

MAINTAINING A RIGHT HEART



In the book of Proverbs we read,

“Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.” (Proverbs 4:23)

- **The condition of our heart spiritually will greatly determine the outcome of our life**

King David was the only man referred to in the bible as being a man after God's own heart

He wrote, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties;

And see if there is any wicked way in me,

And lead me in the way everlasting."



(Psalm 139:23-24)

"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my ^[h]strength and my Redeemer."

(Psalm 19:14)

In the book of Joel we read,

"Now, therefore," says the Lord, "Turn to Me with all your heart, With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning."

So rend your heart, and not your garments;
Return to the Lord your God, For He is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm." **(Joel 2:12-13)**



- The Lord put on my heart to share a message today on the importance of maintaining a right heart when I meditated on **Joel 2:12-13**



- The simple fact is that we are now living in a world full of secular and ungodly values that can have the potential to dull our affections for the Lord. So today I will be sharing some keys to help us to continually maintain a right heart in the times that we are now living in

- The simple fact is that God in most concerned about our heart being right with Him and not our outward form of expressing our faith



Jesus Himself made this clear when He quoted the words of the Prophet Isaiah, “This people honours Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me.

And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.”
(Mark 6b-7)

- Over recent weeks, the Lord has continually impressed upon my heart the importance of all believers maintaining a right heart, especially given the nearness of the rapture of all true believers



- Having a humble and contrite spirit is also a great key to seeing revival in our hearts and lives and to seeing God moving powerfully in and through our lives as believers

In the book of Isaiah we read,

“For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy:

“I dwell in the high and holy place,

With him who has a contrite and humble spirit,

To revive the spirit of the humble,

And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”

(Isaiah 57:15)

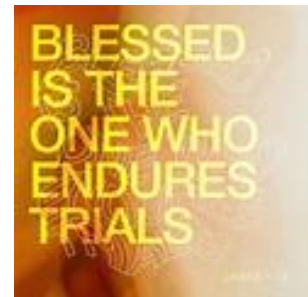


- The bible says much about the heart and the importance of maintaining a right heart
- The condition of our heart spiritually will greatly determine the outcome of our life and the degree to which we walk in victory as a believer



- This is especially the case given the lawless and ungodly times that we are now living

In the book of James we read, “Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He himself tempt anyone.” (James 1:12-13)



“But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full grown, brings forth death. Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.” **(James 1:14-16)**



- So, the condition of our heart spiritually will greatly impact our ability to overcome the trials and temptations of life and greatly determine the outcome of our life

Jesus Himself was “... in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.” (Hebrews 4:15)

For this reason, He was able to say, “I will no longer talk much with you, *for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in me.*” (John 14:30)



Like Jesus we too need to endeavour to give the devil no foothold in our life by keeping our heart with all diligence so that we CAN CONTINUALLY WALK IN VICTORY AND EXPERIENCE THE ABUNDANT LIFE THAT JESUS SPOKE OF

In the book of Proverbs we read,

“For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. “Eat and drink!” he says to you, but his heart is not with you.” (Proverbs 23:7)



- Maintaining a right heart is therefore such a great key to living a victorious and overcoming Christian life and to finishing our walk with the Lord well

- I will now just quickly look at 8 keys to help us to keep our hearts soft towards both God and others, so that we can enjoy the abundant life that Jesus spoke of and realise our full potential in Christ

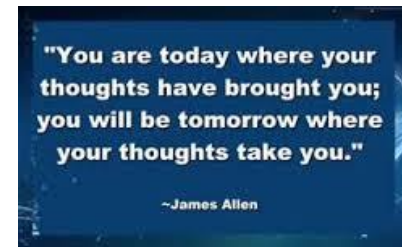


1) We need to be quick to take all wrong and negative thoughts captive and to replace them with what God says in His Word

- We need to take all wrong thoughts captive before they take us captive and become strongholds in our mind
- It more important than ever before that we lead a disciplined thought life
- We all need to win the battle for the mind if we are to fulfil all that God has planned for our life



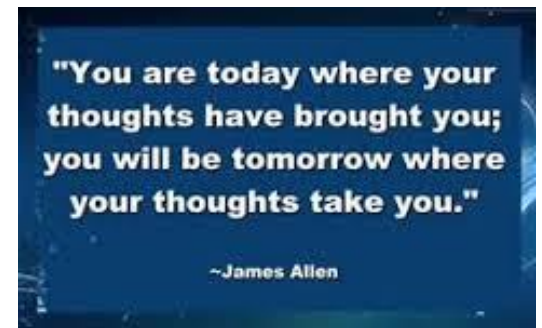
- The thoughts that we entertain in life will ultimately influence our heart attitudes and our actions and our destiny in life
- This is why it is so important that we only entertain Godly and positive thoughts in our mind
- The enemy will continually try and put wrong and negative thoughts in our minds to try and undermine our faith, in order to cause us to lead compromised and defeated lives



WINNING THE BATTLE FOR THE MIND IS THEREFORE CRUCIAL TO LIVING A VICTORIOUS AND OVERCOMING CHRISTIAN LIFE

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote,

- Sow a thought, reap an action
- Sow an action, reap a habit
- Sow a habit, reap a character
- Sow a character, reap a destiny



The Apostle Paul wrote,

“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.” **(2 Corinthians 10:4-5)**



2) We need to continually have the right people in our inner circle of friends

- Ungodly friendships will weaken our character and undermine our faith
- We must choose friends who will encourage us in our walk with the Lord



- The friends that we keep will have a great influence on how successful we are in life. We need people of Godly vision in our life

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Do not be deceived: Evil company corrupts good habits.” (1 Corinthians 15:33)

In the book of Proverbs we read,

“The righteous should choose his friends carefully, For the way of the wicked leads them astray.” (Proverbs 12:26)

The godly give good
advice to their friends;
the wicked lead them
astray.

Proverbs 12:26 NLT



The righteous choose
their friends carefully,
but the way of the wicked
leads them astray.
(Proverbs 12:26)

3) We need to keep short accounts with God (The importance of having a repentant heart)

- When we sin and have wrong attitudes, we need to be quick to repent. This is such a great key to maintaining a soft heart and conscience



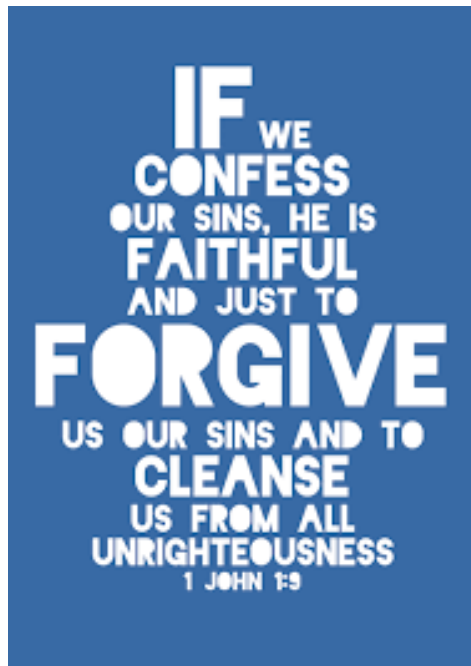
- Having a repentant heart helps us to enjoy sweetness of fellowship with the Lord

- Having a soft heart helps us **to hear clearly from the Holy Spirit** and to sense His warnings before we pursue wrong choices in life that could cause us great pain and suffering



The Apostle John wrote,

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)



4) We need to quickly forgive those who hurt us

- If we allow offences into our heart, it will negatively affect our relationships both with God and with others



- Our unresolved hurts and pains will invariably be passed down to the next generation through our actions and words
- The simple fact is that we will have many opportunities in life to forgive others

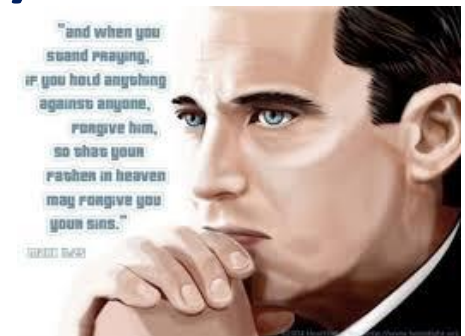
- If we fail to forgive others who have hurt us, we will experience torment in our lives and continue to be victims
- Forgiving others who have hurt us frees us to enjoy healthy relationships in the future



- Forgiving others is crucial to maintaining a healthy heart

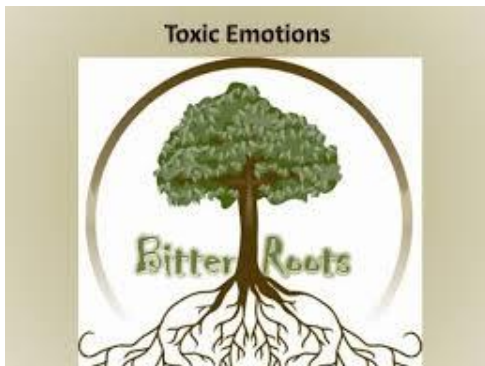
Jesus Himself emphasised the importance of forgiving others when He said,

“And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.” (Mark 11:25-26)



In the book of Hebrews we read,

“Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord; looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;” (Hebrews 12:14-15)



5) We must be careful what we mediate and focus on

- We are living in more and more ungodly times
- More than ever before we need to be disciplined in what we look at and focus on (Especially on the internet)



- The enemy is always looking for an open door into our lives to cause us to stumble and fall

- Even King David, a man after God's own heart, stumbled when he looked out from the roof of his house and saw a woman bathing. A short while later he had an affair with her and was responsible for the death of her husband
- **We all must be careful what we allow into our ear and eye gates**
- We must also continually choose to focus on things that are wholesome and of good report, that will build us up.



What we focus on in life will greatly influence:

- What we talk about in life
- The way that we live our life,
- The degree to which we walk in victory as a believer, and
- The degree to which we wholeheartedly pursue God's plan for our life and embrace the fullness of life that God has planned for us



The Apostle Paul wrote about what we should focus on in the book of Philippians

“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy-meditate on these things.” **(Philippians 4:8)**



Be careful

how you think;

**Your life is shaped by
your thoughts.**

DAILYHOPE
with God's Word

What we focus on will greatly affect our heart attitudes and desires and will determine how fruitful we are in our walk with the Lord

Jesus Himself emphasised this in his explanation of the Parable of the Sower,

“Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the *devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts*, lest they should believe and be saved.” **(Luke 8:11-12)**



“But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away.”
(Luke 8:13)

**SATAN TEMPTS US TO GET
THE **WORST** OUT OF US.**

**GOD TESTS US TO GET
THE **BEST** OUT OF US.**



“Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. “But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and ***bear fruit*** with patience.” (Luke 8:14-15)



6) We need to continually build up our faith by meditating on the Word of God

- We need to continually renew our mind with the truth and promises contained in God's Word



- The Word of God is *full of promises* that we can appropriate as believers and build our lives on

- Mediating on the Word of God helps to build up our faith and gives us encouragement that *with God nothing will be impossible*
- Building our lives on the Word of God gives us a firm foundation for life
- It is so important that we meditate on the word of God so that the word of God takes root in our hearts



The Psalmist wrote,

“How can a young man cleanse his way?
By taking heed according to Your word.
With my *whole heart* I have sought You;
Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!
Your *word I have hidden in my heart*,
That I might not sin against You.” **(Psalm 119:9-11)**



“Great peace have those who *love your law*, and
nothing causes them to stumble.” **(Psalm 119:165)**

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” **(Romans 12:2)**

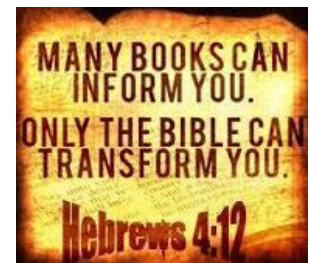


Meditating on the Word of God is a great key to replacing our negative thinking with Kingdom thinking and to being prosperous and having good success in every area of our life

**Meditating on the word of God also helps to
convict us of wrong heart attitudes and to
bring correction to our lives so that we stay in
the centre of God's will for our life**

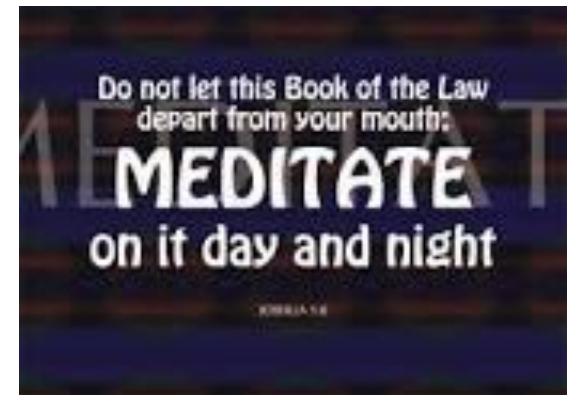
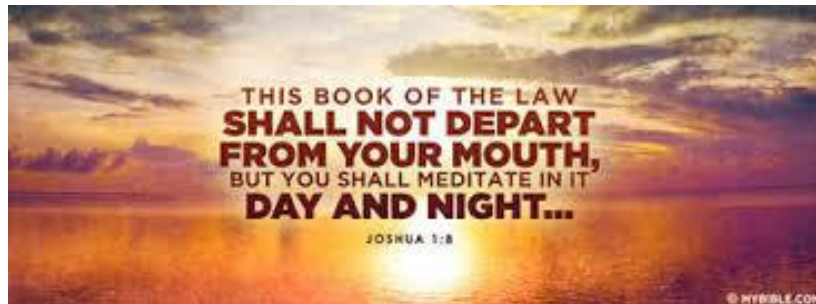
In the book of Hebrews we read,

**“For the word of God is living and powerful, and
sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even
to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and
marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and
intentions of the heart.” (Hebrews 4:12)**



The LORD said to Joshua just prior to him leading the children of Israel into the Promised Land,

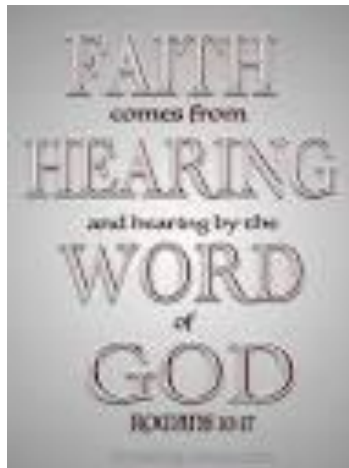
“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.” (Joshua 1:8)



Meditating on the Word of God on a *regular basis* is a great key to developing a strong faith

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” (Romans 10:17)



7) The importance of being in fellowship with and accountable to other Christians

- We all *need each other* as Christians
- Being accountable to other Christians is a *great safeguard* to help us remain strong in our faith



- Our God given destiny will always be worked out in connection with other believers
- When in fellowship with other believers we can receive encouragement and support and godly counsel when making important decisions in life



- Being accountable to other mature believers is also such a great key to maintaining integrity of heart in all that we do in life and ministry

In the book of Proverbs we read,

“The backslider in heart will be filled with his own ways, but a good man will be satisfied from above.” (Proverbs 14:14)

- How important it is that we are accountable to other believers, especially in the lawless times that we are now living in**
- That we have mature and discerning believers in our life who can give us godly counsel when they can see potential problems arising in our life**

In the book of Hebrews we read,

“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.” (Hebrews 10:23-25)

And let us consider
How we can spur one another
On toward love
And good deeds

Scripture Reading:



• HEBREWS 10:23-25

- 23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised;
- 24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:
- 25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

In the book of Proverbs we read,

“Where there is no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.”
(Proverbs 11:14)



In the book of Psalms we read,

“Those who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bear fruit in old age; they shall be fresh and flourishing.” (Psalm 92:13-14)



Being planted in a local church fellowship is such a great key to seeing Christians bearing much eternal fruit in their lives, **AND**

8) That our relationship with Jesus is our greatest priority in life and that we are continually filled with the Holy Spirit

- **Everything in our Christian walk flows out of our relationship with the Lord**



- **Intimacy with the Lord is a great key to growing in Christlike character and to fulfilling God's plan for our life**

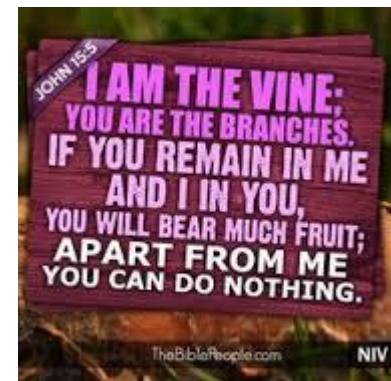
- **Being close to the Lord is a great key to walking in the will of God for our life**
- **Our love for Jesus will keep us strong during the trials of life**



- **Being continually filled with the Holy Spirit is a great key to living an overcoming Christian life and being filled with the right heart desires**

Jesus Himself said,

“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”
(John 15:4-5)



The Apostle Paul wrote,

“that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height - *to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge*; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.” (Ephesians 3:17-19)



Like King David we need to make our passion to know God our greatest priority in life. That we truly love the Lord with all our heart



CONCLUSION

**YOUR HIGHEST
PASSION MUST BE
GOD.**

Mark 12:30

Love the Lord your God with all
your heart and with all your
soul and with all your mind and
with all your strength.

- As we do, we will always be ready for the return of the Lord and *our focus on things above*
- As we stay close to the Lord, we will have God's heart to reach out to the lost in our community and a great desire to live for Him

- We must purposely make time on a regular basis to spend with the Lord. As we do, we will continue to grow in our faith and love for Him



- Having a special place to meet with God is also a great key to cultivating intimacy in our walk with the Lord
- Starting the day in the Lord's presence also helps to see our days running more smoothly

- **It is our love for God that will continually help us to have a right heart both towards Him and others in our life**



- King David was the only man referred to in the bible as being a man after God's own heart. He became Israel's greatest king
- **His consuming passion was to know God intimately**
- How we too, like King David, need to make our greatest priority knowing God intimately in the ungodly times that we are now living in

King David wrote,

“O GOD, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for you; My flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water. So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your glory. Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips shall praise You.” (Psalm 63:1-3)



“Thus I will bless You while I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, And my mouth shall praise You with joyful lips. When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches. Because You have been my help, Therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice.” **(Psalm 63:4-7)**



King David also wrote,

**“Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.”
(Psalm 37:4)**



- **Maintaining our love for the LORD is such a great key to always having a right heart both towards God and others and to gaining His heart of compassion for the lost and hurting**

- So, may I conclude this message by encouraging everyone today to keep your heart with all diligence, so that you will always be ready and prepared for the imminent rapture of all true believers

