

GUARD YOUR HEARTS

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Grace Fellowship of Morehead, Kentucky

Proverbs 4:1-9; 20-23

- 1 Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.
- 2 For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law.
- 3 For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother.
- 4 He taught me also, **and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words:** keep my commandments, and live.
- 5 **Get wisdom**, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.
- 6 Forsake her not, and **she shall preserve thee:** love her, and **she shall keep thee.**
- 7 **Wisdom is the principal thing;** therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.
- 8 Exalt her, and **she shall promote thee:** she **shall bring thee to honour**, when thou dost embrace her.
- 9 She shall give to thine **head an ornament of grace:** a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.

NOTICE: Most of the headlines of this portion of chapter 4 goes to wisdom! It is the principle thing! And it is!

But notice where wisdom starts? Where wisdom is located!

Vs.4 – “Let thine **HEART** retain my words...”

BELOVED: It is about the heart! What you allow in your heart!

IN OTHER WORDS: All the good things listed in verses 6-9 are yours if you get these words in your **HEART!**

- 20 My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings.
- 21 Let them not depart from thine eyes; **keep them in the midst of thine heart.**

QUESTION: Where are these words to be located?

ANSWER: In the heart!

- 22 **For they are life unto those** that find them, and **health to all their flesh.**
“**Life**” – alive; running; quick; springing
“**Health**” - medicine

NOTICE: Here is the KEY to getting all of these things that wisdom brings...

- 23 **Keep thy heart with all diligence;** for **out of it are the issues of life.**
“**Issues of life**” – boundaries of life; outflow of life
BELOVED: Your **HEART** is the KEY to your life.
It is the key to how much you get in life!

“**Heart**” – your soul; seat of emotions and passions
Your mind, your will...YOUR EMOTIONS!

OBVIOUSLY: We know that the Word that is in your **HEART** is what makes the difference. Mark 4 shows us that...it is about the seed!

The Word is seed; seed is awesome...but it CANNOT work by itself...the soil/**HEART** is what is key! That is why it says to GUARD YOUR HEART...don't let other things in your heart.

“Keep” – guard your heart like your life depends on it.

The WORD talked about in Proverbs 4 is dependent upon the **HEART!**

UNDERSTAND: If your **HEART** is wrong; it doesn't make any difference on how good the Word is that you have heard or received!

God Focuses on the Heart

Proverbs 17:3 – “The refining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the LORD trieth the hearts.”

“Trieth” – examines, scrutinizes, proves

BELOVED: The Lord focuses on your **HEART**...wants your HEART strengthened!

REMEMBER: What Samuel said to Jesse about David?

1 Samuel 16:7 - “But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: **for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.**”

We can look and focus a lot on actions...but the heart is what is important! **NEVER FORGET THAT!**

Proverbs 21:2 – “Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts.”

(NASB) – “Every man's way is right in his own eyes, But the LORD **weighs the hearts.**”

He measures what is in the heart!

Proverbs 25:3 – “The heaven for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of kings is unsearchable.”

“Unsearchable” - deep

What is in a person's heart may not be seen; but **it is essential!**

Psalms 64:6 (AMP) (talking about David's enemies) – “They think out acts of injustice and say, We have accomplished a well-devised thing! For the inward thought of each one [is unsearchable] and **his heart is deep.**”

UNDERSTAND: The context is the wrong they do, but with the LOOK of being good!

Proverbs 27:19 (NASB) – “As in water face reflects face, So the **heart of man reflects man.**”

LISTEN: You are on the outside what your heart is on the inside!

You CANNOT walk in the blessings of God on the outside, if your heart is not right on the inside.

Your heart is important! Your heart is in your control. The seed is a sure thing...your heart is dependent upon you.

THEREFORE: We are to keep our hearts!

- ~ With all diligence!
- ~ Like our lives depend on it!
- ~ Because what we get in life is dependent on your heart!

Luke 6:45 – “A good man out of the **good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good**; and an evil man out of the **evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil**: for of the **abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.**”

NOTICE: Good heart produces good stuff; bad hearts produce what is bad!
Why? Because your heart will dictate what is in your mouth.

Matthew 15:19,20

- 19 For **out of the heart proceed** evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:
- 20 **These are the things which defile a man:** but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

Where do the bad things come from? **Heart!**

Circumstances Come

BELOVED: Every fleshly circumstance in your life comes to TARGET your **HEART**, your **emotions**, your **decision maker!**
(take a look at Circle of Victory)

I see a BREAKDOWN in Scripture when talking about the heart of a man!

Three basic types: Neutral, Bad and Good!

1.) Neutral Heart

This is a heart that has been attacked by life's circumstances.

- ~ Bad turn of events.
- ~ Someone has treated you wrong
- ~ In the middle of a temptation/test/trial!

A neutral heart is ripe for the picking!

What you do with a neutral heart means everything and determines where you go in life.

A neutral heart is not necessarily bad or wrong...but it can be a danger zone.

What you do with a neutral heart will lead you to a good or bad heart!

(UNDERSTAND: I am not going to teach deeply on each of these, but know that they are all listed in the word.)

a.) A Broken Heart (grief, sorrow, shattered)!

Psalm 34:18 – “The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.”

Psalm 51:17 – “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.”

NOTE: When you come to Him with a broken heart...it is a sacrifice...He definitely understands that...He will not shame you!

REMEMBER: Jesus came to heal the broken hearted (Luke 4:17).

God does NOT want you live in a broken heart, but He knows life and what it brings!

(Also defined as a sorrowful (wounded) heart in Proverbs 15:13)

b.) **A Discouraged Heart (frustrated)!**

Numbers 32:7-9 talks about the tribes of Reuben and Gad wanted to settle their lands on the side of the Jordan (before the crossed it).

Not a bad idea, but Moses told them that if they were busy setting up their land and enjoying peace while the rest of the tribes were battling and fighting for their lands...the other 10 tribes would get DISCOURAGED of HEART!

There are a lot of opportunities in life to get frustrated or discouraged.

NOTICE: Nothing is said about it being wrong...just a type of heart that you have to fight through to get your victory.

c.) **A Burdened Heart (heaviness)!**

Luke 21:34 – “And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be **overcharged** with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.”

We know that many of those things are clearly wrong...but you can be BURDENED by the cares of life!

What do you do with a burdened heart? Take heed! Let it be a warning!

d.) **A Troubled Heart (to agitate or stirred up)!**

John 14:27 – “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

When circumstances in life come at you...it can real easily get you agitated...it can stir you up.

BELOVED: Don't let it develop deeper!

REMEMBER: These hearts are breeding grounds for evil stuff. It can take you down if you let it.

HOWEVER: They can also be those places where you set up your victory...do what you need to do and move to the place of victory.

UNDERSTAND: When the enemy has his way and you allow these things to develop deeper in your HEART, you will see a bad heart develop!

2.) **Bad Heart!**

BELOVED: A bad heart will destroy you! It will shrink what you can receive from God! It will stop your harvest!

REMEMBER: Bad things will come out of your mouth, when bad things are in your heart AND they will develop in your life.

When your circumstances hurt you...and your heart develops these things...you are in trouble.

(**UNDERSTAND:** I am not going to teach deeply on each of these, but know that they are all listed in the word.)

a.) **Obstinate or Hard Heart!**

"No way...not going to do it! You can't make me!"

Deuteronomy 2:30 – "But Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him: for the LORD thy God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into thy hand, as appeareth this day."

Israel was trying to pass through his land and he said NO WAY (obstinate heart); so everything he had was turned over to Israel!

Psalm 95:8 – "Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness:"

The children of Israel hardened their heart and it cost them 40 years wandering in the wilderness!

When you are hurt by life...stay soft to the Lord.

b.) **Proud or Haughty Heart!**

"I will do it my way!"

Deuteronomy 8:14,17,19

14 ***Then thine heart be lifted up***, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage;

17 And thou say in thine heart, ***My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth.***

19 And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ***ye shall surely perish.***

Ezekiel 28 says that Lucifer had a proud heart!

Proverbs 18:12 – "Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour is humility."

UNDERSTAND: When life hurts you...keep doing things God's way!

c.) **Wicked or Evil Heart! (Froward and Perverse)**

"I choose sin!"

Proverbs 6:18 (things God hates) – "An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief..."

UNDERSTAND: Stay holy!

d.) **Double Heart!**

"I choose right, I choose wrong!"

James 1:8 – "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways."

(PASSION) – "When you are half-hearted and wavering it leaves you unstable."

James 4:8 – "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded."

1 Chronicles 12:33 tells of Davids men from Zebulun were NOT of a double heart...they were fully committed!

UNDERSTAND: Stay consistent...full hearted!

e.) **Bitter Heart!**

"If my life was only better...I can't believe they have done that."

1 Samuel 1 – Hannah was bitter of soul because she didn't have a child...the other wife had children.

Hebrews 12:15 – "See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled;"

Don't let a bitter heart spring up! It is unforgiveness unchecked!

UNDERSTAND: Forgive!

f.) **Whorish Heart!**

"I will attach myself to someone else."

"Your Cheatin' Heart" (Hank Williams Jr.)

This really has to do with breaking covenant. Operating outside of love! **Being unfaithful!**

Ezekiel 6:9 describes Israel as having a whorish heart, because they cheated on God... connected to other gods and idols.

UNDERSTAND: Do NOT let your circumstances move you out of covenant with others or with God.

g.) **Angry Heart!**

"Argh!"

Proverbs 19:3 – "The foolishness of man perverteth his way: and his heart fretteth against the LORD."

(NLT) – "People ruin their lives by their own foolishness and then are angry at the LORD."

(AMP) - "The foolishness of man subverts his way [ruins his affairs]; then **his heart is resentful** and frets against the Lord."

This is a horrible place to find yourself in...**anger against God..or anger against others!** Be angry and sin not! Don't let the sun go down upon your wrath.

The only one that can get you out of your problem and you are angry at him.

BELOVED: When these types of hearts develop...you are in trouble! God's promises are on the outside looking in at you...but will not visit you.

Guard your heart.

GOOD NEWS: God is a giver of new hearts! Those that have gone bad...can be renewed!

When Israel had turned away from God...

Ezekiel 36:26 – "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh."

2 Corinthians 5:17- “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

BELOVED: When you trust in God (through Jesus) and His system...your heart can go from bad to good.

We will FIRST OF ALL look at what a GOOD HEART is, in Scripture.

But then we will look at things you can do to create a good heart in your life.

3.) Good Heart!

a.) Contrite Heart!

Psalm 51:17 – “**The sacrifices of God** are a broken spirit: a **broken and a contrite heart**, O God, thou wilt not despise.”

“**Contrite**” – remorseful, desire for making things right; correction

1 Samuel 24:5 – When David cut the hem of Saul’s robe...his “**heart smote him**”. It grieved him!

Desire to make things right when you have been corrected!

b.) Willing Heart!

When Moses was taking an offering for the building of the tabernacle...one thing was key in their offering.

Exodus 35:5,29

5 Take ye from among you an offering unto the LORD: whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the LORD; gold, and silver, and brass,

29 The children of Israel brought a willing offering unto the LORD, every man and woman, whose heart made them willing to bring for all manner of work, which the LORD had commanded to be made by the hand of Moses.

REMEMBER: So willing of heart were they...they had to be told to stop!

Don’t be a person who is forced or coerced to do something, easy peasy!

c.) Perfect Heart! (Pure Heart/Clean Heart)

1 Kings 8:61 – (**to Solomon**) “Let your heart therefore be perfect with the LORD our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day.”

“**Perfect**” – whole...all of yourself...nothing hidden

Very similar to a pure heart and a clean heart!

Psalm 24:3,4

3 Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?

4 He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

Psalm 73:1 – “Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.”

Matthew 5:8 – “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.”

That is why David desired, “Create in me a CLEAN HEART.”

Because he wanted to be in God’s presence!

NOTHING HIDDEN...all in!

- d.) **Tender Heart (Meek and Lowly Heart) – humility**
Soft Heart!
Flesh Heart! You can feel for others!

Ephesians 4:32 – “And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.”

“Tenderhearted” – compassionate; to show pity

Ezekiel 11:19 – “And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and **I will take the stony heart out of their flesh**, and will give them **an heart of flesh.**”
 A heart of flesh is a heart that can feel for others...compassionate!

Focus on others and how they feel and see things.

- e.) **Fixed Heart!**

Not double minded!

Psalm 57:7 – “My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise.”

I shall not, I shall not be moved!

Nothing is going to change my mind!

- f.) **Merry Heart!**

Proverbs 17:22 – “A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.”

Proverbs 15:13-15

13 **A merry heart maketh** a cheerful countenance: but by **sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.**

14 The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge: but the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness.

15 All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is **of a merry heart hath a continual feast.**

- g.) **Singleness/Covenant Heart!**

Acts 2:46 – “And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,”

The oneness of the early church is what brought the blessings.

REMEMBER: 1 Samuel 18 – David and Jonathan’s heart were knit together.

How to Get a Good Heart

How do you get from that NEUTRAL heart to a good heart? Avoiding a bad heart?

1.) The Word

Proverbs 3:1-2

- 1 My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:
- 2 For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.

Proverbs 4:4 – “He taught me also, and said unto me, **Let thine heart retain my words**: keep my commandments, and live.”

Proverbs 22:15 – “Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the **rod of correction** shall drive it far from him.”

a.) Get it in your mouth.

Proverbs 15:28 – “The heart of the righteous studieth to answer: but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.”

b.) Act on the Word.

Proverbs 4:4 – “He taught me also, and said unto me, **Let thine heart retain my words**: keep my commandments, and live.”

2.) Wise Counsel (covenant partners)

We need one another. Especially when we are going through tough times. We need covering. We need people investing into us.

Time and time again Proverbs tells us to listen to our fathers and mothers and their wisdom.

Proverbs 5:12,13

- 12 And say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof;
- 13 And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!

Proverbs 22:17-19

- 17 Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto my knowledge.
- 18 For it is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee; they shall withal be fitted in thy lips.
- 19 That thy trust may be in the LORD, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee.

Proverbs 12:25 (NLT) – “Worry weighs a person down; **an encouraging word cheers a person up.**”

Proverbs 18:15 – “The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.”

Proverbs 23:12 – “Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge.”

3.) Listen to the Spirit

Proverbs 2:6-10

- 6 ***For the LORD giveth wisdom:*** out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.
7 He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.
8 He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.
9 Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.
10 ***When wisdom entereth into thine heart,*** and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul;

That is what Romans 8 is all about. Operating and listening in your spirit to experience life.

4.) Practice His Presence

Proverbs 23:17 – “Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long.”

(AMP) – “Let not your heart envy sinners, but continue in the reverent and worshipful fear of the Lord all the day long.”