

“The Heart – The Wellspring of Life”

by Rev. John C. Tittle

Scripture Reading: Proverbs 4: 20-27 NRSV

²⁰ My child, be attentive to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. ²¹ Do not let them escape from your sight; keep them within your heart. ²² For they are life to those who find them, and healing to all their flesh. ²³ Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life. ²⁴ Put away from you crooked speech, and put devious talk far from you. ²⁵ Let your eyes look directly forward, and your gaze be straight before you. ²⁶ Keep straight the path of your feet, and all your ways will be sure. ²⁷ Do not swerve to the right or to the left; turn your foot away from evil.

Discussion Questions:

1. What jumped out at you about this passage?
2. What sayings can you think of that include the heart in them?
3. Why do you think the heart is such a crucial image for our spiritual life in the Scriptures?
4. What five parts of the human body are mentioned in these short verses? What do each of them represent?
5. In Hebrew thought, the word “listen” means more than to just hear. To listen means to obey. Why is it important that listening is not just a state of being, but something that leads to concrete action?
6. What are ways that we can guard our hearts? What is the difference between guarding your heart and being defensive?
7. What do you think it means that “the heart is the wellspring of life,” as one translation puts it?
8. How can we be a wellspring of life to others? To God? To ourselves?