

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Lesson 8

## D1: PROVERBS 4:23

DUE:

Saturday, January 26, 2013

Begin your homework with prayer.

1. Review the lesson on Proverbs 4:23 (January 12, 2013, Guarding the Heart). Identify one thing that impacted you from the lesson. Write it down and explain why you chose it.

2. In Psalm 119:10 the Psalmist says that he seeks God with his **whole** heart. Is your seeking of God in His Word whole-hearted (pure) or half-hearted (tainted)? Reflect on the following questions (you don't need to write out your answers) to evaluate your heart's devotion to God. Remember to do this in the **shadow of the cross, where Jesus died to give us a new heart and reconcile us to Himself.**

Do you usually sense a presence or absence of affection for God?

Do you have an appetite for God's Word?

Are you daily shepherding your heart to God in His Word?

Do your daily routines (including your entertainment choices, internet use and use of free time) reflect that you are guarding your heart above all else?

How do your prayers reflect the vigilance with which you guard your heart?

What lures your heart away from God? (Be specific). Look up James 1:14-15, James 4:4-5, 1 John 2:15-16.

Are you vigilantly guarding your heart away from the polluting influence of those things?

Are there any areas of known disobedience or patterns of sin in your life? What does this reveal about your heart or how you have guarded your heart? Look up Matthew 7:20-23.

Does your life evidence a growing:

love for God?

love for your neighbor?

love for the body of Christ and desire for fellowship with believers?

concern for the lost?

hatred for sin and desire to confess and repent?

desire to forgive others?

trust in God and commitment to obey His Word?

desire for holiness and Christlikeness?

- a. After considering the lesson on Proverbs 4:23 and reflecting on the above questions, and meditating on your position in Christ, ask God to show you what you need to remove from your life that negatively impacts your heart's devotion and what He wants you to put on in its place.
  
  - b. List the changes you will implement to help improve your heart's devotion to God.
  
  
  - c. Give some examples of how you guard your heart.
3. Read Psalm 119:65-80.  
Observe the Psalmist's pattern of praying and how he shepherds his heart through the following:
- a. Write out the repeated words and phrases.
  
  
  - b. List the verses that precede his prayer requests. Make note of any patterns that you see.
  
  
  - c. How does the Psalmist develop and measure his understanding of God and his circumstances, what he values, and how he prays?
  
  
  - d. Write down any observations that challenge you. Ask God to help you orient your thinking and shepherd your heart around His Word.
4. As you progress through your reading plan, watch for other prayers in the Bible. Write down the reference(s) and how you could follow their example in your own prayers.