

I'm going to do something that I very rarely do. I'm going to try to make a few introductory remarks and then leave it there. I hope I make it. It's just introductory. Would you turn with me to Proverbs? This is Proverbs 4:23: "Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flows the springs of life." Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flows the springs of life. That is really, really heavy.

Hebrews 13:9: "Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings, for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, through which those who were thus occupied were not benefited." The heart can be strengthened, but I prefer a better translation: the heart can be established by grace. The heart is established by grace.

1 Thessalonians 3:13 bears this out too, that the heart can be established by grace. This is the same word. "So that he may establish your hearts unblameably in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all the saints, so that he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before your God." It is quite a thing the Lord has set out to do: to establish our hearts unblameably.

Three weeks ago, I began speaking to you about a series of things and how the Lord might deal with us. The first thing we discovered was God's creation. He made man in three parts—body, soul, and spirit. Then man fell. And we saw the damage that had come into man's body. It became flesh. Man's soul became enlarged. Man's spirit became dead.

The man got indwelt in his body by sin, and his body became flesh. Now then, after I become a Christian, I have to have my flesh dealt with. When I get converted, I have enough of the Lord Jesus Christ in me at my conversion for my flesh to be completely dealt with. We touched on about two or three things, and a sister talked to me Thursday night and brought out one I hadn't mentioned or thought of, but that is also there. There are three or four things that may be actually active in our lives at conversion. A question was asked about immorality. There may be active immorality that's therefore in the body which has become flesh. But what about the lust toward immorality? That's in the soul, because it's in the mind. But the active engagement of immorality has got to go at the time of conversion. Then active addiction has got to go. It's got to go. If it doesn't, you'll be frustrated in your Christian growth.

Now, sisters, brothers, some of us weren't told that when we first got converted, and we went on in active addiction. So, you've got to come back and start all over again. And this calls for a renewed heart. I mentioned that, and a lot of brothers and sisters said, "Yeah, talk about that." But I said, no, later. If you missed out on this when you first got converted, and you didn't take care immediately of the things of the flesh, you're going to have to come back to a renewed heart. And I just said in passing, I would encourage you to come right back at the beginning and be baptized and drop the things of the world. How many of you got baptized? May I see your hands?

Then you must deal with the addictions that are in the flesh. You have enough of the Lord's life to do it. It is His grace that does it. You've got it at conversion, and you can drop it. Amen.

Well, there is also the work of the flesh and the soul. Not the work of the body and the soul, but the active work of sin that is in our soul. We looked at Galatians 4, talked about a lot of this, and moved from the flesh to the soul. Well, by the way, that thing the sister mentioned the other night was gluttony that is also in the flesh. It's got to go.

Well, I don't want to get off too personally on this, but it is there. How do you break gluttony? I think there are two or three ways you don't do it. You don't do it by going on a diet. You're looking at a man who's lost over a thousand pounds in his lifetime. My average weight from the time I was, I guess, right after I was converted until about 1965 or 66, I guess, was around 200. I just lost an incredible amount of weight in my lifetime. And I didn't do it by going on a diet. I'm not going to say more about it than that, but it is something that the Lord can handle, the Lord can deal with. Praise the Lord.

Now then, we talked about the soul. We spent quite a bit of time on the soul. One day, we're going to come back to the human soul and take a look at it a little bit more. Well, I have a very distinct impression the Lord really touched us a great deal on this, but I'm just going to touch on it again for a moment and say to you, brothers and sisters, well, maybe I just started reading it. It's just easier to read out of the New Testament.

Galatians 5:19. Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are immorality, that's of the body, impurity of the body, sensuality of the body, idolatry, all of the body, sorcery of the

body, of the flesh in the body. Now then, we come to the soul. Enmity, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envies. You can cut out drunkenness and carousing; those go back to the body. Things like these, of which I warned you before, and I warn you that those who continually do those things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. So the Lord breaks this continual practice in our lives. If he doesn't, we're not going to inherit the kingdom of God. I have no more comment about that than that, except there's a difference between getting converted and inheriting the kingdom of God.

You may not know how much, and someday when we have absolutely nothing else to do, I intend to talk about it because it's really not the most positive thing on earth to get involved in. Brothers and sisters, here's the thing I would like to tell you: the Lord took the soul, the self of the soul, and put him on the cross.

I want to tell you the most wonderful news in the world. The most wonderful news in the world is that you do not have to criticize other people. You don't have to be critical. You don't have to be divisive. You don't have to... do you understand what I mean? All of these things, you don't have to do them. The next time you come up, and you're tempted to say something about a brother in the Lord, just let the Lord's Spirit speak to you. He'll say to you, "You don't have to say that. You can, but you don't have to." I don't have to. I don't have to do that. Have you ever felt you've had to? If you didn't, there's something inside of you that just wasn't going to get satisfied. You know, if it gets pushed out of me, I'm just going to have sort of an unsatisfied feeling. You know what I'm speaking of, do you not?

Then let the Lord speak to you and say, "No, you don't have to say that." I'll tell you, brothers, you'll go away for two or three minutes, and you'll be very, very blue. I wanted to say that. If I thought it would have helped that other brother or sister, I had said it to them. But as you go away, about ten minutes later, you're going to find out something. If you have a keen spirit, you will notice a strengthening in your spirit. You will notice yourself getting stronger in your spirit. Have you ever had that experience? There it is, just sitting there tempting you, just looking at you, saying, go ahead and say it. If you can't say it just out loud and bold, you can twitch with the eye, frown, you can nod the head, you can, you know, but it's better to go ahead and say, "I can't stand that guy," than to say, "Oh, he's nice." You know, yeah, he really, yeah, I'd say that. That's right, he's a nice brother. You'd rather say I

can't stand him. But to just let it completely go about ten minutes later, you're going to sense a real growth in your spirit. Isn't it glorious? You don't have to criticize another brother. You don't have to be divisive. You don't have to be critical. The Lord has dealt with it. That's glorious. That's liberating. It's just marvelous. I don't have to be bitter. I don't have to. That's marvelous. Praise the Lord.

Even if you're right, even if you're so... oh, you're always right. You're always correct. It doesn't have to be said. We can go and live without it ever being uttered. Pretty soon, if you'll deny the soul enough—deny the soul enough—you'll begin to see the Lord really taking a finished work in you. You will notice a succumbing...a final end of this work in you. We have to begin denying. We'll turn one day to the positive when we get to the Spirit. There's the denial of the soul. There's turning to the Spirit. We haven't even gotten there.

Then we stop. I don't talk to brothers here who are ambitious like my brother here. Sometimes we begin with something negative by saying the soul's enlarged. That's negative. That we have to deny the soul. That's really negative. But you hang around long enough; we must never stop there. We must come to Christ.

So whatever I say about the heart for the next two or three days, remember: we come to the end, and the end is Christ. So we came to Hebrews 4, and that's where just a whole lot of things got started. Hebrews 4 tells us that there is the dividing of the soul from the spirit, and this is something we must touch on more, but praise the Lord, there was a group of people on this earth who did not divide their soul from their spirit. I'm sorry, the Lord looked in them and saw. He divided their soul from their spirit, and he saw that the intent was in their soul not to go on with the Lord. He saw it, and they didn't get to go in.

Then the writer of Hebrews, whom I feel very strongly was Barnabas—nobody knows who wrote it, but I feel like it was Barnabas—whoever wrote it, he said there have come a group of people who walked up to the edge of the wilderness to go in. And the voice of the Lord is speaking one more time, isn't it? If you don't harden your heart, you get to go in. All you have to do is believe the voice within you. There is a speaking within you. Don't harden your heart to it and go in. Isn't that neat? Who is that group of people? That's us. Who is the one speaking? Jesus Christ, by the Holy Spirit, is speaking to you, and he's saying, "Go on in."

Well, what is the land? And even more, it's going into our spirits. You can get in your spirit, and you can stay there. I want to encourage you. Despite all the negative things I might say about the soul, I want you to know you've got a heart for the Lord. And then we can go in.

That's where we've come to now, and at this point we have to talk about the heart. I've wanted to do this, I guess, ever since I've arrived here. As far as I recall, we have never touched on the heart. Never. We've mentioned it a few times but never dealt with it...never dealt with the heart of man. There are brothers and sisters who really need this. You know how many will need it? All of us need it.

What do you consider the heart? Okay, that's about all I'm going to get to tonight. I just want to tell you this. You've got a heart for the Lord. You've got a heart for the Lord. I'm just not going to say anything a whole lot negative, because I assume you're going in. I just assume you're going to go in. You deal with the first. You deal with the second. You understand the third. You go in, brothers.

Let me say the heart's not the body. It's sure not the body. What is it? The soul? It's hard to say. Is it the spirit? It's hard to say. I read all the verses that I know that anybody's ever quoted on the heart, and I'm just not ready to stand up here tonight and tell you that the soul and the heart are the same thing, or the spirit and the heart are the same thing. I can only tell you this. I'm going to give you a very simple definition of what the heart is...and don't forget it. *The heart is the entrance and the exit of your whole being.* That's what it is. It is the entrance of your being, and it is the exit of your being. All that will ever come into you will have to come into you through your heart, and all that ever comes out of you will come out through your heart. And, brothers and sisters, your heart eventually is going to tattle on you. It is going to tattle on you.

What did we read in Proverbs 4:23? It was that the heart... well, I'd like to read it again, because that's really how we're going to get tonight. 4:23 - *Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flows the springs of life.* Brothers and sisters, watch over your heart with all diligence. So, for the next few days, I do not know exactly how long, we are going to talk about the heart. If we get a chance, we're going to talk about the Spirit. Watch the

heart with all diligence, because it lets everything in, and eventually what's in you will come out. The heart must be watched. It is the entrance and exit of your whole being.

I'm just going to say a quick word to you. Jesus said, out of the heart the mouth speaks. Out of the heart the mouth speaks. Out of the heart, the mouth speaks. It is so simple. Spend enough time with a brother, and you'll know what's in his heart. What do you talk about? Every one of us is kind of curious. See, I've been running around here for years knowing this. Maybe you didn't know this, but I've been listening to you talk. I'm going to talk to you for a minute, just to say I listen to you talk. I really do. I challenge you, brother: listen to me talk. Listen to me talk publicly and privately, because out of the heart the mouth speaks. You may know what's really within you.

So, we're going to learn how to deal with the heart, so that the right things come in and the right things go out. We're going to learn to purge the heart of whatever might be in there, to get it out. So I come to a brother, and I begin to listen to him speak. You know, in the beginning, it's very easy for us to talk. We talk about lots of things, and eventually we talk about the Lord. Then one day, brother, I don't know, if you're just careful, it'll come—the real thing in the heart comes out. You know why it takes you to be 39 years old? Sometimes it takes 39 years for the Lord to build a heart. Then finally, there's not anything left in there but one or two things—either your destruction or your Lord. There's just no longer anything.

I can tell you...I can tell you what's been in my heart. My Lord has been in my heart, but I can tell you something else that's been in my heart, and that's my desire to serve my Lord. You know? To be a king in the kingdom of God, to be somebody, to do something, to serve my Lord.

Brothers and sisters, out of the heart the mouth speaks. What do you speak about? You spend some time with a brother, and you begin to hear him saying "I, I, I." What's in his heart? He has allowed himself into his heart. Do you see? He's allowed himself... what comes out of his heart? "I, I, I." If you allow theology in, theology will come out. Sisters are very interesting to listen to. Sisters can just talk about lots of things, but you're real careful. When they finally got you into their confidence, they'll say that little thing they weren't just

saying, kind of from the back door, you know. *By the way, Gene, have you ever noticed so-and-so or such-and-so?* Then out of the heart, the mouth speaks. I don't want to put anybody under the pile tonight. I'm not here to put you in the pile, but I'll put you there if necessary. But praise the Lord, I have a Lord who's gotten you out, and I'm going to stand with my Lord before it's over with.

Brothers and sisters, guard your heart with all diligence, because what you let go in is what comes out. There are so many verses of Scripture on the heart. Did you know there are more Scriptures on the heart than the body and the soul and the spirit put together? The Lord is very, very interested in your heart.

Well, I'm just going to give you a little introduction. The best book to study to understand the heart is the book of Matthew. And you need a little bit from Ezekiel, you need a little bit from Jeremiah, but you've got to have the book of Matthew. The book of Matthew starts out speaking of the pure in heart. The pure in heart, what do they get? They get to see God. The pure in heart see God. We're going to find out how to see God from a pure heart.

Then I think it is in Matthew 6. Another mention of the heart. What is it in Matthew 6? That's where your treasure is. Your treasure is in your heart. What do you treasure, brother? What's there? What's in your heart? Whatever grows into your heart will become your treasure. I've seen many folks and many treasures. Sometimes I get to know folks, and I sense that the only thing they treasure is wearing somebody else down. That's a funny thing to treasure. Another is just talking about themselves. Another one is their ambitions and goals in life. But you know, sometimes we cannot tell what we have laid in our heart. Do you know?

I would like you to read one verse of Scripture with me. It is Jeremiah 17:9. Somebody just read it to us. "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know it?" Sometimes we honestly don't know what's in our hearts. It was so wicked, and it is so desperate at the time of conversion; we don't know what's in it. That's kind of frightening, isn't it? That's really frightening.

I'm going to say to you the same thing about the heart that I said about spirit. Here I am, a flesh, here I am, a soul, and here I am, a spirit. The Lord Jesus Christ comes into my spirit. He

lives in there. I have His life. But if I'm not careful, I don't realize I have His life, and I keep living by my own life in the soul. Do you understand?

Okay, the Lord Jesus Christ does things with a heart, but if I'm not careful, I may never know the deep motives of my heart. The deep, well-springing motives of my heart. Therefore, I really need to do a little dealing with my heart, that the motives that might have gotten in there previous to my conversion, and at the time of my conversion, and maybe through a religious system, that those things be purged out, that the Lord may start all over.

I'm not going to say more than that, except I can tell you one thing. It's in the heart where the treasure is. I don't care what your treasure has been. I don't know what it is, and I don't care, but I can tell you this. Whatever goes into the heart will come out of the heart. So we shall learn to deal with this desperately wicked heart and let the Lord deal with it and renew it and purge it, cleanse it, and then, praise the Lord, a new treasure, a new treasure, a new treasure to go in. Brother, what are your treasures? What are your treasures?

There's just so much to say about the treasure. Wow. And we will. But anyhow, do you know what your treasure must be? You know what it is? The Lord Jesus Christ. If you'll keep on putting the treasure in your heart, I'll tell you one thing. It'll take a while, but one of these days it's going to start coming out.

How many of you have ever primed a pump? May I see your hand? A water pump. Okay. You keep on pouring water in, and you pump, and nothing happens—absolutely nothing. And you just keep pouring water in, and pretty soon it goes... just like that, right? And then it goes... and it just starts splashing out.

Praise the Lord, the Lord God can deal with our hearts. It doesn't matter what's been there before. The Lord can give us a new treasure, and then out of the heart the mouth will speak.