov. 4:23).

The physical heart is not just a muscle; It is the body's engine room, responsible for pumping life-sustaining blood via a network of vessels. It sends oxygen to the entire body. The heart is an amazing pump; it beats 72 times a minute. It is truly the spring of life. When it stops life stops with it. It is the center of our emotions. As such it is the symbol of goodness or meanness. At the act of one's goodness, it is said to be from a heart of gold. But it is there that bitterness is harbored and evil springs forth. A carrier of life in the physical, the heart is also a receiver of good and evil in its emotions. The Bible says that the heart is deceitful above all things and perverse and corrupt and severely, mortally sick! Who can know it (Jer. 17: 9). The tendency of the heart is to be evil. It is in agreement with the ingenerated soul of men which comprises the mind also. It is hard to understand that a body organ so vital to bring life is also a haven to harbor corruption, destruction, and bitterness. Solomon admonishes us to guard the heart with all vigilance, because the heart is vulnerable to all things. The heart receives and the mind processes whatever enters the heart of men. The Apostle Paul admonishes us to hold our thoughts captive into obedience to Christ and to have a renewed mind. That in itself is guarding the heart. We are what we think in our heart. As the heart is, so is man. The mind, the master controller of the body, is key in guarding the heart. When the soul is mentioned, it is implied to be the heart and the mind, that is, emotion, will and intellect. We feel with the heart, we desire with the heart and we think with our mind. Heart and mind are inseparable in their functions.

The meaning of the word guard opens up a better understanding of the context of this verse. To guard means to keep safe from harm, watch over and protect; defend; shield. When the heart is watched over it is protected, and kept safe from harm; the shield of protection then defends it against the schemes of the evil one. That will result in a calm and undisturbed heart and as a result, the body will be blessed with life and health... (Prov.14:30). The warning of Solomon concerning the heart has nothing to do with the heart's physical functions; however the body

will be affected if the heart is not protected in the spiritual. When the Lord tells us to love Him with the heart and mind, it is to love Him in completeness: with our emotions- love others as we love ourselves and forgive their debts against us; with our desires- sacrifice my desires to submit to His desires; to love Him with our intellect it is to have our thoughts controlled by His thoughts.. Our love for Him should be in complete surrender of all our emotions our wills and thoughts. YAHSHUA said that where our treasure is, there is our heart. It is hard to love Him with all our heart and mind, if the focus of the heart is on the earthly things. To the rich man YAHSHUA told to sell everything and follow him, but the focus of his love was not toward the kingdom of God. His heart was focused on riches and earthly things. He could not love God and be saved as long as he kept his heart going on the earthly direction. "It is good for the heart to be established and ennobled and strengthened by means of grace" (Heb. 13: 9a).

The Lord calls us to have a heart that is inclined to understanding and wisdom. He said, "My son, if you will receive my words and treasure up my commandments within you, making your ear attentive to skillful and godly Wisdom and inclining and directing your heart and mind to understanding... then you will understand righteousness, justice and fair dealing; yes, you will understand every good path" (Prov. 2:1-2,9). Guard your heart; protect it as the pupil of your eye and you will enjoy a blessed life in the presence of all those who know you. It is good to have the heart searched and cleansed often. David prayed, "Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Psalm 139:23-24). In other words, David prayed for God to search his soul – emotions, will and mind. In humbleness of heart, he was willing for God to strip clean his heart and mind. When David acknowledged his sin to the Lord, and his iniquity he did not hide, he said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord." Then the Lord forgave him the guilt and iniquity of his sin (Psalm 32:5). The Lord desires truth in the inner being of every believer's heart. Peace and joy will abide in the heart that is forgiven. "The sacrifice that God desires is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart. Such O God, You will not despise" (Psalm 51).

King Solomon had everything going for him when his heart was leaned toward God. But in the course of time, he became idolatrous and proud, forsaking God and His commandments. He became the epitome of all that represented evil and his kingdom was later divided. His heart became cold and indifferent toward

everything that was right. But at the end of his life there was a returning point when he wrote the book of Ecclesiastes with the purpose of teaching that life is “meaningless without proper respect and reverence for God”. *He said, “I applied myself by heart and mind to seek and search out by [human] wisdom all human activity under heaven. It is a miserable business which God has given to the sons of man with which to busy themselves. I have seen all the works that are done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity, a striving after the wind and a feeding on wind. . . I entered into counsel with my own mind, saying, Behold, I have acquired great [human] wisdom, yes, more than all who have been over Jerusalem before me, and my mind has had great experience of wisdom and knowledge. ..in much [human] wisdom is much vexation, and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow” (Eccl.1). He concluded the book by saying, “All has been heard; the end of the matter is: Fear God [revere and worship Him, knowing that He is] and keep His commandments, for this is the whole of man and the whole [duty for every man]” (Eccl. 12:13).*

Guard your heart with all diligence; with all that you know to do; apply it to obey God and His word. It is the most important thing you can do for yourself. Tomorrow will smile for you and your sleep will be sound and sweet in the arms of peace.

THINK ABOUT IT!