

Spiritual Health Check-Up: How's Your Heart?

Proverbs 4:23

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for from it flow the springs of life.*
(Proverbs 4:23 ESV)

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*Above all else, guard your heart,
for everything you do flows from it.*
(Proverbs 4:23, NIV)

I. What does it mean to guard your heart
above all else?

Chuck Swindoll says it refers to “our inner being, our seat of consciousness, our core of decision-making, the center of our mind, our emotions, and our will.”

The ESV says *Keep your heart*;

the NASB says *Watch over your heart*;

several translations like the NIV say *Guard your heart*.

We are instructed to guard our heart:

with all vigilance (ESV);

with all diligence (NASB);

above all else (NIV).

II. Why should I guard my heart?

for from it flow the springs of life.
(ESV and NASB)

for everything you do flows from it.
(NIV)

The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.
(Luke 6:45)

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*The heart is deceitful above all things, and
desperately sick; who can understand it?
(Jeremiah 17:9).*

I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (Jer.31:33)

“Several verses in the New Testament speak in a quite positive way about the condition of our hearts. If we’ve been born again . . . there’s a goodness to them that has to be protected.

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*Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we
have confidence before God. (1 John 3:21)*

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*Purify your hearts, you double-minded.
(James 4:8)*

“So, even though the New Testament talks about our hearts as having been cleansed when we’re born again, James says you can have bitter jealousy in your heart as a Christian, and you can have selfish ambition, and you can be double-minded. And so, while our hearts aren’t perfect, there is a goodness in them (by Jesus’ work within us) that needs to be protected and guarded. Keep your heart with all vigilance because it can go astray.”

- Wayne Grudem

For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person. (Mark 7:21-23)

III. How can I guard my heart?

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Keep your heart pure; don't pollute it.

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Stay close to God through Bible study and prayer.