

## ***"A guarded heart"***

**Ice breaker:** Ask individuals how they feel and what caused it. Identify what they allowed to their heart.

### **Jeremiah 17:9 NKJV**

What are the similarities between the physical and the spiritual heart?

A healthy diet results in a healthy heart. A bad diet results in a sick heart. A sick heart affects the entire body, no matter how good looking it is. **NB: This applies to both the physical and the spiritual man.**

Whose responsibility is it to guard one's spiritual heart?

One is responsible to guard one's own heart. It is no other's responsibility. **NB: We allow or reject what comes to our hearts. One can be in a dead environment and not permit death into the heart, vice versa.**

### **Proverbs 4:23 NKJV and Deuteronomy 29:14-19 NKJV**

What happens to an unguarded heart?

An unguarded heart is exposed to poison that affects one's mood, attitude, relationships, walk with God and other crucial aspects. Some physical ailments are a result of an exposed spiritual heart.

According to the commentary, (i) how should one guard one's heart? (ii) what are the issues of life?

(i) One has to guard one's heart by going beyond the ordinary call of duty and the expected, like guarding a dangerous prisoner. (ii) "Issues of life" refers to the source of everything or the starting point. **NB: A river starts small and grows as it develops; such are good or bad issues that come from the heart.**

(i) What is the ultimate warning on this passage? (ii) How does a hardened heart respond to it?

(i) We ought to be careful not to act like the unbelievers around us (Idolatry). Hanging around them long enough with unguarded hearts will cause us to think, talk and act like them. (ii) A hardened heart denies its backslidden state. It determines to continue in evil while deceptively claiming to be well, regardless.

### **Psalms 119:10-11 and Joel 2:12-13 AMP**

What is the solution for an unguarded heart?

We should daily surrender our hearts to God. Only God can help us to handle our hearts. He uses His Word to keep us from the defilement of sin when we keep the Word in our hearts. Furthermore, we should fast and pray until barriers are broken and fellowship with God is restored.

**Closing:** Encourage all to develop a habit of fasting and praying without being directed by the church.