

Sermon: “How to Keep Your Heart” (Part IV)

I. The 7 “Steps” of “Keeping The Heart”

To “**Keep the Heart**” is to carefully and constantly preserve it from sin (and from anything) that will disorder it! And to maintain the kind of spiritual and Heavenly-minded and grace-filled “frame” which makes a soul “fit” for a life of communion with (and service for) God!

ACT 1): Time “IN” the Word (daily)!

ACT 2): Frequent “self-examinations” of the “frame” of the heart (constantly examining how the case stands with it)!

ACT 3): Deep (and sincere) brokenness over “heart-evils” and “disorders”!

ACT 4): Heartfelt requests in prayer, for heart-purifying and rectifying grace (whenever sin has defiled and disordered it)!

ACT 5): Strong accountability and resolutions (to walk more accurately and closely with God and to avoid even the things that lead to sin)!

ACT 6): A “Holy jealousy”! (i.e.: a pro-active “guarding” of what is “allowed access” into the “gates” of the heart)!

ACT 7): Realizing God’s presence with us and always setting the Lord before us!

II. Key words defined:

A) To “**re•solve**” means: — “to reach a firm decision”;
— “fixity of purpose”
— “a formal expression of intent”

- And (perhaps even more interesting) is the fact that in Scripture the Hebrew word that is often translated “resolved” (in the NIV) is actually (in the Hebrew) 4 words!

And **included** in that combination of words is the idea of:

- “Establishing in concrete” ... and ...
- “Bringing about a change” and ...
- A “setting aside of something” for “special purposes” ...
- And it speaks specifically of these “changes” and “commitments” taking place in the “deepest, innermost feelings of the mind, soul, heart, and (most importantly) the will of the person”! (i.e.: Where the “choices” are “determined” and “set”!!).
- So all of that teaches us that:
This “idea” of “resolutions” is not something that is casually or flippantly done (but rather) it speaks of a strong, clear, well-thought-out, well established ... “intent” and “purposing” in one’s heart, soul, mind, and will to do something which God has called us to do (in advance of facing our “trials” or “temptations”!!).

For the Christian it includes imposing strong “engagements” and “bonds” on ourselves to walk more accurately with God and to avoid the “triggers” (the “occasions” and “circumstances” that we find ourselves most vulnerable to and that (in our case) most often lead us into that same sin!).

B) “**accountability**” — “The state of being “accountable”! To render an account, or to be answerable! (As every man is accountable to God for his conduct)!”

C) “**fellowship**” (In the Greek: **koi•nō•ni•a**). Literally: “Sharing in; Participation in”.

III. What is OUR Application?

A) **ASK** myself:

- What is the sin(s) that “so easily besets me”, personally?
- What can I resolve to do differently ... (before, during, and after the sin) ... to avoid it happening again in the future?

B) **WHO** can I ask to help hold me accountable?

- (Utilize your “**GROWTH GROUP**” as much as possible here for accountability).
- (Also: be aware of ways you might allow yourself to manipulate, avoid, be secretive, be evasive, or be hypocritical with your accountability partner(s)).

C) Be **PRO-ACTIVE** about what you let in (or out of) the “**gates**” of your senses!

- What needs to change?
- How will you make that change?
- When will you start?

(Prov 23:26a); (Jn 3:3); (Ez 36:26, 27); (Prov 4:23); (1 Jn 1:9); (Job 31:1-4); (Mt 5:29, 30); (Gal 5:13, 14); (Jn 13: 34, 35); (Eccl 4:9-10); (Rom 12:10, 16); (Gal 6:1-5); (Heb 10:24-25); (1 Cor 12:21-26); (Phil 3:15-16); (Ps 141:3); (Prov 2:11); (Prov 4:13); (Prov 7:2); (Eccl 5:1); (Phil 4:6,7); (2 Tim 1:14); (1 Cor 16:13); (Mt 26:41); (1 Peter 5:8); (Prov 4:23)