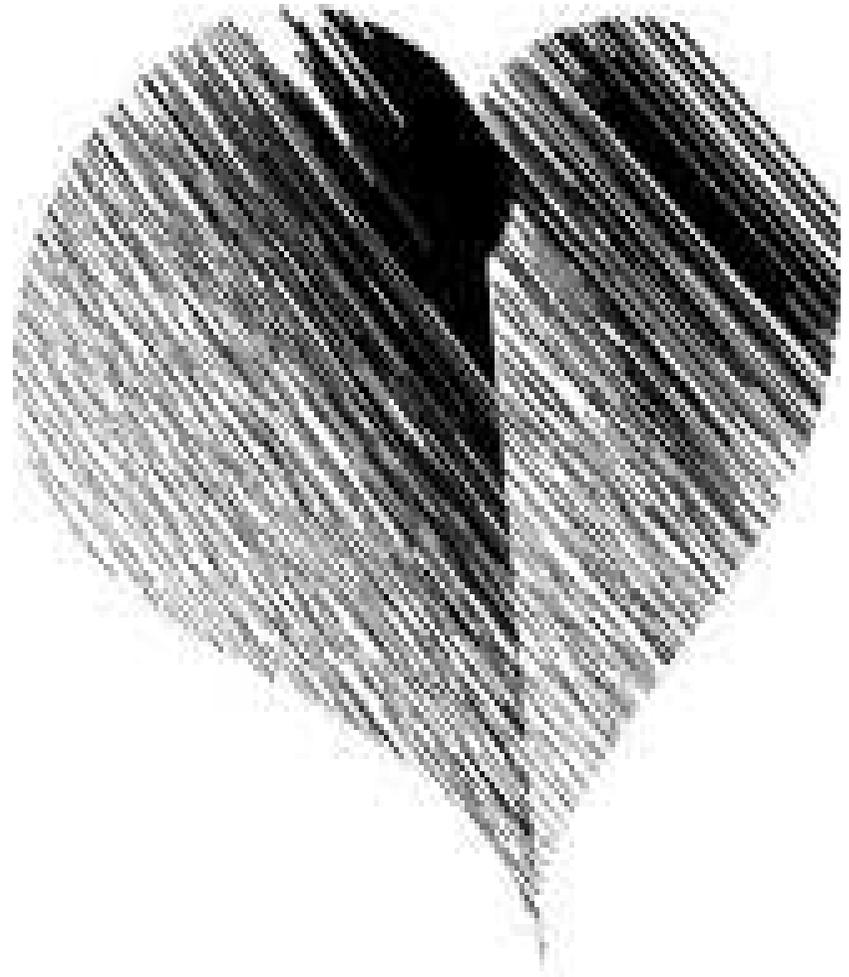


The heart of man.

- Jeremiah 17:9. The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it.



The heart of man.

- Hebrews 3:10.

That is why I was angry with that generation, and I said. ‘Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.’

(Matthew Henry: Sin not only provokes God, but it grieves Him. A hardened heart is the spring for other sins. One sin allowed makes way for another, and every act of sin confirms the habit.)

- Psalm 95:10.

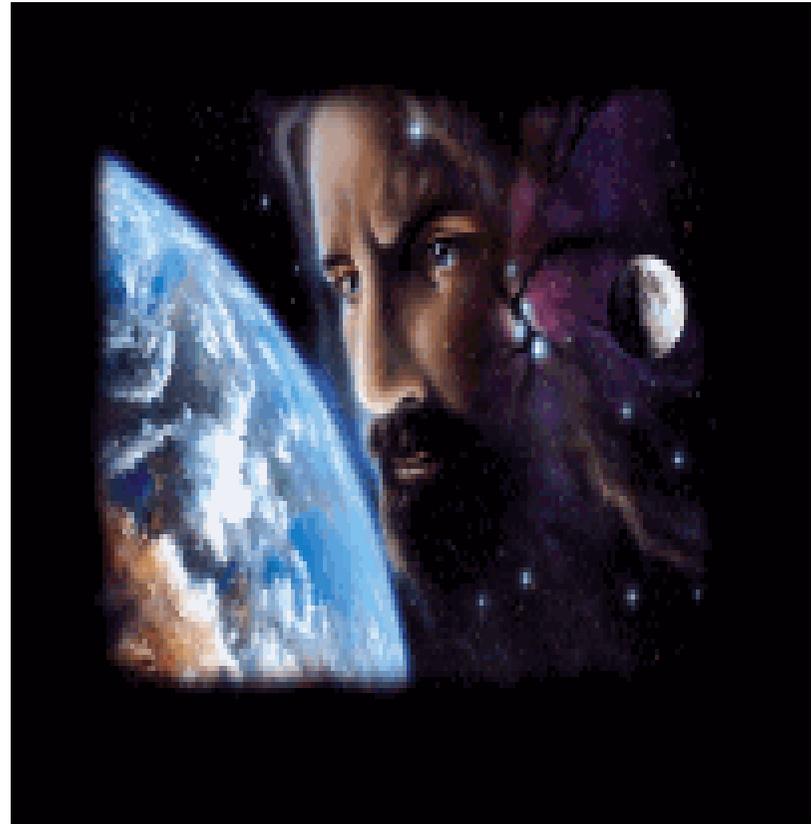
For forty years I was angry with that generation; I said, ‘They are a people whose hearts go astray, and they have not known my ways.’

➤ **From these scriptures we can see that there is a dire need for us to guard our hearts and keep them on track.**

REMEMBER: THE MIND ALWAYS JUSTIFIES WHAT THE HEART EMBRACES.

The fool in Psalm 14.

- **The fool says in his heart, “There is no God”.** They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good.
- The LORD looks down from heaven on all mankind to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God.
- All have turned away, all have become corrupt; there is no-one who does good, not even one.



Comment on Spurgeon regarding the fool.

Romans 1:20-21.

Says they became foolish by exchanging the truth of God and exalting the creature over the Creator (by put their own agenda ahead of His).

Verse 26-32. *tells us that, because of this exchange, God gave them up to vile passions and a debased mind. It would appear that part of this debased mindset is the denial of the (verse 20) universal revelation of His eternal power and Godhead.*

So the fool who has said “no, God” eventually becomes foolish enough to believe there is “no God.” Dabbling in sin, choosing our will over the revealed will of God has a price and that is a hardened, foolish heart.

An example of this process is revealed as we see God harden Pharaoh’s heart as Pharaoh continues in rebellion.

Guard your heart.

- Proverbs 4:3.

Guard your heart with diligence for it is the wellspring of life.

- We put alarms on our houses and cars and put password protection on our computers and bank accounts, **but we leave our hearts and minds open to be infiltrated by envy and lust and bitterness** as we expose ourselves to TV programs and magazines/books and bad company with advice and suggestions and ideas that are contrary to God's Word.



Things to guard your heart against.

Luke 16:10-15. (Worldliness)

10 “Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. 11 So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? 12 And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else’s property, who will give you property of your own?”

13 “No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other.

You cannot serve both God and Money.”

14 The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. 15 He said to them, “You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, **but God knows your hearts. What is highly valued among men is detestable in God’s sight.**”



Things to guard your heart against.

- Matthew 6:19-21. (Worldliness)

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.



For where your treasure is, there your heart will also be.

- Hebrews 3:12. (Unbelief)

See to it, brothers, that none of you has a **sinful, unbelieving heart** that turns from the living God.

(We see in Hebrews 3:18,19. that unbelief and disobedience go hand in hand, just like faith and obedience go hand in hand in James 2.)

Things to guard your heart against.

- **James 3:13-16.** (Envy Selfish ambition)

Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. **But if you harbour bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts,** do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such wisdom “does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.”

- **To harbour a thought, is to give it permission to stay, we all have to deal with wrong thoughts, but we don't have to accommodate them.**

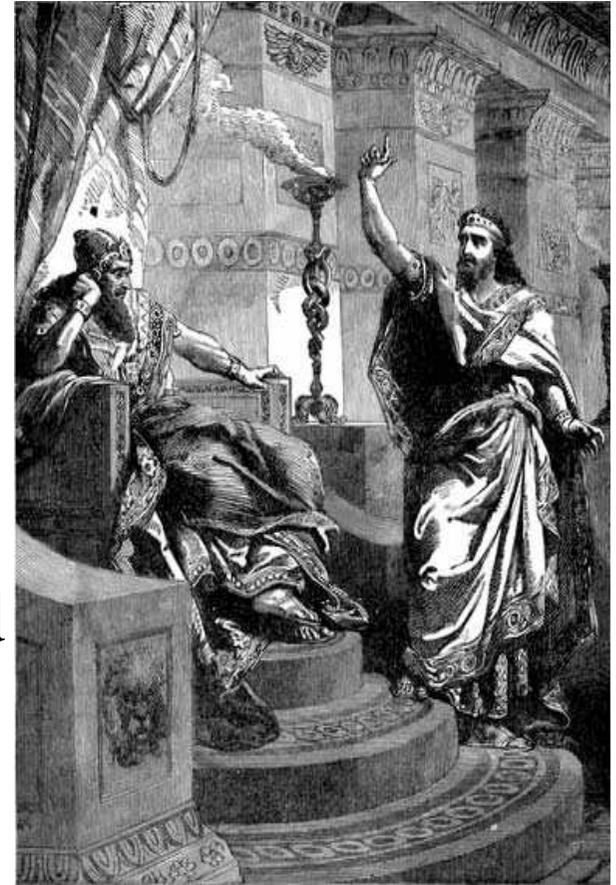
Things to guard your heart against.

- Daniel 5:20,21. (Pride)

But when his heart became arrogant and hardened with pride, he was deposed from his throne and stripped of his glory. He was driven away from people and given the mind of an animal; he lived with the wild donkeys and ate grass like cattle; and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven, until he acknowledged that the most high God is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and sets over them anyone he wishes.

- Proverbs 17:3.

The crucible for silver and the furnace for gold, but the Lord tests the heart.



The heart of man.

➤ The reason we need to guard our hearts is because that is where God puts his laws as we enter into the new covenant spoken of in the Old and New Testaments.

- Jeremiah 31:33.

This is the covenant I will make declares the Lord I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts.

- Hebrews 10:16.

This is the covenant I will make with them after that time says the Lord, I will put my laws in their hearts and write them on their minds.

➤ God is not interested in a shallow service that pays lip service only.

- Mark 7:6.

*He replied Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: “These people honour me with their lips, but **their hearts are far from me.**”*

The heart God wants.

- Deuteronomy 6:5.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

(Since the law is fulfilled in Christ this should be the desire you have when you have been “Born again”)

- Proverbs 3:5-6.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart.

- Jeremiah 29:13.

And you shall seek me and you shall find me when you search for me with all your heart.

The Parable of the sower.



- **The parable of the sower sounds a warning to us to guard our hearts, if we look at the answer Jesus gave his disciple as to why he spoke in parables we see even more reason why we should be very concerned about the state of our heart.**
- Before we look at the parable and the meaning of it, let us see why Jesus said he spoke in parables.

The Parable of the sower.

- **Matthew 13:10-15.**

The disciples came to him and asked, Why do you speak to the people in parables? He replied, “because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. Whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. This is why I speak to them in parables:

“Though seeing they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand. In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: “You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.

For this people’s heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.

The Parable of the sower.

- **Show you tube clip on the sower.**

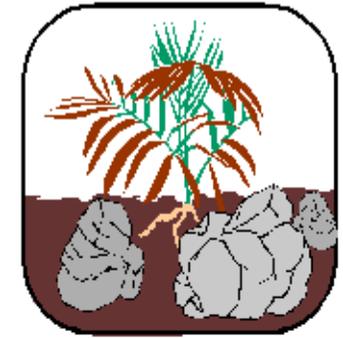
The Parable of the sower.

- The only variant in the parable of the sower is the soil.
- The soil represents the heart.
- ❖ **What kind of heart do you have.**
 - ✓ Hard..
 - ✓ Stony..
 - ✓ Thorny..
 - ✓ Good..

A Sower Went Out to Sow



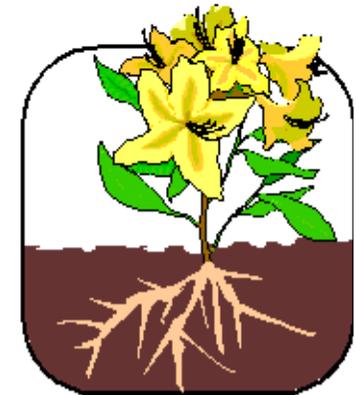
packed soil



stony ground



thorny ground



good soil

The Parable of the sower.

- Matthew 13:18-23.

Now here is the explanation of the story I told about the farmer sowing grain:

The seed that fell on the hard path represents those who hear the Good News about the Kingdom and don't understand it. Then the evil one comes and snatches the seed away from their hearts. **The rocky soil** represents those who hear the message and receive it with joy. But like young plants in such soil, their roots don't go very deep. At first they get along fine, but they wilt as soon as they have problems or are persecuted because they believe the word.

The thorny ground represents those who hear and accept the Good News, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the cares of this life and the lure of wealth, so no crop is produced. **The good soil** represents the hearts of those who truly accept God's message and produce a huge harvest -- thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted."

The Parable of the sower.

Hard ground. (A hard heart is a choice)

- **Zechariah 7:8-14.**

...They made their hearts as hard as flint.....

- **Hebrews 3:7.**

Today if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts.



➤ **Our hearts need to be prepared to receive God's word.**

- **Hosea 10:12.**



**12 Sow righteousness for yourselves,
reap the fruit of unfailing love,
and break up your unplowed ground;
for it is time to seek the LORD,
until he comes
and showers his righteousness on you.**

The Parable of the sower.

Stony ground. (A stony heart is a choice)

The rocky soil represents those who hear the message and receive it with joy. But like young plants in such soil, their roots don't go very deep. At first they get along fine, but they wilt as soon as they have problems or are persecuted because they believe the word.



➤ There are many who choose their own comfort and pleasure above God's purposes and plans. Some have even formulated doctrine to justify their own agenda of living a life free of trials and persecution.

- 2 Timothy 3:12.

All that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

- John 16:33.

In this world you shall have trouble, but take heart, I have overcome the world.

The Parable of the sower.

Thorny ground. (Thorny ground is a choice)

- **The thorny ground** represents those who hear and accept the Good News, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the cares of this life and the lure of wealth, so no crop is produced.



- **Philippians 4:6-7.**

Do not be anxious about anything but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God, and the peace of God which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

- **Luke 21:34.**

Be careful or your heart will be weighed down with carousing and drunkenness and the cares of this life and that day will close on you suddenly like a trap.

The Parable of the sower.

- **Hebrews 6:5-12.**

7 Land that drinks in the rain often falling on it and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is farmed receives the blessing of God. 8 But land that produces thorns and thistles is worthless and is in danger of being cursed. In the end it will be burned.

9 Even though we speak like this, dear friends, we are convinced of better things in your case—the things that have to do with salvation. 10 God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. 11 We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, so that what you hope for may be fully realized. 12 We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.

The Parable of the sower.

- **Just as man's sin resulted in the ground been cursed and bringing up thorns, so sin has also affected man's heart.**

Jeremiah 4:3-4.

3 This is what the LORD says to the people of Judah and to Jerusalem:

**“Break up your unplowed ground
and do not sow among thorns.**

**4 Circumcise yourselves to the LORD,
circumcise your hearts,**

you people of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem,
or my wrath will flare up and burn like fire
because of the evil you have done—
burn with no one to quench it.

The Parable of the sower.

- **The good soil** represents the hearts of those who truly accept God's message and produce a huge harvest thirty, sixty, or even



a hundred times as much as had been planted."

James 4:8-10.

8 Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

The Parable of the sower.

❖ Bible rap.

One day a farmer went out to sow Scattering seed to and fro
Some fell along the path which could not deliver from God's wrath
For the devil took what they hadn't craved
So they didn't believe and were not saved.
Some fell on rocks but withered and died
For their faith was not deep enough to be qualified
To receive the life God promised to those Who really believed Jesus died and arose.
Yes at first they were overjoyed But when trials came their faith was destroyed
For they received it without their faith being rooted
And so fell away after they were persecuted
But then some among thorns fell But in the end didn't mature too well.
For they were too concerned for their security To bring any fruit to maturity
But those on good soil retained what they heard It wasn't taken away by any bird
Nor did they fall away like those on the rock
But continued to believe when others did mock
The problems in life would not make them stop
And by persevering they produced a crop

Guard your heart.

□ What are your priorities?

- 1 Peter 3:15.

But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord.

➤ Has the Lord got first place in your life or are there other altars that need to be torn down?

Sport: In 2005 it was reported that the US spent more than \$200 billion on sports merchandise.

➤ We have a responsibility to clean up our heart “Pull down some altars.”

- James 4:8-10.

Purify your hearts you double minded.

- Matthew 5:8.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

- Psalms 24:34.

Who may ascend the hill of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart.....

Guard your heart.

➤ What have you got stored in your heart.

- Luke 6:45.

A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.

➤ What are you doing to store the right things in your heart?

- Psalm 119:11.

I hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

- Ephesians 5:19.

Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord.

➤ WHAT FLOWS FROM YOUR MOUTH

- Matthew 12:34.

The mouth is the overflow of the heart.

James 3:10.

Is it blessing and cursing from the same mouth



Guard your heart.

➤ **Fellowship is vital to guard your heart.**

- **Hebrews 3:13.**

But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today”, so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.

It is not good for man to be alone. (Accountability is vital)

Hebrews 10:25. not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Matthew 24:12. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, 13 but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. 14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

Guard your heart.

- Jeremiah 17:9.

The heart of man is deceitful....

➤ **Because our hearts are prone to sin and deceit, we need God to examine us and expose sin.**

- Psalm 139:23.

Search me oh God and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts...

- Hebrews 4:12.

The Word of God.... A discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

➤ **Once God has exposed our sin, we need to repent.**

- Psalm 66:18.

If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.

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