

## “A Better Way 9” Guarding Our Heart

### I. Knowing God

#### A. A Personal Relationship

John 17:3 (TPT) **Eternal life means to know and experience You as the only true God, and to know and experience Jesus Christ, the Son whom you have sent.**

**DEFINE:** Know - the Most Intimate Personal Relationship that Two People can Have.

God Loves Us and Longs for a Relationship with Us. The Main Purpose of Salvation is Not Just the Forgiveness of Our Sins, Salvation is all about Having God as Our Best Friend.

#### B. An Undivided Heart

Ezekiel 11:19–20 (NIV) <sup>19</sup> **I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh.** <sup>20</sup> Then they will follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. *They will be my people, and I will be their God.*

Each of Us are Responsible for Our Own Heart, We Determine whether Our Hearts are Sensitive or Hardened Toward God.

#### C. Guarding Our Heart

Proverbs 4:23 (NKJV) **Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it *spring* the issues of life.**

There is nothing We can do to Make God Love Us More, but there are Things We can do that will Harden Our Heart Towards God and Make Us Love Him Less.

### II. The Hardened Heart

Hebrews 3:8 (NKJV) **Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.** *In the day of trial in the wilderness,*

**DEFINE:** A Hardened Heart - A Heart that becomes Cold, Insensitive, Unresponsive and Unyielding to God.

**PRINCIPLE 1:** A Person with a Hard Heart is not just Someone who is Living in Sin and Open Rebellion; A Hard-Hearted Person is also Someone Who has become Calloused and Insensitive to God!

#### A. Things that Harden Our Hearts

##### 1. Sin / Disobedience

James 4:17 (NKJV) Therefore, **to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.**

**DEFINE:** Sin - Direct Disobedience to the Things that God has Told Us Not to Do, but We do it Anyway.

**PRINCIPLE 2:** Our Disobedience (Sin) does not Change God’s Heart toward Us, but it does Change Our Heart Toward God!

##### a. Sin Desensitizes Our Heart

Hebrews 3:13 (NKJV) ... exhort one another daily, while it is called “*Today,*” **lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.**

**PRINCIPLE 3:** A Hard Heart Doesn’t Just Happen, it’s a Process. Insensitivity and Disobedience cause Callousness and Little by Little We become so Dull that We don’t Realize How Far Away We are from God!

Matthew 13:15 (NKJV) **For the hearts of this people have grown dull (*waxed gross*). *Their ears are hard of hearing* ...**

##### 2. Our Focus on in Life

Matthew 6:33 (NKJV) **But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness,** and all these things shall be added to you.

**DEFINE:** Focus - to Seek After; Think Upon.

Proverbs 23:7 (NKJV) **For as he thinks in his heart, so is he...**

**PRINCIPLE 4:** The Things We Place Our Primary Focus on in Life, what We are Seeking After and Thinking About cause Our Hearts to either become Sensitive or Hardened.

##### a. Setting Our Focus on God

Colossians 3:2 (NKJV) **Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.**

**DEFINE:** set - to place in order.

**PRINCIPLE 5:** Becoming Excessively Absorbed and Engrossed with Our Jobs, Families and Hobbies can Harden Our Hearts, if We Make them a Greater Priority than Our Relationship with God.

### 3. God's Call

**PRINCIPLE 6:** A Hard Heart is One that is More Immersed and Captivated with Other Things, Instead of the Things of God.

**Hebrews 11:15–16 (NKJV)** <sup>15</sup> And truly **if they had called to mind that *country* from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return.** <sup>16</sup> *But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country.* Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

**PRINCIPLE 7:** We can be so Involved with the Obligations and Responsibilities of Life that We become Unresponsive and Unyielding toward what God has Called Us to Do!

**Luke 10:41–42 (NKJV)** <sup>41</sup> And Jesus answered and said to her, “**Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things.** <sup>42</sup> **But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.”**

**PRINCIPLE 8:** Being Preoccupied with and Mindful of the Things of the World Captivate Our Attention, and make us Insensitive!