

Why is Keeping the Heart So Important?

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[0 : 00] Well, why are we guarding our hearts? Why is it so important? Why is it so important? Well, that's the palace where Jesus lives, if you're a Christian.

And we want that palace to be for him. I think, didn't England have something about the flag flying over the residence when the king was in residency? And we're wanting the king to have a heart to dwell in that is pleasing to him and nothing that would grieve him.

So, I trust that in all that we're studying, we'll see the end. We're wanting fellowship with our king and that's why we guard our hearts.

There's nothing between us and our saving king. So, last week, it's building off of Proverbs 4.23, Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.

Last week, the author John Flavel introduced us to the study telling us what it means to guard our heart, what it involves. We saw frequent examination of the heart, humbled for our heart sins, not just outward sins that others see, quick confession of such, and prayer for a better condition of heart.

[1 : 21] Now, I just had to read out the last three and I'll spend a little more time with them before we go on. But number four, it involves avoiding the occasions where the heart may be tempted to sin.

So, if I can pray from the heart, Heavenly Father, lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from the evil one, then if I know that a certain path has been a temptation to me in the past, then I need to find a different route.

And that's behind Jesus' words, Matthew, all the gospel accounts, but John, but in Mark, we saw it in chapter 9, verse 43, if your hand offends you, your foot offends you, cut it off, your eye offends you, causes you to sin, cut it out.

It's better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one than to have two and be thrown into hell where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched. Jesus is not commanding the mutilation of our physical body.

He's using that imagery to teach us there are some things that your hand should not do if you are to keep your heart from temptation and sin.

[2 : 34] There are some things that your feet, places your feet should not go. Things that your eyes should not see. Lest it tempt you to sin.

So if you would keep your heart and pray for a better heart, then avoid the occasions that have drug your heart into temptation or sin before. And if you're frequently examining your heart, you'll know what those areas are.

Oh yes, this has been a stumbling block to me. And there you'll know where to set your defense. So to avoid the temptation of an immoral woman, the wise father tells his son, be careful little feet where you go.

Proverbs 5, 8. Keep to a path far from her. Do not go near the door of her house. Take a detour. Joseph, Genesis 39, did not trust himself to be alone with Potiphar's wife.

Job was the most righteous man of his day. And we can see why when we see how he guarded his heart. In Job 31, 1, I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully upon a girl.

[3 : 48] The most righteous man is doing what? He's guarding his heart and avoiding the occasions of temptation to sin. He took this seriously.

Eyes, you're not allowed to look lustfully at that girl. That's guarding the heart. Knowing that a wrong look can inflame lust in the heart.

So he's guarding the heart by guarding the inlets to the heart like the eyes. And that can be the difference between standing and falling. Just ask David.

Proverbs 6, 27. Another time the father asked his son, can a man carry fire next to his chest and his clothes not be burned? What's he saying?

Well, he's saying the same thing, that our hearts are like a barrel of gunpowder. This is the enemy within, and all it takes is a few sparks to ignite it. So go about through this world knowing you've got that barrel of gunpowder inside and avoid those sparks as much as possible that would ignite it.

[4 : 59] I know a man in California, a godly man, who takes a different route, a longer route to church and on the way back just to avoid a place that is a temptation to the eyes.

Now you say, that's going too far. Is it? Or is that not exactly what the wise man tells his son? Don't go past her house.

Take the long way. Guard your heart. For out of it are the issues of life. Now that's very clear in the area of sexual sins, and it's laid out throughout the word of God in that arena of sexual sin.

But it's not just a principle for sexual sin. It's a principle for every sin. So if you're tempted to spend money that you don't have and can't afford to spend, then cut up your credit cards.

Or don't let your feet go walking through the mall to see what might tickle your fancy if you can't afford to buy it.

[6 : 12] Don't let your fingers do the walking, browsing online and looking for anything that might tickle your fancy. You see, setting boundaries of where we can go and can't go because we know something of our tendency and therefore we're avoiding the occasions of sin.

So the sincerity of our confession of sin, the sincerity of our prayer for God to give us a better condition of heart is proven right here. Whatever the sin may be, will I avoid the occasions of sin?

Keep your distance is to keep your heart. And then fifthly, keeping your heart involves a constant jealousy over your heart. And again, here, Flavel uses a word of the affections.

Think of a relationship of a husband and wife and where there's real love, there's a proper jealousy, isn't there? This is to be a twosome.

No third wheel is allowed here. This is an exclusive bond and we're jealous if we love it all, the one that we've taken in marriage.

[7 : 21] And so keep a constant jealousy over your heart. It's meant for one. And don't let other loves come in and rival the Lord Jesus.

Jonathan Edwards wrote a treatise on religious affections in which he lays down the premise that true religion is chiefly a matter of the affections. And you can hardly disagree when the summary of the entire laws summed up in one word, love.

And it's more than affection, but it is an affection, isn't it? And so disordered affections, love set on the wrong lovers, is the danger.

And so keep a jealous eye over your heart lest it be drawn after rival lovers that would dull your heart's affection for Christ.

It can be something in and of itself that's just fine and not a problem to the guy sitting beside you. But if it has got a grip on your heart, then you need to take this word and keep it jealous.

[8 : 31] I upon your heart. Keep it for Christ. Nothing rival the love of your heart for him. You know, mothers, how, why you wouldn't let your little child fill up his belly with chocolate cake and ice cream before supper.

It would diminish his appetite for the good stuff you've prepared for him for supper. And so it is with our heart's affection. It's like an appetite for Christ and there are things in life that dull that appetite for him.

Do you know them? Do you know what they are in your life? To know what to guard against. And so we have to ask when we're thinking about what's right or wrong for me?

Well, surely we start with the scriptures. What does the Bible say is right and wrong with me? But then, the Bible says, check not only with the scriptures, check with your heart. Check with your heart. Is this thing that I'm considering drawing my heart away from Christ or is it fanning the flames of love for the Savior?

So, that's the fifth, a jealous eye over your heart. And the sixth is, we keep the heart with all diligence by realizing God's presence throughout the day.

[9 : 53] David did it. I have set the Lord always before me because He's at my right hand. I will not be shaken. Which means David is saying, I try to go through my day with the Lord, seeing Him right there at my right hand.

I'm always in His presence. And you know, even the presence of another person can keep you from sinning. We do things when we're alone. We sin when we're alone in ways that we don't sin when another person is with us.

And how much truer should that be of the Lord is with me. And He's right there at my right hand seeing what I have on my screen, seeing what I'm thinking, seeing what I am about to say and type on my Facebook or whatever we're doing.

So, the presence of God, that was what Joseph realized when he was tempted by Potiphar's wife. How can I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?

Who said anything about God? She surely didn't. Oh, but He lived in His presence. And that was the thing that kept His heart from going astray. So, keep your heart full of a sense of God's presence and watchful eye.

[11 : 09] Psalm 33, 13 to 15. From heaven, the Lord looks down and sees all mankind. From His dwelling place, He watches all who live on earth. He who forms the hearts of all who considers everything they do.

Yes, the eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding the evil and the good. Proverbs 15, 3. So, this is really a healthy fear of God. That's what living in the presence of God is.

Always aware of Him. L. Martin gives this definition for the fear of God. It's the pressing realization that I am always under the eye of God.

on my way to the judgment of God and nothing matters more than pleasing God. So, be careful little hands, eyes, feet, what you do for the Father up above is what?

Looking down in love. Oh, be careful. That's the principle. And there, it's wrapped up in the children's song. We walk before His eyes.

[12 : 13] So, these are six things that are involved if I'm going to keep my heart and guard the palace for my Savior. And Flavel says, this work, of all works, is the most difficult, the most constant, and the most important work.

It's the most difficult work. To keep yourself from outward sins is possible. but to keep it from heart sins, you'll need God to do that.

It's difficult. The Pharisee Paul prided himself that he was faultless as to the law outwardly. But when he considered the tenth commandment, thou shalt not covet, oh, that's something our hearts do.

And he was slain with conviction because of a heart sin. I would not have known sin, he says, if the law had not said, you shall not covet.

So, it's a difficult work. It's a constant work. You're never on vacation. Sometimes on vacations we let our guard down, don't we? We can't be on vacation until heaven from guarding our hearts.

[13 : 27] It's like the Israelites when they were battling in the valley with the Amalekites in Exodus 17. Remember, Moses held the rod of God and whenever he held it up, the Israelites were winning.

And as he got tired and brought his hands down, down there in the valley, the Amalekites were winning. And so he put it back up and the Israelites were winning. And I don't know how long it took him to figure that out, but at some point he got Aaron and Hurd to stand on either side of him and to help him hold his hands up that they might have the victory.

In other words, in your fight, you can't take a vacation or the devil will make hay while you sleep.

So, it's a constant work. John Bunyan tells in his testimony of the first time he called out on the Lord to have mercy on him and it surprised him that that cry came out of his mouth.

But he was in the belly of the ship, a slaver, and it had sprung leaks and water was coming in. And the huge storm was rocking the ship.

[14 : 39] It was spilling over the sides and he's down under working the pumps, trying to pump the water out faster than it's coming in.

If he rested for a moment, it's as if they'd be sunk to the bottom. And that's the fight we're in. We cannot stop the pumps.

We cannot stop watching our hearts and guarding them to keep them for our Savior. And then, it's not only difficult and constant work, it's the most important work of a Christian's life.

Apart from this, we're but formalists in religion. All of our possessions and gifts and duties mean nothing to the Lord who says, give me your heart. He wants more than the outer shell of religion.

He wants our hearts kept for him, kept near him. And whatever you bring to God is nothing to him if you don't bring him your heart. And that's why we say with Jonathan Edwards that all true religion is heart religion, the most important work of the Christian's life.

[15 : 45] So, today we're given some reasons on why we ought to make keeping the heart the great business of our lives. Maybe you hadn't thought about it that way, but this is a good reminder just as to the priority of this work of keeping the heart.

Well, of course, the overarching reason to keep it is because out of it are the issues of life. The whole of your life flows from the heart, so that should be reason enough just to cover all these reasons.

But a lot depends upon our care of the heart. And the first reason to make it your great business is the glory of God is much concerned in this.

we hear of heart sins being very provoking to God. The great flood in Noah's day, God says in Genesis 6, 5, and 7, He saw that every imagination of their heart was only evil continually.

So the Lord said, I will wipe mankind whom I have created from the face of the earth. He was looking at their hearts and the mind is one of the faculties of the hearts and just seeing what they're imagining and what they're bringing up.

[17 : 05] It was evil continually, very provocative, provoking God to wrath. David knew the provoking nature of heart sins. And so at the end of Psalm 139, he prays, search me, O God, and just see if there's anything out of place in my life.

No, he doesn't say that. He says, search me, O God, and know my heart. Test me and know my thoughts and see if there be any offensive way in me and then lead me in the way everlasting.

Thoughts, evil thoughts, evil activities of the heart are offensive to God. And so we pray, search that heart, search that mind.

Why? Because, again, it's the dwelling place of our God and we don't want him living in a smoke-filled room filled with evil thoughts and attitudes.

This is what the high and lofty one says, Isaiah 57, 15, He who lives forever, whose name is holy. I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit.

[18 : 16] to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite. He lives here in our hearts and so, ladies, when you have guests coming over to your house for a couple of weeks, you get out the vacuum sweeper and the dust cloth and you go to work, you're wanting to make it presentable for your guests.

Something they can enjoy. How much more for our heavenly guest who's coming to our hearts to stay. We want it to be a place where he enjoys, he finds pleasure and is not provoked, is not grieved, is not quenched.

You know, Jesus said in John 14, 23, if anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My father will love him and we will come to him and make our home with him.

We, father and son, will come and make our home there. When does he do that? When his spirit comes. The Holy Spirit of God comes and the Spirit of God shares the same divine nature with the Father and the Son.

So if the Spirit of God is in you, the Father, the divine nature of the Father and the divine nature of the Son is in you. And that's what we're to remember. We have three divine guests in our hearts by the Spirit's presence.

[19 : 41] And we want it to be the most comfortable, enjoyable place for him. So daily, we keep the heart clean. It's not like he's coming maybe in a year or two. No, he's there already. So, we keep cleansing the heart for the King of Kings.

The fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, bring glory and praise to God. And so, the glory of God is at much at stake in this business.

Jesus said, it's to my Father's glory that you bear much fruit, showing yourself to be my disciple. So when we're like Jesus in the heart, God is glorified because that's his work.

We could never do that. And so he is glorified. That's one reason to make this the greatest business of your life. A second is the sincerity of our profession depends upon a conscientious care of our hearts.

Or to put it another way, the care of our hearts is what differentiates us from an out-and-out hypocrite. A hypocrite has no concern for the heart. What's he concerned about?

[20 : 49] What others see? You know Jesus was constantly dealing with the hypocrites, the Pharisees, and the teachers of the law, and that's what he takes them to task over. God said to his prophet Ezekiel, your countrymen are talking together about you by the walls and at the doors of their houses, saying to each other, come and hear the message that has come from the Lord.

So they seem to have a real interest in hearing the word of the Lord. They're going where the word is going to be preached. But God goes on to tell Ezekiel, my people come to you as they usually do, and they sit before you to listen to your words, but they do not put them into practice.

With their mouths they express devotion, but their hearts are greedy for unjust gain. Indeed, to them you're nothing more than one who sings love songs with a beautiful voice and plays an instrument well, for they hear your words, but they do not put them into practice.

So you see, they profess to be one thing, but their hearts revealed another. And so for the profession to be genuine, the heart must be tended to, or else we're nothing but Pharisees, Pharisees, of whom Jesus said, these people come near to me with their mouth, and they honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.

So David prays, unite my heart to fear your name. A third reason this should be the main business of life is the beauty of our life depends upon keeping the heart.

[22 : 51] Flavel's speaking now of the comeliness, the attractiveness, the true beauty of a person depends upon the keeping of the heart.

There are people that are like a pig with a ring in their snout, Proverbs says. They've got a certain maybe earring or a nose ring in their nose, but they're a pig.

They have a pig nature. A true beauty, you see, has to involve the heart. And a heart kept near God and a heart that's guarded has a beautifying effect upon the whole of life.

It's the beauty of a Christ-like life that Paul tells us adorns the doctrines of God our Savior. That we are to make the gospel beautiful by the way that we live.

There should be something about our lives that say, this gospel that's preached, this gospel that's found in the Bible is a wonderful thing. I see that. I see what it does in his life.

[23 : 58] I see what it does in her life. There's something beautiful about this gospel of Jesus Christ. It's the beauty of holiness that speaks well of the vine to which we're attached and if there's anything beautiful in our lives and in the way of holiness, it's because we're drawing sap.

The same sap that flows into the veins as it were of Jesus, the fruitful vine, is flowing to us. And that's why they're called the fruit of the Spirit because it's the Spirit of Jesus that's producing love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

And oh, that shines out in the world like a light. A person whose life leaves behind the aroma of Christ, the beauty of their well-ordered life grows out of a well-guarded heart, kept in vital communion with God, drawing from Him.

And so, our text, Proverbs 4.23, says, above all else, guard your heart for it is the well-spring of life. And if all the issues of life flow out of the heart, Flavel says, then it's impossible that a disordered and neglected heart should ever produce a well-ordered life.

The heart is the womb of all actions. As goes the heart, so goes the life. So, before the actions break out in our lives, there's first these thoughts interacting with affections, and then the will gets involved, and then we choose how we act.

[25 : 32] And it becomes a habit and leads to a life. But it all began in the heart. Flavel quotes Psalm 37, 30, and 31. The mouth of the righteous man utters wisdom, and his tongue speaks what is just.

The law of his God is in his heart, and his feet do not slip. So, why is his life beautiful in the way that he speaks, in the way he uses his feet, the places he goes, the things that he says?

It's because the law of his God is in his heart. It's in his heart. What rules the heart rules the mouth, feet, and life. So, what else can be the reason why the conversation of many Christians have become so frothy and unprofitable?

Flavel asks, but because the heart is neglected. We're too much like the world instead of beautifully different from the world. And then he says, the attracting beauty of Christians, if it does not win the world to God, will yet at least leave a testimony in their consciences of the excellencies of Christ's people.

So, your beautiful life full of Christ and the Spirit's fruit may not win a person to Christ. It may. You remember the word to wives with unconverted husbands in 1 Peter 3, that they might win their husbands even without a word, just as they see their lives.

[27 : 03] And yet, that doesn't always happen, and where it doesn't happen, it will still leave a witness in their conscience. There will be something of a respect.

That person has a life that, if I were honest, I would say I envy. There's something about them that is attractive. So, the beauty of our life depends upon keeping the heart.

And then, fourthly, our comfortable assurance must, much depends on keeping our hearts. That is, our comfortable assurance. We don't have time for a whole lesson on the assurance of salvation.

Once a person is saved, they can never be lost because salvation is of the Lord and the Lord loses none that he begins the work in. He finishes his work. That's the baseline we start with.

But, the question of assurance is not questioning whether once saved, always saved. The question of assurance is, am I that person that the Bible is talking about that is saved?

[28 : 12] And how do we know that? In other words, how to be saved is one thing. You abandon all trust in anything you do and you put your whole weight on what Jesus has done in living the perfect life that you didn't and dying the death you should have forever and rising again for you.

You put all your trust in and you're saved. But how you know you're saved is another thing. And our confession of faith has a wonderful chapter on it and you can look it up.

I can't remember, it's chapter 21 or something, but it says that assurance is a three-legged stool. There's the promises of God. Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

Whoever believes on me will not perish but have everlasting life. And we just believe the promises. But then there's a second leg and the second leg is that we have the witness of the spirit.

The spirit of adoption has come to live in us. The Holy Spirit, when he comes and inhabits us at the beginning of the Christian life, he's called the spirit of adoption because he assures us that we are the adopted sons of this ancient of days.

[29 : 31] That this majestic God is our father. And just as Jesus prayed, my father, he says, we can now pray that. And the spirit assures us of that, that when I address this holy, holy, holy God, I can say, my father.

God is God is God is God is God is bearing witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, Romans 8, 16, and 17.

But then there's a third leg. And the third leg of assurance is that we see the presence of graces in our lives, the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

We see that God has changed us. I'm not the person I used to be. I once was that, but now I'm this. I'm not what I will be and should be, but I'm not what I was.

And I know that what I am is not by my effort, but that God the Holy Spirit has given me a new heart to make me want to live for Jesus.

[30 : 41] And so when I start seeing things in my life that, wow, like Bunyan or like Newton said down there under the, maybe I called him Bunyan. Did I call him Bunyan?

I'm sorry. I meant John Newton. You correct me now. Come on, people. You just call me down right now. It just hit me that, so my mind's still working. I remember that.

I called him. Now what was I going to, oh, he's down there and he's rowing away. He'd been a blasphemer. People blushed to hear him speak because he blasphemed God.

He blasphemed Jesus Christ. And he's down there working and he's crying out, God, have mercy on me. And it shocked himself.

Instead of blaspheming God, he's calling on God for mercy. And it wasn't just a foxhole prayer like many have and when they're in danger they cry and then when they get out of danger they go right back to the pig pen.

[31 : 41] God. No, when he got out and God did spare his life, he pursued the Lord and he walked in holiness and he became a minister, not saying that that's what you have to be to show, but it showed in a whole lifetime of service to the Lord.

This was no foxhole prayer. And you see with every grace, when we're reading love is patient, love is God, every bit of patience, kindness, humility, forgiveness that you find in your heart, you say, that's God, that's God at work in me.

And that strengthens your assurance. So salvation is sure, you can't lose it, but our assurance is like this. We can go up and down, we can have strong assurance one day and then, oh man, I'm living like the world in this area, what's going on?

And we don't see and feel and know that smile of God, we know his frown of displeasure, not his wrath, but his displeasure, and that hurts our assurance, and we're brought back to confess our sins and to clear the cloud between my Savior and I so that I see again and enjoy his love, and I realize, yes, the one who knows me best loves me most.

And when I come with what I am and confess it, he's ready to forgive me, that in itself is a sign that I'm not the old man I once was. I was too proud to own I was a sinner. Now when I sin, I come back and I ask for mercy and I know that's not of me and so it strengthens my assurance and the verses are too many.

[33 : 26] The whole of 1 John is written for that reason, that we might know that we have eternal life and there are tests in that letter of 1 John. Do you love your brethren?

If not, you're not a Christian. How can you love God whom you've not seen and not love your brother whom you have seen? There's tests, you see.

And so if I find in my heart a love for the brethren, these are my people. I might not have anything in common with you on any other point in life except that we have met at the cross and we have cast our souls upon Jesus and we have found him to be the lover of our souls and the one that's forgiven us and called us to heaven and I have more in common with you than I have with people that may have all the same hobbies and other things with but is not a Christian.

What is that? That's an evidence of the Spirit who binds the people of God in one. This unity is brought by, is inwrought by the Spirit and so with the other tests in 1 John.

But that's all to say that if I'm not guarding my heart and all I'm doing is just guarding my outside, I just want to make sure that you people don't see me the way that I really am and that I really look good on Sunday for you and I look holy and I'm doing the right things in the right place with the right people at the right time doing the right thing.

[34 : 48] I'm happy. That's the Pharisee. That's the hypocrite. And so this keeping of the heart shows, oh, this guy's more than a hypocrite.

And it says that tells me myself, now we're still guilty of hypocrisy. You know, it's one thing to have the sin of hypocrisy.

It's another thing to be characterized as a hypocrite. So I have to confess hypocrisy. I was more concerned about what you would think than what God thought.

Forgive me, Lord. But the fact that I come back and say, forgive me, Lord, shows I'm not a hypocrite. I acted like one.

It was the sin of hypocrisy. But God has made me something than what I was, only concerned with the outside. So you can see how keeping the heart keeps our assurance swelling with comfort.

[35 : 49] God is at work within me. As by our fruits, we're known both to others and known to ourselves. Examine yourselves to see whether you're in the faith.

Test yourself. Where we see the work of God's grace, we find great comfort and assurance. So that's the fifth, the fourth.

And then the fifth is the improvement of our graces depends upon guarding our hearts. The heart's the soil out of which grows words and acts.

And so as we improve, or as we guard our hearts, our graces flourish. So the guarding of the heart is the guarding of the ground. If you're a gardener, you're tending that soil and making sure that that soil is healthy and fed and has the nutrients in it.

And so what happens when the soil is good? Well, the plants then are healthy. And so guarding the heart from sin and things that are noxious to these graces in the Christian life, if those are pulled out, the roots, the weeds are pulled out, you're keeping the soil conducive to the word of God flowering in the graces of the Christian life.

[37 : 08] So if we would grow in grace, we must guard our hearts. And lastly, the stability in the hour of temptation depends upon this heart work. The heart left unguarded is an easy victory for Satan's temptation.

It's like an enemy finding the city gates left wide open and unguarded. Well, they just have to walk in. And so when we're not guarding our heart, sin becomes very easy. It becomes easier than when we're guarding our hearts.

Maybe you've noticed on the days when you just rush into your day and not a thought toward God and not a prayer, not a Bible read. You find it easier to sin.

God's not there with you in your own mind as it is. And so to guard our hearts helps us in the hour of temptation. Because temptation to sin grows in power the longer it's considered in the heart.

The more thought we give to it, the more it feeds on itself. It's like a huge rock up on a hill. When is it easiest to stop that rock in its downward roll?

[38 : 18] 20 feet down the hill or two inches? As it's just beginning, you stop it there. Because if you aren't guarding your heart and you're letting that sin roll, it's gaining power with each thought.

until the power of the temptation is more than you can handle. So temptation is never easier to resist than in its first motions.

Remember that. The very first temptation, the very first thought of sin, that's the time to reject it. Sometimes I see my thoughts coming down a conveyor belt.

And you know how people do on the conveyor belt and they're picking out the bad ones and sorting out the bad from the good. And sometimes I just see it in that way, that my thoughts are on a conveyor belt.

That's a bad one. And I just have to even sometimes just verbally say, God, that wasn't worthy of my thought. I must reject it. But the quicker we can do that, the more stability we have in the hour of temptation, lest it gain power over us.

[39 : 29] So there's some strong reasons to give ourselves to this business of guarding our hearts. In the next weeks that are coming, Roger and Jeremy will lead us through, and myself, through specific seasons in our life where we need to guard our hearts and how that looks in those seasons.

So how to guard the heart in these seasons of affliction when we're going through trials. How to guard it during times of prosperity when everything's going hunky dory.

When we're sick. Have you thought about that? How do I guard my heart when I'm sick? How do I guard it when I'm going through spiritual darkness and I don't have a clue where God's leading me?

How do I guard it when I'm being persecuted or mistreated? How do I guard it in temptation? So that's where we're headed. May the Lord stir us to the guarding of our hearts with the bottom line motivation that we want sweet fellowship with our Lord Jesus and the Father and the Spirit who come to dwell in our hearts by grace.

Well, we're dismissed. Well, we're dismissed.