

“How You Can Finally See Change Happen In Your Life”
By Scott Aughtmon

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We all have things we want to change about our lives. Some of us have **problems** that we want to solve and some of us have **goals** or **dreams** that we want to see come true.

The problem is that so many times it's hard to really see change happen...

There's a reason why.

When most of us try to change our lives we go about it the wrong way. Let me show you...

Most people **start working on their current results** and try to make them into the results they want. But no matter how hard they try things don't change! The results are **still the same!**

But that doesn't work!

If you want to have different results, then **you have to start with a different seed.**

Someone once said, **“If you want to change the fruit, then you have to change the root.”**

I want to talk about a way you can see change in your life – to **improve** it. This way is what I call the **“Inside-Out” Way of living.**

Turn with me in your Bibles to **Proverbs 4:23-27** and let's look at what it says...

Proverbs 4:23-27

“Above all else, guard your heart, for it affects everything you do. ^{F8 24}Avoid all perverse talk; stay far from corrupt speech. ²⁵Look straight ahead, and fix your eyes on what lies before you. ²⁶Mark out a straight path for your feet; then stick to the path and stay safe. ²⁷Don't get sidetracked; keep your feet from following evil.”
NLT

There are 4 ways to change our lives revealed in these 5 verses. But the **most important one** is right at the beginning in **verse 23**

“Above all else, guard your heart, for it affects everything you do.” I like how the NIV translates this verse... “Above all else, guard your heart for it’s the wellspring of life.”

1. My Life Experience Springs From My Heart

Where does this verse tells us all our results in our life come from? Our **heart!**

When the Bible uses the word heart it doesn’t mean this organ beating in your chest. It means your mind. It’s talking about 3 main things: your **thoughts**, your **emotions** and your **will**.

So the Bible is telling us that our heart affects **everything** in our lives. In other words, our thoughts, emotions, and will are the **springboard** of our life.

Our thoughts, emotions and will are the ultimate cause of all the results in our life.

One commentary on this verse said...

(Proverbs 4:23). The fact here stated is that the whole moral conduct of human life, and its every action, attitude and purpose are determined by what one thinks and believes.^{F15} The great corollary of this is that thought control is the prerequisite of all moral rectitude and uprightness.

You know this is one area where the self-help gurus get it right.

A man named **T. Harv Eker** who as far as I know is not a believer and was speaking to secular group said it this way...

“The results that you get in your physical world are just a printout from your invisible world.

Mind + Your Emotion + Your Spirit = Results.

“...If you want to change your results, then you have to work on the invisible things.”

Have you ever realized how much affect what’s going up here in your head has on your life?

Your thoughts are what set off a chain-reaction that eventually affects your whole life.

[Someone once said...](#)

Watch your thoughts; they become your words. Watch your words; they become your actions. Watch your actions; they become your habits. Watch your habits; they become your character. Watch your character for it will become your destiny."

There's a story that's a great example how your thoughts can change your life. It's from the book "The Power Of Focus"...

Brent Vouri knew he was going to die.

*The severe asthma attack had deteriorated into adult respiratory distress syndrome. Basically his **lungs had completely seized up**, just like a car engine when it runs out of oil.*

*The last thing he could remember that night was the hospital floor rushing to meet him, then, total blackness. **The coma lasted for 15 days** during which he dropped 40 pounds. When he finally woke up he couldn't speak for another 2 weeks.*

That was good, because for the first time in years it gave him time to think.

Why at only 20 years old had his life almost evaporated? *The doctors had done a miraculous job at keeping him alive, when others thought he had no chance to survive.*

Brent thought about this deeply. He'd had asthma from birth. He was well known at the hospital after numerous visits to stabilize his condition.

*Even though he had **lots of energy as a kid** he was never able to do physical activities like other kids. At 10 years old, his parents divorced and all his **bottled up frustrations finally boiled over**. The next few years he went into a **downward spiral leading to drugs, alcohol abuse and a smoking habit** where he smoked 30 cigarettes a day!*

*He **never finished school** and just drifted from one part-time job to the next. Even when his health kept getting worse, **he ignored it** – until that night when his body said, “no more.”*

After reflecting on all this in the hospital he came to this conclusion: “I brought this on myself through years of making bad choices.” He decided right then and there: “Never again; I want a life.”

Brent gradually got stronger and eventually was released from the hospital. Soon after, he mapped out a positive game plan to improve his life.

*He first enrolled in a fitness program and his only **goal was to win the T-shirt** they offered for **completing 12 sessions**. He did it.*

Three years later he was teaching aerobics. The momentum was building. 5 years after that he competed in the National Aerobics Championships. Along the way he got his high school diploma and worked through a University.

*Finally him and a friend started their own manufacturing business called **Typhoon Sportswear Ltd.**, specializing in producing apparel for retail chains. They started with **only 4 employees** and **today it's a multi-million dollar company with 66 people** and an international distribution network supplying high profile clients such as Nike.*

That's an amazing story isn't it?

To go from almost dying, having a lifestyle and body that's out-of-shape and no education to competing in national aerobics competitions and running a multi-million dollar company!

But, it all started with a thought: **“I brought this on myself through years of making bad choices. Never again; I want a life.”**

What we say yes to in our mind we'll eventually say yes to in our life!

Your thoughts have a huge effect on your life: where you're **at**, where you're **headed**, what you **do** or **don't do**, etc...

So when we want to see change the first place to start is with our thoughts. We have to start with **what we think about**, what our **opinions** are about things, what we say is **true**, what we say is **right**.

But, our life is affected by more than just our thoughts...

Remember, your heart is not just your thoughts, **it's also your emotions -- it's your will**.

These three things together are what give you the results in your life.

Most of us like to think that we're logical that we make our choices based on facts. But you know what? Most of the decisions we make are based on **emotions**.

Marketers say that most buying decisions are made based on emotion and justified later by logic. I'd bet that this is true not just about buying decisions but all decisions!

Story Of My Son Jack

I can tell Jack. **“Hey Jack, don't do that or you're going to get hurt.”** Or I can say, **“Jack, don't do that because I said so.”** and do you know what his answer is?

“But I want to!”

Recently he's started to go through a phase where he chooses to do something I just told him not to do, even though he knew he'd get in trouble, because why? **“But I want to!”**

By watching Jack, I've discovered something that's true of Jack and true of everyone of us in this room and that's this...

* **“Want” is stronger than “know”!**

How many times in life have you **chosen to do something** even though you **knew we shouldn't? Why? Because, you wanted to!**

I bet that 98.9% of the time what you want will **win** over what you know!

There are **so many times we choose to do something because of some deep, underlying want** and we have no clue – in our minds - WHY we did it!

As Blaise Pascal said...

“The heart has its reasons that reason does not know.”

Our emotions and desires our powerful!

There's a success teacher names Jack Zufelt who talks about what he calls “the DNA of success”...

Core Desire + Direction x Proper Action + Persistence =Success

Our emotions and desire have a strong part in the results of our lives.

This is how I think about these 3 things...

Thoughts deal with the facts. Here's what I think about this.

Emotions deal with desires. Here's what I feel about this.

The Will makes the decision. Here's what I'm going to do.

Do you want to know how important the heart is to God? There are **677 verses in the Bible** that talk about it and most of them are talking about it in the same way we are here.

God cares about what's going on in your thoughts, emotions and will!

In Matt. 23:25-26 Jesus said this to the Pharisees...

“How terrible it will be for you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! You are so careful to clean the outside of the cup and the dish, but inside you are filthy—full of greed and self-indulgence! ²⁶Blind Pharisees! First wash the inside of the cup, and then the outside will become clean, too.”

Jesus is saying it's the inside that matters. Stop working on the outside – the results. Work on the inside and the outside will change also!

James Allen in a book from 1902 called “As A Man Thinketh” said this...

“Men are anxious to improve their circumstances, but are unwilling to improve themselves; they therefore remain bound.”

The ironic thing is that there are so many things that we guard or protect in our lives: we protect our houses, our cars, our money, our families, - even our time!

But, we seem to leave the most important thing -- our heart -- unprotected.

What I've been realizing more and more is that the quality of my life springs from what's inside me, not outside me.

The life that I end up living is affected by what I allow inside -- what's going on in my "heart", not from the outside (circumstances). I need to guard my thought, emotions and will.

How do you do that?

The rest of these verses give us some practical ways to guard/control our hearts, so we can see change in our lives...

2. My Life Is Affected By My Words

”²⁴Avoid all perverse talk; stay far from corrupt speech.”

This is talking about any kind of negative speech: **evil words, cursing, swearing, lying, slandering, filthiness, and foolish** talk.

Why is controlling our words so important? We see a clue in **James 3:2...**

²We all make many mistakes, but those who control their tongues can also control themselves in every other way.

The secret here is that **controlling your tongue**, watching what you say, is a physical way to begin to control – or guard - your heart.

The life I experience is affected by the things I say - to **myself**, to **others**, and to **God** (prayer). If you want to **change your life** you have to **change your words**.

The next thing that we can do to guard our hearts and change our in lives is...

3. My Life Is Affected By My Focus

“²⁵Look straight ahead, and fix your eyes on what lies before you.”

The kind of life that I end up living is affected by what I focus on. Where I "fix my gaze" in life will determine which way I go and where I ultimately end up in life.

Brian Tracy tells a story in his book "**Focal Point**" that shows the value of focus...

There was a major technical problem at a nuclear plant. This malfunction was slowing energy generation and reducing the efficiency of the whole place.

The plant's engineers tried and tried to figure out what was wrong, but they couldn't. So finally, they brought in one of the nations top consultants on nuclear power plant construction and engineering to see if he could figure out what was wrong.

The consultant got there, put on his white coat, took his clipboard, and went to work. For 2 days, he walked around, studying hundreds of dials and gauges in the control room, taking notes, and making calculations.

At the end of the 2nd day, he took a black felt marker out of his pocket, climbed up on a ladder, and put a large black "X" on one of the gauges.

He told them, "This is the problem. Repair and replace the apparatus connected to this meter, and the problem will be solved.

He then took off his white smock, drove to the airport and jumped on the next plane home. The engineers did what he said and disassembled the apparatus and discovered that he was right. It was soon repaired and the plant was back to full capacity.

About a week later, the plant manager received a bill from the consultant for \$10,000 for "services rendered."

The plant manager was surprised at the size of the bill, even though this was a multibillion-dollar facility and the problem had been costing them a huge amount of money in lost generating capacity.

The manager still thought to himself, "All this guy did was stand around for a couple days, write a black "X" on one of the gauges, and then head home." \$10,000 seemed like a high fee for such a simple job.

The plant manager wrote back to the consultant, "We received your bill. Could you please break down and itemize your charges? It seems that all you did was to write one "X" on a single gauge. \$10,000 appears to be excessive for this amount of work"

Some days later, the plant manager received a new invoice from the consultant. It said this, "For placing an "X" on the gauge: \$1.00. For knowing which gauge to place "X" on: \$9,999."

****Knowing where to put the “X” – where to focus - is one of the most important and valuable things you can do.**

Coffman's Commentary says...

(Proverbs 4:25,27). The great goal of earthly existence, for every wise man, is that of receiving at last the blessed welcome of the Lord, Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Looking straight ahead means that men should not allow sensual, earthly, selfish, or material temptations to turn their eyes and their purpose away from the true goal and toward such other considerations. The mention of the right and the left hand is a warning against extreme positions. It should always be remembered that there is a ditch on either side, (the right or the left) of the road!

If you want to change your life, then you have to **change what you're focused on**. This is another way to help you to begin guarding your heart.

The next thing that will help us guard our heart and change our lives ...

4. My Life Is Affected By The "Tangents" I Take.

“26Mark out a straight path for your feet; then stick to the path and stay safe.

²⁷Don't get sidetracked; keep your feet from following evil.” NLT

The kind of life I experience is based on whether I choose to take "**straight**" paths or whether I take the "**crooked**" paths.

Someone once said, "**If you don't want to fall, don't go where it's slippery.**"

The kind of life that I end up living will be affected from how many tangent -- or side paths -- I take in my life. **I think some people think "I'm just gonna go off this way for awhile" and they never make it back on the path their life was headed on!**

That's what Brent Vouri did. How many people do you know like this?

The direction you take, and your ability to stay on that path, will help you guard your heart!

It All Comes Down To This

These things: **your words**, **your focus**, and **your direction** will help you to guard your heart.

The problem is our thoughts, emotions and will are a hard thing to fully understand and control. In another place in the book of Proverbs, it says that **only God fully understands the motives of our hearts.**

You need to **submit to God and walk with him** if you're ever going to be able to guard your heart.

We can only begin to see amazing changes by remembering that the heart is the root cause of our life and by applying these things.

But if we're going to become all we were created to be, then we have to do more than that...

John Gill in his commentary shows us the missing ingredients: the heart can be guarded by prayer, hearing the truth, reading the Bible, meditation on scripture; and, above all, by asking Jesus for his grace and Spirit to sanctify, preserve, and keep us.

If you want to change your body you've got to **change what you put in it**. The only other way is a **makeover**.

If you want to change your life you have to change what you put in your thoughts, emotions and will. We need an extreme makeover of our hearts!

Again this can only happen if we submit to Jesus as Lord and follow Him.

Do you know what's amazing?

***If you're thoughts and feelings change, but your situation doesn't, you'll still feel like your situation has changed!**

What if God wants us to **stop asking for Him to change our situation** and instead **change in us!**

It all starts today and it all starts in your heart.

Will you give it to Jesus today?

Email me if you did that today. info@experiencepathway.com

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Successful People Are Successful Life Managers

Starting on **Sunday, September 17th at 10:30am** I'll begin talking about 5 gifts that God has given us to manage in life. How you manage these "gifts" will have a HUGE impact on whether you reach your full potential.

See my blog the "**Life Management Blog**" for more posts! Go here: <http://life-management-blog.blogspot.com/>

Go to our church site to learn more about us and where we meet: <http://www.PathwayPaloAlto.com>