



WEST WINDS

Peabody, Massachusetts

June 2017

GUARDING OUR HEARTS

In **1 Samuel 16:7** an important truth about God and our hearts is communicated to Samuel, the prophet, by God Himself in the selection of David as the new King of Israel. It is clear here that God measures people by a different standard than we do.

But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart."

The heart is symbolic of the center of our thoughts, motivation, desires and that which affects our behavior.

The Bible, God's Word, gives us clear teaching about the state of our hearts. Because of Adam's sin and fall we have inherited from him, our represented head, a heart that is depraved, dead, sinful, wicked, deceitful, and with a propensity to evil. Two verses that describe the state of our fallen hearts are in **Genesis 6:5** and **Jeremiah 17:9**.

The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?

But our God is a God of mercy and grace and part of His redemptive promise and purpose for His people is to give them a new heart. This was promised and foreseen in the Old Testament and secured by Christ by His obedience, death and resurrection with the coming of the new and final covenant. In the letter to the Hebrews the writer ties the promise in the Old and the fulfillment in Christ in the New.

But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion to look for a second. For he finds fault with them when he says: "Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. For they did not continue in my covenant, and so I showed no concern for them, declares the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more." In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

Hebrews 8:6-13

The blessings of the New Covenant are that those "in Christ" will be regenerated (born-again) by God and given a new heart that knows God in a personal way and experiences the freedom of full and complete forgiveness of sins. This is why the Gospel we proclaim is 'good news'!

God has given the believer now the capacity to know Him, obey Him, love Him and follow Him because He has given them a new heart! The believer did not have this capacity before the gift of regeneration.

So it is our responsibility to guard what God has given us by His grace; that is to guard our hearts toward Him. Though we have a new capacity and spiritual ability as believers we still have enemies that want to 'dull our hearts' toward God and have us wander from loving Him with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. These enemies are the sin nature that still remains, the fallen world system, and Satan which all wage war against

our souls trying to capture our hearts from God. Every day we wage war with these enemies as we try to love God with all our hearts.

Therefore we must keep 'heart healthy' in the spiritual sense and guard our hearts. This involves daily and privately spending in God's Word, seeking His presence, open our hearts to God and letting His Word speak to us. Also it involves worshipping God consistently and corporately with God's people in singing hymns, spiritual songs and prayers and in the hearing God's Word preached with an open and sincere heart. Finally, we must seek out opportunities for fellowship and service with God's people with the goal of encouraging one another to love and good deeds.

Beloved, if we don't actively and intentionally 'guard our hearts' we will drift away and our hearts will become hardened to the things of God. Let us remember the exhortation in **Hebrews 3:12-13, *Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.***

We must remember that God sees not as we do. He looks beyond the outward appearances and sees our hearts. He knows if our hearts are clean, pure and devoted to Him. We can fool others but we cannot fool God. He knows all things. The summer is coming and we must not let down our guard for a moment because the enemies of our soul do not rest! But if we turn to God through Jesus Christ with an honest and sincere heart He will embrace us in His grace.

Hebrews 4:14-16, Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

I love you,

Pastor Rick

CHURCH SOFTBALL TEAM

Games are Monday evenings at 6:30 pm.

- June 5 at Farnham Park, Peabody
- June 12 at O'Connor Park, Peabody
- June 19 at Riverside #2, Danvers
Game at 8:00 pm
- June 26 at Pine Hill, Lynn

ROCK SOLID

Rock Solid will be meeting Sunday nights June 4 and 11 from 6-8:30pm. June 11 is the Senior Send Off. For additional information please contact the office.

MEET, GREET & EAT | JUNE 9 at 7:00 pm

If you are new to West Church within the last three years, come to this ice cream social to connect with us. This event will meet in the Upper Room.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLOSING PROGRAM

JUNE 11 at 8:45 am

All are Welcome to Attend

Please join us for a morning of reflection and worship as the Sunday School classes for children and youth celebrate all they have learned about God and how these truths apply to their lives. Classes will be sharing how their faith impacts, informs and influences their lives every day.

Families, please sign up in the lower narthex on June 4 to bring refreshments that will be served during the reception following the Closing Program. All refreshments can be dropped off in the kitchen before the closing program. Thank you.

Children and youth please arrive to your classrooms by 8:30 am due to the early start time of 8:45 am.

DESSERT SOCIAL | JUNE 22 at 7:00 pm

The women of West Church are invited to a time of fellowship and encouragement. Our guest speaker will be a member of our missionary family that serves in Africa with her husband and two children. This event will be held in the Upper Room. Please RSVP to the office to help us plan for the event. Thank you.

TALENT NIGHT | JUNE 23 at 7:00 pm

You don't want to be saying, "I wish I had gone!" So mark your calendars now for this fun night of fellowship and entertainment. Hope to see you there, and oh by the way, there is still time if you want to participate. Contact the office to be added to the list of performances.

WEST CHURCH WOMEN'S RETREAT

NOVEMBER 3-5, 2017

Brookwoods Conference Center

Learning from the Past, Living for the Future

"But I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to you; what I have vowed I will pay. Salvation belongs to the LORD!" ~ Job 2:9 ESV



God's grace and tender mercy is seen in the lives of many individuals in both the Old and New Testaments. People like Ruth, Hosea, Jonah, and Peter, are like us perhaps in more ways than we realize. They also experienced a number of the same challenges we face today. God met them in their circumstances, and He meets us in ours as well. Come and get to know these Bible characters as flesh and blood people. Discover how they responded to God and what we can learn from them.

We are pleased to welcome Diane Averill back again as our speaker this year. A love for God's Word and a love for people are evident in Diane's life and ministry. As a speaker and writer Diane uses her skills to support local church Bible study and outreach ministries. Diane is married to a pastor and has four married children and eleven grandchildren.

The total cost of the retreat is \$135 which includes a non-refundable deposit of \$30. To register please complete a registration form and submit it to a committee member with the deposit. Registration begins Sunday, June 4 following the Worship Service.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
JULY 10-14 | 9am – 12:30pm



*Searching the Visible,
Discovering the Invisible*

Join us for a fabulous week of galactic adventure from July 10th to the 14th! From Monday through Friday, 9am-12:30pm, kids in Pre-K through Grade 6 are invited to take the journey with us into Galactic Starveyors VBS!

At Galactic Starveyors VBS, kids will search the skies, encounter amazing things designed by a Creator who is even bigger than the vastness of His creation, and discover that the God who created everything there is wants a relationship with them! With Galactic crafts and music, outdoor games, snacks, and Bible exploration, kids will experience a VBS adventure like no other!

Be sure to gather your crew and plan on attending our **Galactic Starveyors Closing Program** on Friday, July 14th at noon.

To register your child, visit our website at: www.westchurchpeabody.org. Click on the Ministries, then Children & Youth tabs, to find "Vacation Bible School 2017." The Registration Form link is at the bottom. A classmate preference may be requested from within the same group. Classes are assigned according to the grade completed in June.

The classes are divided as follows:

- Pre-Kindergarten (Children who will be entering Kindergarten in September or age 4 as of June 1)
- Kindergarten
- Grades 1 and 2 Combined Class
- Grades 3 and 4 Combined Class
- Grades 5 and 6 Combined Class

In lieu of a registration fee, VBS invites all families to generously contribute food and non-perishable items to be donated once again to Citizens Inn, Peabody.

Please visit the Parent Café each morning at drop off for:



PARENT
cafe

- *Parent fellowship
- *Free refreshments and coffee
- *Free resources for family, parenting and marriage
- *A daily giveaway drawing
- *A brief overview of your child's daily lesson

An important part of each day at Galactic Starveyors VBS is Snack Time. As you can imagine, it takes a lot of snack supplies to provide snack for 150 hungry kids! You can help us with our shopping! If you are able, choose an item or two from the list of snacks below, and pick it up the next time you're grocery shopping. You can leave all VBS Snack donations in the blue VBS Donations bin in the lower narthex.

- *Kix cereal
- *Fruity Cheerios
- *Gallons of Water
- *Market Basket brand Magic Stars cereal

A great, big "Thank You" to everyone who has come forward to join our dynamic Galactic Starveyors Crew! We are about 5 people away from being fully staffed. If you are interested in diving into this Galactic Adventure with us, please let me know! Here are some of the positions still available: 3 Classroom helpers and 2 Craft helpers.

As you look ahead in your calendar, please add these important VBS dates:

- Tuesday, June 27 @ 7pm – 2nd Crew Meeting in Sanctuary: Teacher Training and Crew Expectations
- Sunday, July 9 – VBS Crew Dedication during worship service, followed by Noon-3pm – Galactic Starveyors Set Up & Crew Pizza Party
- Friday, July 14 @ noon – VBS Closing Program, followed by 1-3pm Take Down, Evaluation & Crew Pizza Party



Please pray with us for God to guide all of our Galactic plans!

Looking forward to our adventure,
The VBS Committee: