

that you have never trusted Christ as Lord and King.  
It may be some secret sin or some hidden flaws.  
Come give it to God. Respond as the Spirit leads.

- Thankful to be here. Thank you Pastor Joey.
- My name is...
- Today, we are concluding the series WisDumb st through parts of the Proverbs.
- We are going to be building off of what Pastor C taught last week when he was teaching Proverbs “Trust in the Lord with all your heart..”
- Today, we are going to talk about “Guarding your Heart.”
- In our culture, we have several different common of what it means to “listen to your heart” or “follow your heart.”
- One the one hand, you have this *Hallmark Persp* where listening to your heart leads to this perfect idealized life.
  - o Now I am not an expert at Hallmark mov I have seen enough to know that that all the same basic pattern.
  - o A woman and a man meet in some chance circumstances.
  - o They get to know each other and begin to love.
  - o Something happens that brings them ap
  - o But in the end, their hearts draw them b together and they live happily ever after
  - o **In this perceptive, Listening to your heart to this perfect. happy life.**

hurting people and from ruin.

- Picture Peter Parker or some other young person.
  - They start out with these restless heart. They follow them and in following them hurt their friends and hurt themselves.
  - In the end, they realize that they can't always trust their feelings and they mature and grow to become better people who serve the world better.
  - **In this perspective, listening to your heart can lead to tragedy and hurt.**
- In reality, the heart is complex. When submitted to God and His will, listening to the heart leads to joy. But a selfish and self-centered heart leads to destruction and hurt.
  - Today, we are going to talk about guarding our hearts. Learning how to submit our hearts to God and His will, and then following in that direction.
  - Our key verse today is **Proverbs 4:23**. If you have your Bible, would you please turn there.
  - Today, we are not going to do a full exposition of this text. We are going to seek to understand it and spend some time apply its message into our lives.
  - Would you please stand as we read, **Proverbs 4:23**
  - **Read Proverbs 4:23**
  - **“Guard your heart above all else, for it is the source of life.”**

- g. Among other things, Jonathan Edwards responded by saying this, “In all your course walk with God, and follow Christ, as a little poor, helpless child, taking hold of Christ by the hand, keeping your eye on the marks of his wounds in his hands and side, whence came the precious blood that cleanses you from sin, and hide your nakedness under the skirt of the white shining robes of his righteousness.”
- h. And that is really the key to guarding your heart, walking with Christ in humility, submitting your life to him.

Conclusion:

As we finish up today, I want to give you the opportunity to test your heart, to check what is inside.

First, can you honestly assess, “What is coming out of my heart?” Is it anger, bitterness, yelling, pride? Or love, Joy, Peace, Patience, kindness, gentleness self control?

Second, consider if there is anything inside that you need to submit to God, any rebellious pride? Any indwelling anger, malice? Any dishonesty?

We are going to pray and then you are going to have the chance to respond:

- xiii. But that's not true. I have seen others in those circumstances without the anger!
- xiv. The circumstances don't make who you are. They reveal who you are!
- xv. They showed off all those little twists, all those little marks that I had made in my own heart through my pride, through my bitterness.
- xvi. It is only in realizing that that I Could begin to be accountable for my choices and begin to make changes.
- xvii. It is important to guard your heart.

### 3) How Do You Guard Your Heart?

- a. You guard your heart by submitting your heart to God.
- b. James 4:7, **"Therefore, submit to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."**
- c. You want to avoid becoming a hellish creature that spews anger and bitterness, submit your heart to God.
- d. The simple act of stepping aside and letting Christ rule in your heart will protect you from becoming someone you don't want to be.
- e. This involves 1 recognizing your sin, 2 owning it, and 3 giving your heart over to God through prayer.

flourishing comes through guarding your heart.

### 1) What Does the Bible Mean When It Speaks About Heart?

- a. The heart is defined in the Bible "inner the essence of personality; being the seat of the center of all life. (Lower)."
- b. It is the center of a person's logical, physical, and emotional activities.
- c. In your heart, you "imagine."
- d. In your heart, you "think."
- e. In your heart, you "love"
- f. In your heart, you "feel."
- g. In your heart, you "inclined to do something or nothing."
- h. In your heart, you "understand."
- i. In your heart, you are "wise or unwise."
- j. In your heart, you "will or chose."
- k. The heart is the center of who you are!
- l. It is the spiritual or metaphysical part of a person.
- m. That is why it is important to guard your heart. For out of the heart, we live our lives!
- n. **Rational Appeal:**
- o. For me, the Bible's teaching on the heart is compelling evidence for its authenticity.
- p. When we look into the world and into our actions, the Bible's teaching on the heart is true and fits the world we live in.

evolved into their current state, they cannot believe that a person has a metaphysical part that we call the heart.

- s. They don't believe in the spiritual or they believe that spiritual is an extension of the physical (Avatar).
- t. When you think about this in regards to choices, it means that a person's choice, a person's character is what it is because of their biology, because of the genes that were passed down to them.
- u. The cell's in your brain that were created according to your DNA determine your choices good or bad.
- v. If you turn out to be an ax murder, it was because you were programmed by your DNA to make choices that would lead you to become this. You were born with a biological tendency toward aggression and toward harming others.
- w. It takes away freedom and it takes away responsibility.
- x. I don't believe this.
- y. Certainly biology can have an affect on choices. But I am responsible for my choices!
  - i. If I am a grouch and snap at my wife, I may have a headache but I am still responsible for my behavior!
  - ii. If a teenager makes a bad choice trying

central, inside part of the soul  
**are going to turn it, in the long run  
into a heavenly or a hellish creature**

- iii. The choices that we make create a twist or a little mark deep in you. They affect who you are. Over time those little twists, those little marks begin to shape you and change you. They make you into something heavenly or something hellish.
- iv. One day you wake up and you are angry, anger, hatred.
- v. Or you are full of jealousy
- vi. Or bitterness
- vii. Or deceit.
- viii. Those things didn't just get there overnight.
- ix. The daily choices that you make have a formative impact on who you are and who become.
- x. **Illustration:**
- xi. Thinking back on my own life, there have been several points in my life where my circumstances got hard. I was filled with anger and taking it out on my family.
- xii. And it really made sense to me in those moments just to blame my

- consistently promising a cure for the bent heart.
- v. Ezekiel 36:25-26
  - w. **"<sup>25</sup> I will also sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean. I will cleanse you from all your impurities and all your idols. <sup>26</sup> I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will remove your heart of stone<sup>10</sup> and give you a heart of flesh."**
  - x. Ultimately, the cure for the bent heart is a new heart that comes through Jesus.
  - y. The New Testament tells us this new heart is the filling of the Spirit which comes through faith in Christ.
  - z. Mark this down, You will never be able to overcome your sinful, selfish desires apart from faith in Christ and a new spirit inside of you.
  - aa. But even after faith in Christ, we can still struggle with sin. We can make bad/ destructive choices. And we need to guard our hearts.
  - bb. Second, the choices we **make mold our hearts.**
    - i. Even after trusting in Christ, we can make choices that mold our character and shape our hearts.

- z. Its fit the headaches fault, its not the no fault. Its my fault. Its your fault.
- aa. We are responsible for our actions.
- bb. This is what we means by heart.
- cc. The heart is the inner person, the self, w controls our choices.
  - i. In your heart, you are good or ba
  - ii. You are honest or deceitful.
  - iii. You are wise or foolish.
  - iv. And out of the character of your choose.
- dd. **Illustration:**
  - i. In my own life, I think back to so my failures.
  - ii. It's easy to find something to bla your failure:
    - 1. I messed this up because circumstances were haro
    - 2. I messed this up because didn't have enough time
    - 3. I messed this up because people wouldn't listen.
  - iii. But growth as a person happens we begin to acknowledge that m our failures, most of our failures are because of who we are and v have chosen to be. Then we beg take responsibility.

exist in our hearts and control our hearts and they lead to destruction.

v. **Good leaders can succeed in difficult circumstances because the character of their heart informs their decisions, not their circumstances.**

vi. What is in your heart matters, it affects who you are and how you lead your family, and what kind of person you become.

## 2) Why Does a Heart Go Bad?

- a. There are two factors that cause the heart to sour.
- b. A heart goes bad because we are born with a predisposition to sin and a heart goes bad because of the choices that you make.
- c. First, **the Bible teaches that we are born with a character that is bent toward sin.**
- d. In Genesis chapter 3, we see the entrance of sin into the world through Adam and Eve then in Genesis 5, we have this boring chapter going through the genealogies after the death of Adam. A lot of times we can just kind of ignore these bring genealogies. But I have found that they are usually there for a reason,
- e. And Seth begot Enosh and Enosh begot Kenan, and Kenan begot Mahalalel and so forth.
- f. But in each generation Moses recorded these

- h. **But he also shows the spiritual death of**
- i. Genesis 4 Cain kills Abel.
- j. Genesis 6 wickedness is over the whole of the earth until God destroyed it with a flood but Noah and his family.
- k. Then, we see Noah getting drunk and naïve trying to build a tower up to God in heaven.
- l. The sin of Adam and Eve spread through each generation to reach every person. It was not fixed a flood.
- m. It is spread by a bending of **the heart toward selfishness, towards pride, towards selfishness.**
- n. It's in all people, everywhere,
- o. We are born with this propensity for sin and selfishness.
- p. **Just as a spider has 8 legs and spins its own web that is who it is, so are we as humans born with a heart that is bent toward selfishness/ sin.**
- q. This is why you see many people when they mess up and are confronted, they blame other people because they don't want to hurt their pride.
- r. This is why people try to hide their flaws and pretend them away.
- s. This is why we try to bulldoze over people instead of admit our problems.
- t. It's that selfish nature of the heart!