Loyalty, a Heart Issue September 8, 2024

Divided Loyalty

- James 1:8 (NLT) — 8 Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do.
- Issue
  - A problem of any kind
  - Something that comes out as an outflowing stream
- Heart Issue – Biblical use of "Heart" – the human spirit – inner being
- Mark 7:5–9 … 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me…
- Isaiah 29:13
- Mark 7:18–23 …"It is what comes from inside that defiles you. … All these vile things come from within; they are what defile you."
- Proverbs 4:23 (KJV 1900) — 23 Keep thy heart with all diligence; For out of it are the issues of life.
- Proverbs 4:20–23 (NLT) — 20 My child, pay attention to what I say. Listen carefully to my words. … Let them penetrate deep into your heart,…Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.

A divided tongue from a divided heart

- James 3:7–12 … And so blessing and cursing come pouring out of the same mouth. Surely, my brothers and sisters, this is not right!
- Matthew 12:34–35 … For whatever is in your heart determines what you say.
- Blessing and cursing pouring (issuing) out of the same mouth
  - Sometimes praises
  - Sometimes curses
  - Both from the same mouth, reveals a divided heart, a divided loyalty
  - Let God's word penetrate deep into your heart
  - Bringing life and healing
  - Determining the course of your life
- Proverbs 18:21 (NASB95) — 21 Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.
- James 1:8 (NLT) — 8 Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do.
- Blessing and cursing – life and death

Guard Your Heart

- Let the Word of God penetrate it deeply
  - Reflection
  - Meditation
  - Memorization
  - Use it (by reason of use – practice – training) senses trained to discern good and evil

Numbers 22-24 – Balaam

- Balak to Balaam – please come and curse these people
- Blessings fall on those you bless and curses fall on those you curse
- I will tell you how the Lord directs me
- Don't go with them – you are not to curse these people
- Bribery - Balak to Balaam – I will pay you very well, just come and curse these people
- Let's see if the Lord has anything else to say
- God to Balaam – Go, but only do what I tell you to do
- God was angry that Balaam was going – angelic roadblock
- Donkey Discipline
  - The Lord opened the mouth of the … donkey
  - What have I done to deserve beating 3 times?
  - Then the Lord opened Balaam's eyes
  - You are stubbornly resisting me
- Doing what is acceptable? - Romans 12:2 … so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.
- I will speak only the message that the Lord puts in my mouth
- I received a command to bless; God has blessed and I cannot reverse it
- Blessings spoken 3 times – forfeited the reward.

The curse…

- Numbers 25:1-3
  - Israelite men defiled themselves with Moabite women
  - Worshiped the gods of Moab
  - The Lord's anger blazed against his people
- Balaam's Counsel – from a divided loyalty
- Numbers 31:14–16
- Revelation 2:14
- 2 Peter 2:15–16

Motives for divided loyalty

- Others we may bless and curse