

Guarding Your Heart

by John McGregor

John McGregor emphasizes the importance of guarding our hearts as the source of life and aligning our desires with Christ in the new year.

Duration: 10:26

Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:10

Topics: "Heart"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the importance of guarding the heart as we enter into a new year. He emphasizes the need to be cautious not to forget the Lord in times of prosperity and not to question God when faced with adversity. The speaker highlights the significance of the heart, stating that it is the place where assurance of salvation and the enabling of the Spirit of God reside. He shares a personal story of forgiveness and encourages listeners to allow Jesus to carry them through difficult situations.

Transcript

Let me add my word of thanks for your kindness. You guys are so good to us, and it's wonderful to be in the family of God together. And one of the things we've experienced over the years as part of the congregation here is just the sense of belonging and the love of God that you have as a family.

And it's marvelous, you know, to come and to worship together. It's good to praise the Lord, is it not? And I was listening a little bit as you were singing forth his praises, and I was thinking about Jesus. And you know, the same Jesus that we lift up this morning is worshipped all around the world.

And I'm happy this morning we have two guests from Liberia. Two brothers sitting here in the middle, and I'm mentioning it because I hope you'll take opportunity to say hello to them. It's good to welcome John from Kenya, and he's from east side of Africa, and these two men are originally from the west side of Africa.

Sharif, here sitting closest to Michael Timchak, is a refugee, and his wife and six children are in a refugee camp in Sierra Leone. And so we could certainly pray for him, and I know he would appreciate that. He's a friend of a friend of mine in Ontario, and so that's how we kind of got hooked up.

And it's great to have you both in the service this morning. Aby is here in Regina, and he's been here six years, so he knows all about the weather. A very warm welcome to you both in this new year.

And as we think about our new year and setting the course for 2010, you think about the task that God has assigned us to, to reach people with his love and with his goodness and with his grace. And, you know, I want to just take us to one verse this morning in Proverbs chapter 4 and verse 23, and we'll spend a few moments just thinking about one verse. It isn't very often that we do only one verse.

But it's a good verse. It's an excellent verse as we think upon this new year. Do you ever make New Year's resolutions? I think many are the years that I have resolved I shall lose weight.

Brad says give up. So anyway, I think we do that from time to time, and if you're like me, you can end up being disappointed also in some of the things that we resolve to do, and we never kind of quite make it. So I thought this time we would take just a look at the heart.

What will God do this year? And the issue is always an issue of the heart. And if you just keep your finger there in Proverbs 4 and slip over to Proverbs 23 in verse 7, it says something significant about the heart. Think I have it wrong? No, we're okay.

He is the kind of man who is always thinking about the cost. Eat and drink, he says to you, but his heart is not with you. There's all kinds of things that can be in the heart, and when the heart is not right, you get all kinds of tugs.

Do this, do that. This will make you happy. This will give you what you're really looking for, but you know the issue is the heart, your heart and mine.

And so let's read our verse this morning in Proverbs 4 and 23. Here's what it says. Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.

Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life. Now here's a good piece of scripture for us to start 2010 with. As you think about this year and its opportunities and its challenges and all of those things, where do you get the truth? Where do you get that foundation that you can actually stand on and trust in fully? And here you know scripture gives us clear instruction as we start off this year.

Above all else. Well, if you put something above all else, where is it? It's an absolute priority for life. So what you set above all else is that which counts more than any other thing in your life and in your heart.

And so as you think with me this morning about this guarding of the heart, what is it talking about? Well, you know, the scripture tells us there are many, many things about the heart. You can look in Concordance and it's just such a big list of verses where heart is mentioned. But you know, before conversion, before we come to know the Lord Jesus as our Savior, it tells us in Jeremiah 17, 9 that the heart is deceitful above all things and dreadfully wicked.

Who can know it? What an interesting verse that is. That says that we can't even know our own heart. And we've certainly seen that, have we not? People change.

They bounce around according to the wind that blows and so on because we need an anchor in the heart that keeps us in that secure place, in that honest place of integrity before God. Before conversion, our flesh holds sway in our heart. You know what I mean by that? Oh, that looks so good.

I think I'll get that. Oh, wait a minute. That's a better model and that's cheaper.

I'll get that one. And it's all about me and my and the things that I want and desire. The heart, you know, can be full of envy as well.

In Psalm 37, 1 and 2, it says don't be envious of the wicked. Don't be envious. Well, you can be envious of all kinds of things.

If only I had that, I'd be so happy. Hmm. Now, answer that question for me this morning.

If only I had, I'd be so happy. What do you think it would be? Sharon says Jesus. That's a good answer.

Yeah. But, you know, we sometimes find those things that pull at us. If only I had this or that.

The heart. It's about the heart. And scripture gives us this clear instruction to guard the heart above everything else.

Did you see when we come to know the Lord Jesus, he comes to reside in the human heart. And he comes to sit there as upon his throne. He is the sovereign Lord, Dan, of our lives.

He is the supreme king of each one who has trusted in him. And that leads us to a place where we want to pay close attention to what the king of kings and Lord of Lords says. Rather than having all of those things in our heart that tug us here and there and somewhere else.

To be centered this year on the king. On Jesus. On his word.

Because his word will not guide you wrongly. It will guide you in the right path. And it will show you the way to all kinds of wonderful blessings.

We want to pay close attention to his word if we're going to guard our hearts. You see, when we are ready to get up in arms about something and say, it's mine. If we're guarding the heart, we're really going to come to say, it's his.

And he is mine. What would happen to all the arguments and all the struggles and so on if we let go of all those things that hold on to us and just hold on to Jesus? Guard your heart above all things, scripture says. We'd spend that time in prayer.

Seeking him and knowing him. Guarding the heart against outside influences and things that want to pull us here and there.

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