

## **“Bishoping” your heart** Sermon Notes

\*\*An Elder refers to his mature respectability-

\*\*An Overseer/bishop refers to his management role-

\*\*A Pastor/shepherd refers to his maintenance responsibilities-

Proverbs 4:23

“diligence” = “vigilance”

“issues” = “sources, fountainhead, starting point.”

“Looking diligently” in this verse is a phrase that comes from the Greek word episkopos, taken from the two words “epi” and “skopos.” The word “epi” means “over,” and the word “skopos” means “to look.” When these two words are compounded into one word as in Hebrews 12:15, the word means “to look over or to take supervisory oversight.”

As the chief overseer, it is the bishop’s responsibility to watch, direct, guide, correct, and give oversight to the church under his care. As long as he serves as bishop, he will be held responsible for the good and the bad that occurs under his ministry.

As the bishop of your own heart, it is your responsibility to guide, direct, and give oversight to what goes on inside your emotions and thinking. You alone are responsible for what you allow to develop inside your head and heart. Like a bishop, you are personally responsible for both the good and the bad that occurs within your thought life, subsequent actions that result.

### **What consumes your mind controls your life!**

The words “springing up” are from a word that depicts a little plant that is just starting to sprout and grow. It isn’t a large plant yet; rather, it’s a small seedling that is just breaking through the soil and starting to peek out at the world.

The words “trouble you” mean “to trouble, to harass, or to annoy.” It refers to something inside that bothers and upsets you so much, you are constantly pestered by thoughts about it. In fact, your whole life is stalked by these hassling, troubling thoughts. What you allowed to take root and to fester inside your soul has now become a major nuisance to your peace, keeping you upset and emotionally torn up inside much of the time.

It is that “inside” part — the part you control — that God will hold you responsible for. Why? Because you are charged with a personal responsibility to oversee what goes on inside your soul. That means you have the last word. You are the one who decides whether or not that wrong settles down into your soul and starts to take root in your emotions.

Anger is an emotion that comes and goes. You choose whether or not irritation turns into anger, anger into wrath, wrath into bitterness, bitterness into resentment, and resentment into unforgiveness. You choose whether these foul attitudes and emotions take up residency in your heart or are booted out the door!

God will hold others responsible for what they do to us. But God will hold US responsible for what we allow to go on inside our minds and hearts. We cannot answer for the actions of other people. We will answer for our inward responses to what others have done to us.

### **A suggested prayer for you**

“Lord, help me keep my heart free of offense! You have given me authority over my own will, mind, and emotions, so I know I have the authority to tell offense that it has no right to dwell inside me. I refuse to blame everyone else for the mess I’ve allowed to grow inside my heart — and today I am asking You to help me, Holy Spirit, to quit making excuses for the wrong attitudes I’ve permitted to grow in my life. With Your supernatural help, I am making the choice to repent, to turn from these destructive thoughts, and to replace them with thoughts and words of kindness for those who have caused me hurt or grief in the past.” I pray this in Jesus’ name!

### **A suggested confession for you**

“I confess that I deal diligently with my heart to keep it in good shape. I don’t make excuses for rotten attitudes that try to fill my thoughts about people who have wronged me. Even if they really did commit a wrong, I refuse to let the devil use it to eat me up and ruin me. I am the bishop of my own heart, so I refuse to let wrong attitudes fester, take root, and begin to produce bad fruit in me!” I declare this by faith in Jesus’ name!

### **Questions to Answer:**

1. Is there any feeling of bitterness, resentment, anger or unforgiveness that you have held on to and allowed to grow in the soil of your heart? Has the Holy Spirit been trying to convince you to forgive and to let it go?
  2. If the Holy Spirit is dealing with you about forgiving someone, what are you going to do about it? Will you resist the Spirit’s dealings and develop a hard heart, or are you willing to forget it and go on with your life?
  3. If you are really serious about getting victory in these matters, are you willing to do whatever it takes to Scripturally deal with these sins?
- 4 practical steps you can take to correct your irritability, anger, bitterness, unforgiving spirit:
1. Accept responsibility for your attitude-
  2. Seek to be conformed to greater Christlikeness-
  3. Deal with real problems righteously-
  4. Choose love over your irritability, anger, bitterness and an unforgiving spirit-