

Keep Your Heart With All Diligence

Proverbs 4:23

Introduction:

- A. The Bible “heart” refers to man’s three-fold psychological make-up.
 - 1. **Intellect:** Ability to *think* (Prov. 23:7), *reason* (Mk. 2:8), *imagine* (Lk. 1:51), *understand* (Mt. 13:15), *believe* (Rom. 10:10).
 - 2. **Emotions:** Ability to *love* (Matt. 22:37), *desire* (Rom. 10:1), *rejoice* (John 16:22).
 - 3. **Will:** Ability to *purpose* (2 Cor. 9:7), *intend* (Heb.4:12), *obey* (Rom. 6:17).
- B. The Bible warns us to keep (guard) the heart with all diligence against all *abuses*.

Discussion:

- I. We Must Diligently Keep Our Hearts From Defilement. (Mark 7:18-23).**
 - A. A defiled heart produces evil *thoughts*. (V. 21)
 - B. A defiled heart produces defiled *actions*. (Vs. 21-23)
 - C. A defiled heart can be purified by the gospel. (1 Pet. 1:22).
- II. We Must Diligently Keep Our Hearts From Fatal Deception. (Rom. 16:17,18).**
 - A. A deceived heart can be spiritually and eternally fatal. (2 Thess. 2:11,12).
 - 1. Eve believed a fatal lie: “Shall not die”.
 - 2. We must avoid believing fatal lies:
 - a. Concerning deity of Christ. (John 8:21-24).
 - b. Concerning baptism and salvation. (1 Pet. 3:21).
 - c. Concerning the “works of the flesh.” (Gal. 5:19-21; 1 Cor. 6:9-10).
 - B. A heart is often easily deceived because error is often more appealing than the truth.
 - 1. Error often promises more for less time, effort and responsibility.
 - 2. Error often promises more with fewer unpleasant consequences and sacrifices.
 - 3. Error often unduly appeals to man’s desires and curiosity – “itching ears” (cf. 2 Tim. 4:3,4)
 - 4. Truth speakers and seekers are more concerned with profitable than pleasant (Acts 20:20,27)
- III. We Must Diligently Keep Our Hearts From Theft. (2 Sam. 15:1-6; 13).**
 - A. Absalom stole people’s hearts and almost stole the nation from David, God’s anointed king.
 - 1. He told the people what they wanted to hear. (V. 3)
 - 2. He would “do anything in the world” for them.” (V. 4).
 - 3. He zealously courted the people with his charm and tactics. (V. 5).
 - B. Absalom-like people are an ever-present danger to the Lord’s church. (Gal. 4:16. 17).
 - 1. Too many are swayed by emotion rather than facts and reason.
 - 2. Too many are influenced more by personality and style than substance. (Rom. 16:18)
 - 3. Too many think of men above that which is written—do not verify (1 Cor. 4:6; Acts 17:11).
- IV. We Must Diligently Keep Our Hearts From Hardness. (Mark 16:14)**
 - A. Hardness of heart is expressed in various ways.
 - 1. Unbelief.
 - 2. Impenitence.
 - 3. Stubbornness
 - 4. Unforgiving.
 - 5. Prejudice.
 - B. Christians are to be tender hearted. (Eph. 4:32).

Conclusion:

- A. What a privilege to have the heart the Bible talks about!
- B. What a responsibility to guard it with all diligence!