

Parent Study Guide – Bonus Verse 2007-08

THE WELLSPRING OF LIFE – Proverbs 4:23

Passage: *Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life. -- Proverbs 4:23 (NIV84)*

Theme: THE WELLSPRING OF LIFE – The heart is the inescapable center of our daily life.

Metaphor: YOUR HEART IS LIKE A WELL – All of life flows from that well.

Message: WHATEVER GOES IN COMES OUT – Whatever enters your heart eventually comes out.

Action: ALWAYS GUARD YOUR HEART – It is the most important thing in the world to protect.

Discussion Questions: Answers are Underlined

1. What is a wellspring? – A source for water. A well, fed by an underground spring.
2. What is the wellspring of life? – My heart. All of life flows from the heart.
3. How is your heart like a well? – It can be clean and refreshing, or contaminated and polluted.
4. How can a well be polluted? – By not protecting it. By leaving it exposed and unguarded. By letting garbage get into it.
5. How does a well affect an entire community? – It can be healthy or unhealthy, refreshing or bitter, safe or dangerous.
6. What did Jesus say about trees & fruit (Luke 6:43-45)? – Fruit is determined by the nature of the tree. You don't change the nature of the tree by changing the fruit.
7. Why is your heart so important? – It's the real me, at the center of my being, the person I really am. It's the part of me that is made to last forever.
8. How does the condition of your well affect the rest of your life? – All of life is lived out of the heart. Words, thoughts and actions emanate from the heart.
9. What did Paul say about sowing and reaping (Gal. 6:7-8)? – Whatever a man sows, he will reap. We sow unto the flesh or unto the Spirit. We reap unto destruction or unto salvation.
10. How do good or bad things get into your well? – Everything I see, hear or think has the power to enter my heart.

11. How do things flow out of your well? – Through my words, thoughts and actions.
12. What is the most important thing in the entire world for you to protect, “above all else”? – My heart.

Biblical & Theological Background:

1. Biblical words for “heart,” man’s nonmaterial nature, include: spirit, soul, mind, conscience and will.
2. Scripture distinguishes the material body from the nonmaterial soul/spirit (2 Cor. 5:1; 1 Thess.5:23).
3. Jesus emphasized the importance of our nonmaterial nature (Matt. 10:28; 16:26).
4. Scripture emphasizes that the soul is eternal (2 Cor. 5:8; Eccl. 12:7).
5. Man is distinguished from all other creatures, being created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26; Ps. 8:5-8).
6. Like God, man is a spiritual being designed for communion with God (John 4:24).
7. Man’s words and actions are not just socially, genetically or environmentally determined, but arise from the condition of the heart (Prov. 4:23; Matt. 15:18-20; Luke 6:45).
8. Truth and wisdom are discerned in the heart (Psalm 51:6 and James 1:5).
9. When man suppresses God’s truth in his heart, it has severe consequences (Rom. 1:21-23; Gal. 6:7-8).
10. Man’s inner nature, the heart, can be changed – made new (Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:9-10).
11. The pathway to lasting change in behavior is transformation of the heart (Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 4:23-24).

For additional study materials on the Bonus Verse and a copy of the “Ten Step Bible Memory Method for Life,” go to www.icsva.org/student-life/bonus-verse on the Immanuel Christian School website.