

Lord, Help Us to Keep Our Hearts
(Proverbs 4:23)

Introduction:

1. In this verse, Solomon:
 - a. revealed a responsibility that God wants His people to fulfill -- "keeping [guarding, protecting] the heart"
 - b. showed **how** God wants His people to fulfill this responsibility -- "*with all diligence*"
 - c. explained **why** God wants His people to fulfill this responsibility -- "*out of it are the issues of life.*"
2. We certainly need to depend upon the Lord for help in keeping our hearts.
3. A good approach for us to adopt is "*Lord, help me to keep my heart.*"
4. In our lesson we are concentrating on the Lord's teaching in the Gospels concerning "the heart."
5. Let us begin by examining . . .

Discussion:

- I. THE LORD'S TEACHING IN MATTHEW
 - A. Jesus taught in the Beatitudes that those who are pure in heart will receive a special blessing (5:8).
 - B. To illustrate how the issues of life are out of the heart, Jesus taught that:
 1. adultery may be committed in the heart (5:27-28)
 2. the location of a person's treasure is where his heart will be (6:19-21)
 3. a person's words are an indication of his heart's condition (12:34-37).
 - C. Activities that involve the heart include:
 1. forgiveness (18:35)
 2. loving God (22:37).
- II. THE LORD'S TEACHING IN MARK
 - A. All types of sin originate in the heart (7:20-23).
 - B. Jesus does not approve of "hardness of heart" (16:14).
- III. THE LORD'S TEACHING IN LUKE
 - A. To hear God's Word properly a person must have "an honest and good heart" (8:15, 18a).
 - B. God knows the condition of our hearts (16:15).
- IV. THE LORD'S TEACHING IN JOHN
 - A. A hard heart prevents belief (12:37-41; Isaiah 6:9-10).
 - B. Jesus provides help for the troubled heart (14:1, 27).

Conclusion:

1. In Proverbs 4:23 the wise man revealed a very important responsibility when he called upon God's people to keep our hearts.
2. Thankfully, we have the Lord's instructions in the Gospels that will help us to keep our hearts.
3. Will the condition of your heart permit you to see God? (Matthew 5:8)