

Doctrinal Summary of The Heart of Man: Storage Place for Beliefs and Source of All Activity

In Proverbs 4:23, Solomon identifies that man must guard his heart because it is the source of the springs of life.

“Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life.”

The word “heart” is translated from the Biblical Hebrew word לִבְכָּהּ (“I-beh-kah”) and is used in the Old Testament to identify the storage place for man’s beliefs. In the heart of man is held that which man depends upon to be right or wrong (morals), the procedures or protocols used to accomplish specific tasks (protocols), and personal measured levels of acceptability (norms and standards). Each of these categories of belief are stored in the right frontal lobe of the brain, the heart. Thus, the heart of man is the storage place for all which man is relying upon moment by moment as morals, protocols, and norms and standards.

Man is commanded to “watch over” his heart with complete diligence because of its critical role in his activity. The beliefs residing in man’s heart are the direct cause for every action he carries out with his free will. Jesus identified man’s heart as the source from which his actions come in Matthew 15:18.

“But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man.”

The words “proceed out” are translated from the Koine Greek word ἐκπορευόμενα (“ek-por-eu-o-meh-nah”) which literally means, “participating in being acted upon in a continuous type of action as a matter of principle to travel from one place to another with emphasis upon the place of departure, as tools or instruments used to accomplish something.” Jesus identifies that the actions of man are expressed outwardly by his mouth, but travel from his heart as their original place of departure. Thus, the beliefs in man’s heart are the place from which all of man’s expressed activity occurs. This is a principle of operation. Therefore, this is always the case for every person, whether believer or unbeliever. Every individual’s actions are derived from their specific beliefs regarding morality, protocols for operation, and norms and standards.

As man interacts with the world around him he takes in information through his senses. That information must be identified, understood, filtered, and then have a determination made about it as to whether or not it is able to be relied upon for morality, as a protocol of operation, or as a norm or standard. The decision to rely upon what has been identified, understood, and filtered results in the formation of a belief regarding that which is in view. Until a decision regarding how to rely upon that information is made it remains purely information. Once the individual decides what to do with the information it becomes a belief, something which he has placed his dependency on in some manner or other. Thus, the heart of man is programmable based upon the information brought into the mind and the individual’s assessment of that information as being able to be relied upon for morality, a protocol of operation, or a norm and standard of life.

Fallen man’s heart is deceitful and desperately sick (cf. Jer. 17:9), thus it must be reprogrammed with the spiritual truth of God’s Word which is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of man’s heart (cf. Heb. 4:12). Man’s development of a righteous heart is contingent upon him honoring God as God (cf. Rom. 1:21). Failure to do so results in darkening of the heart, callousness toward God, and a hardened heart.