

KEEP YOUR HEART
Text: Proverbs 4:20-23

INTRO: The standard translators render verse 23, "keep your heart," "guard your heart," or "watch your heart." We try to guard and keep and watch that which is valuable to us. The standard translators rendered the 2nd phrase, "with all diligence," but most of the commentators lean to the idea of the NIV, "Above all else, guard your heart."

I. WHAT IS IT THAT IS TO BE KEPT, GUARDED, WATCHED? THE HEART. "The heart " as used here & in most Bible passages, refers to the inner nature, the soul or spirit.

A. The Bible "heart" is the seat of intellect.

Prov 23:7, as he thinks in his heart

Mark 2:8-why do you reason about these things in yr h?

Prov 2:2, apply your heart to understanding

Rom 10:10, with the heart man believes

B. The Bible "heart" is the seat of emotion.

MT 22:37, love with all your heart

Prov 3:5, trust the Lord with all your heart

2 Sam 6:16, Michal despised David in her heart

Psa 33:21, our heart shall rejoice in God

Eph 4:32, be tenderhearted, forgiving

C. The Bible "heart" is the seat of the human will.

1 Cor 7:37, he who stands steadfast in his heart... has power over his own will & has so determined in his heart...

2 Cor 9:7, give as we purpose in our hearts

Heb 4:12, intents of the heart

Rom 6:17, obey from the heart

EX 35:5, Whoever is of a willing heart...

II. WHY IS THE HEART TO BE KEPT?

A. Because of its own intrinsic value. MT 16:26

B. Because of its fruits. READ PROV 4:20-23

1. Be on guard, lest Satan fill your heart. Acts 5:3; LK 22:3

2. On the other hand, when our hearts are filled with the influence of the H.S., we bear the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, temperance. (Gal 5:22-23).

C. We should guard or keep the heart, because it is the part of man that survives death.

The meek shall eat & be satisfied: they shall praise the Lord that seek him: your heart shall live for ever. (Psalm 22:26 KJV)

III. HOW DO WE KEEP OR GUARD OUR HEARTS?

- A. Be careful what you hear & how you hear, vs. 20.
1. Listen to those who teach what is in harmony with God's word.

Take heed what you hear... (MK 4:24)

Take heed how you hear... (LK 8:18)

2. Remember that some music isn't worth listening to, some books are not worth reading, some jokes are not worth hearing or telling.

- B. Take care what you "see," vs 20-22, 25
Some movies, TV programs, magazines are not worth looking at.

We do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal. (2 Cor 4:18).

Seek those things which are above. (Col 3:1).

- C. Learn to control your tongue, vs. 24.
READ MATT 12:35-36.

- D. Think about the road you're traveling spiritually. Where do you stand, and what will be your destiny? vs 26-27.

The Lord hates... a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that are swift in running to evil. (Prov 6:18)

CONCLUSION: Keep your heart. Keep it pure.
Keep it true. Keep it tender. "Keep your heart
with all diligence, for out of it spring the
issues of life."

Shiloh, Mexia, TX, August 4, 1996

Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, January 18, 2004