

HOW TO GUARD OUR HEARTS

God says the most important thing is for us to guard our hearts - Prov 4:23 **ABOVE ALL ELSE**, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.

The heart is the purpose center for life - Prov 16:9 In his heart A MAN PLANS his course, but the Lord determines his steps.

Man's heart alone is the most untrustworthy thing of all - Jer 17:9 **THE HEART IS** deceitful ABOVE ALL THINGS and beyond cure. Who can understand it?

Its deceptive because man mistakes the heart for desires which manifest itself as feelings and emotions - James 1:14-15 - 14 but each one is tempted when, by **his own evil desire**, he is dragged away and enticed. 15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

There are two choices for the heart, God or not God, the choice is ours

If our hearts are not right, our relationship with God is nonexistent - Matt 15:8-9 - 8 "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. 9 **THEY WORSHIP ME IN VAIN**; their teachings are but rules taught by men."

What we allow in our heart determines our life in the Lord - Ps 66:18 If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened;

Our hearts can be hindered by what we see, that's why it's so important to walk by faith - Prov 23:17 **DO NOT LET** your heart envy sinners, but always be zealous for the fear of the Lord.

It's our choice if our hearts are troubled - John 14:27 - Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. **DO NOT LET** your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

When we come to God, we need to tear our hearts - Joel 2:12-13- 12 'Even now,' declares the Lord, 'return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.' 13 **REND YOUR HEART and not your garments**. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.

Only God truly knows our heart and He is the only way to clean our heart through faith - Acts 15:8-9 - 8 **God, who knows the heart**, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. 9 He made no distinction between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith.

What we are guarding our hearts from is us

Our desires affect our values and our values affect our hearts - Matt 6:19-21 - 19 **"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth**, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But **store up for yourselves treasures in heaven**, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For **where your treasure is, there your heart WILL be also**.

When we keep allowing a hardened heart it will show in how we live - Rom 2:5-8 - 5 But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. 6 God "will give to each person according to what he has done." 7 To those who by **persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he WILL GIVE eternal life**. 8 But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there WILL BE wrath and anger.

Examples:

	Unprotected Heart	Guarded heart
Concerning choosing a life partner	I look for someone that makes me happy. That I'm attracted to. The marriage must be what everyone dreams of.	They MUST be a true Christian. God must be first in their lives. It must fit what God says a marriage should look like. I recognize we both play a role.
Concerning finances	I work hard and deserve to have the best. I spend my money on me first. it's my money.	If it wasn't for God, I would have nothing. I display this by managing my money <u>the way God says to</u> .
Concerning Raising my children	I'll do anything for my child. I will give them anything they want. When they are bad and disobedient, I'll give them a pass because kids will be kids	I will raise my child with the training and instruction of God being careful to discipline them following God's Word.
Concerning my Christianity	I worship God my way. I have a personal relationship with God based on how I am.	I worship God based on Spirit and Truth. I humble and adjust myself to be used by God.