

Guarding Your Heart

Proverbs 4:23

"There is nothing of greater value on this earth than the condition of your heart. There is no single action that will more directly affect the outcome and quality of your life than the guarding of your heart. There is not a more portentous [significant] predictor of your ultimate end than what you expose your heart to. Above all else guard your heart!" (Kitchen)

- I. The **heart** reflects the totality of the inner person: the mind, the emotions and the will. We must guard every facet of the heart from compromising our integrity before the Lord.

לֵב, **lêb**, **labe** = inner man, mind, will, heart (moral character), understanding, seat of emotions and passions

- A. The **heart** is connected with the **mind** and its ability to reason through all matters of life. We guard the heart when we keep our minds steadfast on the things of God over and above the things of the world by making every effort to develop a biblical mindset toward life.

Proverbs 2:1-2; 3:1; 15:14; 23:7
Hebrews 11:2

Isa. 26:3 *You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you.*

- B. The **heart** is connected with the exercising of the **will** toward God's ways or our ways. We guard the heart when we renew the attitude of our minds to keep ourselves from conforming to the pattern of this world, so that we can test and approve what it means to live God's will (Rom. 12:1-2).

Proverbs 11:20; 14:14
2 Cor. 9:7

- C. The **heart** is connected with the **emotions**, **passions** and **affections** of a person. We guard the heart by keeping our emotions, passions and affections from overruling the fruit of the Spirit and the Lord's desire help us stand firm in the faith (1 Cor. 16:13-14).

Proverbs 15:30; Psalm 134:4; Proverbs 12:25; 25:20; Mark 12:30; 1 Ti. 1:5;
Leviticus 19:17

- D. The **heart** is connected with, and is considered the center of, our moral and spiritual life. We guard the heart by staying faithful to the Lord and his moral absolutes.

Job 27:6; 1 John 3:19-21; 1 Samuel 16:7

- II. God commands us to guard our mind, emotions and will, for they make up the **heart** of a child of God. We protect our mind, emotions and will by watching and praying so that we will not fall into temptation, by being self-controlled and alert to Satan's deception and schemes, and by not loving this evil world system more than God's kingdom.

Psalm 51:10

Matt. 26:41

1 Peter 5:12

1 Jn. 2:15

נָצַר *nâtsar*, *naw-tsar'* = to guard, watch, watch over, keep. The verb "to guard" comes from a noun which means "place of confinement." It is occasionally translated "prison." In a broader sense it means something that is closely observed, protected, preserved or guarded. So we get the idea that we are to actually take our hearts (our inner being) prisoner. We are to observe it, protect it and preserve it.

- A. The **heart** needs guarding because we are more inclined to think from the world's perspective than from God's perspective.

Proverbs 19:3

James 4:4

- B. The **heart** needs guarding because we are prone toward fickleness to his Lordship over our lives.

Psalm 119:17

- C. The **heart** needs guarding because of its innate selfishness, self-centeredness, and self-protective ways.

Jeremiah 17:9; Galatians 6:1; Matthew 15:19; Ephesians 4:22-24; Jeremiah 17:10