



Way of the Eagle

by Rhoda Collins

GUARD YOUR HEART-PART 2

Guarding your heart is a full time job and nobody else can do it for you. Your leader can't do it for you; your family and friends can't do it for you; you need to guard your heart with diligence.

Our real life is in us, not what's going on around us. What's in us will reflect what kind of life we lead. People can be rich and have great circumstances and yet be hard to get along with, unhappy, grouchy and conduct pity parties with themselves and others. But there are some people who don't have the best of circumstances and yet they display peace, contentment, and stability in the midst of the storms. That is what it means to be an Eagle Christian; flying above the storm. No matter what the devil throws at them, they remain stable. If you keep your heart right when someone or something "hits" you, then you're going to be victorious.

Proverbs 18:14 (MSG) says, "A healthy spirit conquers adversity, but what can you do when the spirit is crushed?"

Practice being and getting strong in your heart before trouble knocks at your door. Don't wait until you have tragedy to try to get strong.



Stay strong, be strong and keep your heart right before God.

Paul said in **Philippians 3:10-11**, "[For my determined purpose is] that I may know Him [that I may progressively become more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him, perceiving and recognizing and understanding the wonders of His Person more strongly and more clearly], and that I may in that same way come to know the power out flowing from His resurrection [which it exerts over believers], and that I may so share His sufferings as to be continually transformed [in spirit into His likeness even] to His death, that if possible I may attain the resurrection [that lifts me] out from among the dead [even while in the body]".

We need to come to the point that we are not affected by everything that is going on in our lives and instead, only be affected by the Word of God.

We need to keep our heart tender before God and we do that in the presence of God. We need to continue trusting God even when we don't understand and when life doesn't make a lot of sense to us and when our circumstances are hard.

There are several conditions of the heart:

1. **A proud heart:** Pride is an independent, me-oriented spirit. God wants us to be dependent on Him, not independent; thinking that we can do everything ourselves and taking the credit (glory) for it when anything good happens.

A lot of people change when they get power positions, becoming prideful; mistreating people just because they think they are entitled. Promotion comes from God, but He will only give it to us depending on the condition of our heart.

We should believe God for promotion and prosperity, but God wants to make sure that you are not going to use all of it on yourself.

“John answered, A man can receive nothing [he can claim nothing, he can take unto himself nothing] except as it has been granted to him from heaven. [A man must be content to receive the gift which is given him from heaven; there is no other source.]” John 3: 27

You need to use the gift God is giving you to do the best you can with it. Those who are humble, God will lift up and those who are prideful, God will bring down.

“Everyone proud and arrogant in heart is disgusting, hateful, and exceedingly offensive to the Lord; be assured [I pledge it] they will not go unpunished.” Proverbs 16:5

2 Chronicles 32 is the story of the king of Assyria who came against Israel. Hezekiah cried out to God for help and the Lord delivered them. The people then brought many gifts to Jerusalem to the Lord but also to Hezekiah... “so from then on he was magnified in the sight of all nations” (verse 23).

After Hezekiah had the victory against the Assyrians, pride got into his heart and he started to take credit for himself too much. He became sick; God healed him, but he remained very prideful and so God’s wrath came upon him: “In those days Hezekiah was sick to the point of death; and he prayed to the Lord and He answered him and gave him a sign. But Hezekiah did not make return [to the Lord] according to the benefit done to him, for his heart became proud [at such a spectacular response to his prayer]; therefore, there was wrath upon him and upon Judah and Jerusalem”. (v 24, 25).

A lot of people have gifts that will take them somewhere but they don’t have enough character to keep them there. Every success you have you need to give God the credit and say: “God I am nothing without You. Every success I have is because of You”.

God had to test Hezekiah to see what was in his heart. “And so in the matter of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon who were sent to him to inquire about the wonder that was done in the land, God left him to himself to try him, that He might know all that was in his heart” (v 31).

Another example of a prideful king is in Daniel chapter 4 where King Nebuchadnezzar became great among the nations and had a dream that was very disturbing to him. Daniel gave him the interpretation of the dream with a warning to repent, but he refused.

“Therefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable to you; break off your sins and show the reality of your repentance by righteousness (right standing with God and moral and spiritual rectitude and rightness in every area and relation) and liberate yourself from your iniquities by showing mercy and loving-kindness to the poor and oppressed, that [if the king will repent] there may possibly be a continuance and lengthening of your peace and tranquility and a healing of your error.” Daniel 4:27

Nebuchadnezzar instead of repenting for his sins, he became prideful and ended up like an animal eating grass in the field. “The king said, is not this the great Babylon that I have built as the royal residence and seat of government by the might of my power and for the honor and glory of my majesty? While the words were still in the king’s mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken:

The kingdom has departed from you, And you shall be driven from among men and your dwelling will be with the living creatures of the field. You will be made to eat grass like the oxen, and seven times [or years] shall pass over you until you have learned and know that the Most High [God] rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomever He will". Daniel 4:30-32

At the end of seven years, Nebuchadnezzar humbled himself and repented, giving praise and glory to God.

"Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, whose works are all faithful and right and whose ways are just. And those who walk in pride He is able to abase and humble." Daniel 4:37

We need to keep and guard our heart in the right condition if we want to walk the way Jesus walked. Our goal is to help people and to walk in the love of Christ.

2. **Another heart condition is a presumptuous heart.** When you have a presumptuous heart it causes disrespect and rebellion towards the people that you need to ask permission from.

"Who can discern his lapses and errors? Clear me from hidden [and unconscious] faults. Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me! Then shall I be blameless, and I shall be innocent and clear of great transgression. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my [firm, impenetrable] Rock and my Redeemer." Psalms 19:12-14

This heart condition means taking authority that we don't have; being arrogant.

God tells us not to judge non-Christians, as that's His job and God tells us that it is our responsibility to judge and bring correction to confessed Christians, in the area of sin or compromise (1 Corinthians 5: 11-13). And we are to handle them God's way, not our way or some man-made doctrinal way (Matthew 18: 15-17). Failure in either or both areas brings God's judgment on ourselves. Guard your heart from moving into forbidden areas and also from failure to take your authority in other areas that is are our responsibility as royal priests.

When Peter saw Jesus walk on water in Matthew 14:28-29 he didn't just jump in the water saying, "I'm going to do that too!" Peter said instead, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water". He knew he couldn't walk on water without God.

3. **The hypocritical, judgemental heart.** A hypocrite is someone who is a religious person, who knows what is right but doesn't do it; Everyone should have a meeting with themselves and ask 2 major questions:

1. Do I have any bad attitudes?
2. What am I doing to help someone else?

Luke 12 says we can't hide anything from God: "Whatever you have spoken in the darkness shall be heard and listened to in the light, and what you have whispered in [people's] ears and behind closed doors will be proclaimed upon the housetops".

You can't live a man-made religious life; being a hypocrite; falsely judging (outside of your authority); playing "church"; pretending to be Christian.

The Bible says, leave your gift at the altar, go and get things straightened out with your brother, then come and worship God (**Matthew 5: 23-24**).

What is the condition of your heart?

Jesus came against Pharisees and hypocrites: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, pretenders (hypocrites)! For you give a tenth of your mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected and omitted the weightier (more important) matters of the Law—right and justice and mercy and fidelity. These you ought [particularly] to have done, without neglecting the others. You blind guides, filtering out a gnat and gulping down a camel! Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, pretenders (hypocrites)! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the plate, but within they are full of extortion (prey, spoil, plunder) and grasping self-indulgence. You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and of the plate, so that the outside may be clean also.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, pretenders (hypocrites)! For you are like tombs that have been whitewashed, which look beautiful on the outside but inside are full of dead men’s bones and everything impure. Just so, you also outwardly seem to people to be just and upright but inside you are full of pretense and lawlessness and iniquity. Matthew 23: 23-28

God is looking for worshipers who will worship Him in Spirit and Truth, not pretenders and hypocrites. A worshiper lives a lifestyle that follows God’s Word (**John 4:24**).

Matthew 11:12-25 is the story of the fig tree that Jesus cursed. Why did Jesus do that? Well, when the fig tree gets leaves, it supposed to have fruit under the leaves.

“And seeing in the distance a fig tree [covered] with leaves, He went to see if He could find any [fruit] on it for in the fig tree the fruit appears at the same time as the leaves]. But when He came up to it, He found nothing but leaves, for the fig season had not yet come. And He said to it, No one ever again shall eat fruit from you. And His disciples were listening [to what He said].”

Jesus sees leaves in the tree (your conference and church attendance; the fish on the car bumper; the WWJD magnet on the fridge) but when there is no fruit (operating in spiritual gifts; mentoring others; action bearing spiritual fruit), then these trees (Christians) have a phony and hypocritical heart. God rebukes Christians who have leaves with no fruit.



Our words and action are a reflection of our heart.

“But be doers of the Word [obey the message], and not merely listeners to it, betraying yourselves [into deception by reasoning contrary to the Truth]”. James 1:22

Guard your heart from the enemy; from others; from the world; and especially from yourself!

Allow spiritual fruit to grow in your life, as God works through your surrendered heart to Him! Guard your heart!