

“Insights into Glorifying God in Every Detail of Life”

Proverbs 14:14-20

1/18/23

Proverbs 4:23

The word “heart” in the Bible refers to the totality of our inner nature:

- Our mind
- Our affections
- Our will

Titles of individual proverbs are adapted from *The Wisdom of Proverbs* by Bob Beasley.

1. Make Sure Good Fruit Is Produced by Your Life – 14

“backslider” – this is the person who John wrote about in 1 John 2:19

“in his heart” – he may say that Jesus is God, that salvation is by grace through faith, etc. but:

- His mind refuses to believe
- His desires are to be with the world rather than with God
- His will is choosing the things of the world rather than the things of God

Both lines of this verse are illustrated in contrasting the two Sauls of the Bible:

- King Saul – 1 Samuel 26:21
- Saul who became the Apostle Paul – 2 Timothy 4:6-8

2. Pay Attention to the Word of God – 15

“simple” – gullible, no discernment

Illustration: Eve (she had one weapon the Devil feared - God’s Word). All she needed to say was “God says...”

“prudent” – a person who sees that there will be consequences for something he/she would like to do.

3. Fear Consequences of Sin and Depart from Evil – 16

“cautious” – literally: “fears” – “A wise man fears and turns from evil”

“reckless” – the “reckless” person proudly and angrily dismisses all warnings

4. Don’t be Like the World, But Be Spirit-Controlled and Trust in the Providence of God – 17

“a man of quick temper acts foolishly” – anger is an issue of the heart that the believer definitely needs to apply Proverbs 4:23 to.

- We become angry when our desires aren’t met. We must give our desires to God and seek our ultimate satisfaction in Him and yield our “rights” to Him.
- James 1:20. Our acts of vengeance don’t bring justice but instead they compound sin – Romans 12:17, 21; Ephesians 4:31-32
- Remember God is in control and doing what is good for me – Genesis 50:20; Romans 8:28
- Be Spirit controlled – Ephesians 5:16-23

5. Be Crowned with Knowledge – 18

“crowned” – the Hebrew word has the idea of “surround”.

The knowledge of God is pictured as surrounding the wise person as a shield

Psalm 1:2-3; 19:7-11

6. Be Prepared to Judge the World – 19

“It is easier to understand verse 19 eschatologically than in terms of the here and now. Evil men bow down in the presence of the good? Too often we see just the opposite happening. Wicked men trample all over the righteous. Robbers and rapists terrorize communities.” Robert Alden

“before the good” – happens occasionally now – Joseph’s brothers, Philippian jailer

But it is promised for the future – Isaiah 60:14

1 Corinthians 6:1-3; Revelation 2:26-27

7. Never Show Favoritism to the Rich over the Poor – 20

“disliked by his neighbor” – called “sin” in v. 21

“the rich has many friends” – James warns against being like this – James 2:1-7

Conclusion:

There are 2 steps that we need to do in light of what we’ve seen: Repentance and Faith

Repentance:

- Involves our Mind
- Involves our Affections
- Involves our Will

Faith:

- Involves our Mind
- Involves our Affections
- Involves our Will

(The material on the “heart” in the introduction and the conclusion is adapted from two outstanding articles available from the website gentlereformation.com. Both articles are by Warren Peel

A Spiritual MRI of the Heart

Following Up on a Spiritual MRI of the Heart)