

Amazing Potential

- The amazing potential of each human infant:
- *For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. 14 I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. Ps 139:13-14 Gen 1:31*
- Potential: An eternal soul in the image of God, gaining intelligence and skill directing a body designed to function in this creation:
- planning for the future,
- working in the present
- remembering the past.

Have We Reached our Potential?

- Many never reach full potential. We didn't protect heart against detours and dead ends.
- God revealed our full potential when He created us
- *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion ... 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Gen 1:26-28*
- To reach our fullest potential we have to guard our heart against all the detours leading nowhere or the paths leading to a dead end.

Guarding (Keeping) our Heart

- *Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life. Pr. 4:23*
- Our potential for purity and holiness:
- *To the pure all things are pure: but to them that are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but both their mind and their conscience are defiled. Titus 1:15*
- Our Potential for a good conscience
- *their conscience bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing them Rom 2:15*

Our Spiritual / Moral History

- Our life began with innocent purity. When we did what was right we felt good.
- At some point we gave in to evil and defiled.
- In the next few days, we made a choice.
- We listened to our conscience, and strengthened our purity and goodness?
- Did we give in to evil lust again, deadening and defiling our mind and our conscience?
- *To the pure all things are pure: but to them that are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but both their mind and their conscience are defiled.*

The Person we are Today

- The purity we had as an infant slowly changed to whatever perversions we now have in our mind. We did this **one lust and one temptation at a time**
- If we minimized the lusts and “*set nothing wicked before my eyes*” (*Ps 101:3-4*), we maintained our purity in those areas.
- If we realized “*evil companionship corrupt good morals*” (*1Cor. 15:33*), and did not develop such relationships, to that degree,
- Able to “*keep oneself unspotted from the world.*” (*Jas. 1:27*)

The Battle is different for Each of Us

- *“God made man upright but they sought out many schemes (devices)” Ecc. 7:29*
- Paul spoke in a very personal way about keeping his heart.
- *“I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind.” Rom 7:22-23*

Keeping Your Heart with Diligence

- Peter revealed how Christians guard hearts:
- *Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 1Pet. 1:13-16*
- It takes continuous effort, monitoring, trust and obedience to God's Instructions:
- *as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; 15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."*

Eternal Soul is Ours to Win or Lose

- It is up to us to keep the pure heart God gave us as clean and undefiled as possible.
- Even a single experience can open new defiling sources into our heart, and activate a lust that can create a lifetime of sorrow and regret.
- *Incline my heart to Your testimonies, And not to covetousness. 37 Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things, And revive me in Your way. Ps 119:36-37*

David & Joseph

- David, “*the man after God’s own heart*” As he watched Bathsheba bathe, allowed a lust to activate
- While Job had made a “*covenant with his eyes*” (Job 31:1-10) David had not. The lust won and defilement reigned.
- Joseph cried out “*how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*” (Gen. 39:9).
- The progression is always the same. “*Each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lusts and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death* Jas. 1:14-15

We Must Guard and Protect Heart

- Born pure and holy with no lust or defilement
- We sowed in our youth and still reap them today.
- The Only Solution:
- *Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. 2 Tim 2:22-23*
- It never too late.
- **we are today what we sowed yesterday,**
- **we will be tomorrow what we sow today.**
- *But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts. Rom 13:14*

Those who Won / Those who Lost

- *Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, 1Pet. 2:11*
- *they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved. 2 Pet 2:19*
- *Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. Gal 6:7-8*

Those who Guard and those who Don't

- *A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks. 46 "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say? Luke 6:45-47*
- Are we the good man/woman?
- Have we kept our heart with all diligence.
- It is never too late.

Guarding the Heart is Painful

- *If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life crippled, than, having your two hands, to go into hell, into the unquenchable fire, 44 45 If your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame, than, having your two feet, to be cast into hell, 47 If your eye causes you to stumble, throw it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, than, having two eyes, to be cast into hell, 48 where **THEIR WORM DOES NOT DIE, AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED.** Mark 9:43-48*

Guarding the Heart is Painful

- *Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. 25 For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. Matt 16:24-26"*

- If we keep our hearts with all diligence by limiting the evil they bring in, while at the same time filling it with the powerful Will of God, we will be transformed through a gradual metamorphosis into a new creation, and will have a wealth of good treasure in our hearts. We will then reap eternal life!
- *But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, 2 Cor 3:18*