

GUARD YOUR HEART – AGAINST DESPAIR

2 CORINTHIANS 1:8-10 | ERIC SIMPSON | SEPTEMBER 6, 2020

"We can start down that road of doubt and questioning if we want to. But just because the doubts show up doesn't mean you have to let them sit down. They won't linger if they're not welcome. Instead, when it comes to those unwelcome thoughts of doubt and discouragement, how about let's point them to the door. Let's make room for new thoughts to inhabit our minds, thoughts of courage, hope, and belief." – Emily P. Freeman, *The Next Right Thing*

Proverbs 4:23

Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.

kingdom = range of our effective will, those domains where what we say goes

2 Corinthians 1:8-9

8 We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about the hardships we suffered in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life. 9 Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death...

Proverbs 13:12

Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life.

How do we guard our hearts against the “sentence of death”?

1. Examine the fruit of your activities—how is this affecting my heart?

Matthew 7:16

By their fruit you will recognize them...

“The Enemy is far more easily resisted when he is at the door of your heart.” – Thomas a Kempis

What are those life-giving, soul-breathing activities to say *yes* to?

What are those life-draining, soul-deflating activities to say *no* to?

2. Exercise the authority and freedom you’ve been given to pursue hope.

Psalms 42:5-6

Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and 6 my God...

“Have you realized that most of your unhappiness in life is due to the fact that you are listening to yourself instead of talking to yourself? Take those thoughts that come to you the moment you wake up in the morning. You have not originated them but they are talking to you, they bring back the problems of yesterday, etc. Somebody is talking. Who is talking to you? Your self is talking to you. Now this man’s treatment [in Psalm 42] was this: instead of allowing this self to talk to him, he starts talking to himself. ‘*Why art thou cast down, O my soul?*’ he asks. His soul had been depressing him, crushing him. So he stands up and says, ‘*Self, listen for moment, I will speak to you.*’” – Martin Lloyd Jones

There is a stubbornness to taking dominion and rule over our hearts.

- Fear you can’t have my heart.
- Hatred you can’t have my heart.
- Despair you can’t have my heart.

2 Corinthians 1:9-10

9 Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. 10 He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us