

Guarding the Heart-the Psalmist's Pattern

RECOGNIZE - *See what is there.*

Most men do not lose their footing suddenly. They lose it gradually.

Fear goes unnoticed. Discouragement goes unnamed. Pressure accumulates. And over time, what is unseen begins to lead.

The Psalmists lived differently. They noticed. They paid attention to their hearts—not to indulge themselves, but to remain anchored in God.

This is where sturdy, well-guarded hearts begin. It begins with simply seeing.

Day 1- The Battle Beneath the Battle

Scripture

“...Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified.”

— 1 Samuel 17:11

Reflection

Before David ever stepped forward to face Goliath, something else had already taken hold of the battlefield. Fear. Not just in one man—but the entire army. King and all. And that fear changed everything.

It changed how they saw the giant.

It changed what they believed was possible.

It changed what they were willing to do.

The external battle had yet to be fought. But internally, they folded.

This is where most battles are decided. Not outside you. Inside you. You know this feeling. Something happens—a conversation, a decision, a pressure you did not expect—and before you even think clearly, something shifts inside.

Tension.

Uncertainty.

A “heart attack” if you will.

Most men move past this moment quickly. They rush past the initial discomfort. They push on. They distract themselves. They numb themselves. Anything but notice.

But David did something different. He remained aware. He was not ruled by what he felt because he was not afraid to see it.

This is where guarding your heart begins. By noticing.

Remember

“Our greatest victories begin on the inside.”

Practice

Set three alarms today (morning, afternoon, evening). When each alarm goes off, ask:

- What am I feeling?
- Where do I feel it in my body?
- What triggered it?

Day 2- When Something Feels Off

Scripture

“Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me?”

— Psalm 43:5

Reflection

David (as did the other Psalmists) noticed when something was unsettled inside him. He did not ignore it. He didn't stuff it. He didn't bury it with busyness. He turned toward it.

“Why, my soul, are you downcast?”

He spoke to his own heart—not to shame it, but to understand it.

You have experienced this too. Days when something feels heavier than usual. You may not have words for it. Just a weight. A subtle fatigue. A loss of clarity.

Most men live disconnected from these moments. They push forward, assuming strength means ignoring what is happening inside. But Scripture reveals a different kind of strength. Strength that begins with honesty.

God is not asking you to become less aware of your heart. He is teaching you to become keenly aware—so that your heart does not lead you somewhere you never intended to go.

This is not weakness. This is leadership. Leadership of your own soul.

Remember

“What we name, we can tame. What we deny will drive us.”

Practice

Use an emotions list (fear, sadness, anger, joy, shame, guilt, loneliness, peace, etc.).

Circle 3 emotions you experienced today.

Day 3- Slowing Down Enough to Notice

Scripture

“Search me, God, and know my heart.”

— Psalm 139:23

Reflection

Most men live at a speed that makes self-awareness difficult. Responsibility keeps them moving. Expectations keep them occupied. Pressures keep them hustling.

But the clarity your heart needs requires stillness. When you slow down—even briefly—you begin to notice things that you need to notice.

Things like:

- The fear that keeps you from doing what you need to do.
The disappointment that freezes you from trying again.
The fatigue you keep ignoring.

None of this surprises God. He has seen it all along. But He’s waiting for you to gain His perspective. Not so you can fix yourself. So you can walk honestly with Him...in the light.

David understood this. He did not ask God to search him because God lacked information. He asked because he wanted alignment. He wanted nothing hidden between himself and the Lord. This is where a settled heart is anchored. After all, “in His presence is fullness of joy.” (Psalm 16.11)

Quote

“Live slowly enough to be able to think deeply about God.” — J. I. Packer

Practice

Take two minutes today in quiet...sit still with God.

Day 4- The Voice of Criticism

Scripture

“Why have you come down here? And with whom did you leave those few sheep in the wilderness? I know how conceited you are...”

— 1 Samuel 17:28

Reflection

Before David ever faced Goliath, he faced Eliab. The older brother. Eliab’s words cut like a sword. Demeaning. Dismissive. Degrading. Not just questioning David’s judgment—but questioning his heart.

Criticism has a unique power. It does not merely challenge what you do. It challenges who you are.

You have likely felt this before. Words that linger longer than they should. Conversations you replay in your mind. Moments where something in you quietly withdraws.

Criticism can create hesitation where confidence once lived. It can make a man question himself in ways he never had before. David felt this pressure. He experienced the jab of those words. *But* he did not allow them to define him.

This is where recognizing your heart matters. Because criticism can’t shape you automatically. It gains impact over time. Mentally rehearsing the hurtful words. Over and over again. But when you take those words to the One who made you, the One who really knows you; you regain clarity. That painful cycle is broken. “In His light we see light.” (Psalm 36.9)

Let God’s voice be the loudest.

Quote

“When the critics shoot their mouths off, what happens inside you?”

Practice

Write down one critical voice you hear internally.

Then answer this question: “Who told you that?” (see Genesis 3.11)

Day 5- The Voice of Doubt

Scripture

“You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him...”

— 1 Samuel 17:33

Reflection

Saul’s words were not cruel. They were actually reasonable. Practically measured. Reasonably logical. Honestly realistic. And completely destabilizing.

“You are not able...”

Doubt rarely presents itself as hostility. It presents itself as realism. As caution. As wisdom. But internally, it creates something else. It creates hesitation. It causes a man to step back from what he once would have stepped toward. It dries up your faith-filled anticipation.

You’ve heard the voice of doubt as well. Who hasn’t? Sometimes from others. Sometimes from within yourself. Questions about your competence. Your capability. Your readiness. Doubt unravels how you see yourself.

David heard Saul’s words. He felt their weight. But he did not allow Saul’s doubts to direct his destiny. That’s God’s territory.

This is where guarding your heart becomes real. Not by eliminating doubt—but by seeing it clearly enough so that it does not quietly define you. Let God’s view of you reign supreme.

Quote

“Our greatest victories begin on the inside.”

Practice

Write down one current doubt.

Then answer:

- What is the doubt saying?
- What is God saying?

Day 6- The Voice of Fear

Scripture

Goliath stood and shouted his usual defiance.

— 1 Samuel 17:10–11

Reflection

Goliath did more than threaten Israel physically. He destabilized them spiritually and emotionally. It was a massive heart attack! Every day, his voice reminded them of their vulnerability. His size. His strength. His presence.

Fear grows stronger through repetition. Through constant reminders of what could go wrong, or how unable you are.

You know this experience. Situations that feel larger than you expected. Responsibilities that feel heavier than you anticipated. Moments where your internal sense of steadiness weakens.

Fear narrows your vision. It cripples your faith. It convinces you you're toast. Puny. Unable. Done.

David saw the same giant everyone else saw. Everyone thought "Goliath is too big to be beat." But David moved past fear's whispers to realize what no one else could see, "Goliath is too big to miss!"

David was not internally ruled by fear—because he remained aware of his heart before God. This same God who delivered him from the lions and bears would once again prove Himself faithful.

Fear loses some of its power when it is recognized. Not denied. Not suppressed. Seen.

God does not ask you to pretend fear is absent. He invites you to bring it honestly into His presence.

Quote

"When I am afraid, I put my trust in you." Psalm 56.3

Practice

Say this aloud: "Right now, I am afraid of _____."

Naming the fear reduces its grip on your heart.

Day 7- The Turning Point of Awareness

Scripture

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me...

— Psalm 23:4

Reflection

This is the turning point. Not when David picked up the stone. Not when he stepped onto the battlefield. Earlier. Much earlier. When he was alone shepherding the sheep. When the bear stormed in. Or the lion roared. It was game time.

It was then that David discovered the reality of God with him. That awareness shifted his heart from fear to faith. That awareness shed new light on who his God is. That awareness flipped a switch in David's heart.

Apart from God I can do nothing, but with God all things are possible! (note: John 15.5/Matthew 19.26)

Quote

“It is the awareness of God with you that reframes the emotion.”

Practice

Watch for “God with you” moments throughout your day today. When you note one, be sure to say thanks.

BRING IT *Bring your heart honestly to God.*

Most men learn to “manage” their emotions long before they hear they can bring them to God. They learn to push through. To stuff them down. To ignore them, numb them, deny them.

After all most emotions are messy. No one wants to be “that guy”. So, we learn to carry on, best we can. Somewhat composed. Somewhat numb.

Over time, this becomes the norm. It’s what we do. Not because it is wise—but because it is what we feel we have to do.

But the Psalmists lived differently. They did not hide their hearts from God. They brought everything. Their fear. Their anger. Their disappointment. Their hopes. Their confusion. Their joy. All of it.

They learned to guard their hearts not by becoming less emotional. By becoming more honest.

Day 8- The Moment You Turn Toward God

Scripture

“I pour out my complaint before him; before him I tell my trouble.”

— Psalm 142:2

Reflection

David did not wait until he was calm to turn toward God. He turned toward God while he was still unsettled. While questions remained unanswered. While emotions remained unresolved.

He poured out his complaint. Not carefully. Not diplomatically.

Honestly.

This is unfamiliar territory for many men. Most men bring God their conclusions. Their decisions. Their composed selves.

But God invites something deeper. He invites your unfiltered heart. Not because He needs information. But because relationship requires honesty.

There is a quiet moment—sometimes brief, sometimes difficult—when you realize something is happening inside you.

Fear.

Disappointment.

Confusion.

This is the moment you are learning to turn toward God. Not away. Not once you understand it fully.

Now.

This is where your trust in God deepens. Not in certainty. In honesty.

Quote

“We don’t pray our emotions to get rid of them—we pray them to give them to God.”

Practice

Find a private place. Tell God honestly what is troubling you today. **Out loud.** (The Psalms were read and sung out loud.)

Day 9- Why Men Hesitate to Bring Their Hearts

Scripture

“Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”

— 1 Peter 5:7

Reflection

Many men hesitate here. Not because they lack faith. But because they have learned to carry their lives alone. Responsibility teaches self-reliance. Experience reinforces it. Over time, bringing your heart honestly to God can feel unfamiliar—even uncomfortable.

Part of you may wonder: Shouldn't I be stronger than this? Shouldn't I have moved past this already?

But God's invitation is sure. “Cast all your anxiety on him...”

Not some of it. All of it. Not once you have organized it. As it is.

God is not disappointed in your humanity. He meets you in it.

This is where the internal burden of your heart begins to shift. Not because the situation changes immediately. But because you are no longer carrying it alone.

Quote

“Feelings are not the enemy of faith. They are the pathway to deeper trust.” — Henri Nouwen

Practice

Write your biggest concern down on paper. Hold it. Pray.

Then place it somewhere symbolic (your Bible, desk, cross). Let God hold it now.

Day 10- Bringing What You Cannot Fix

Scripture

“How long, LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?”
— Psalm 13:1

Reflection

There are moments in every man’s life when “heart attacks” hit. Clarity disappears. Situations don’t resolve. Prayers go unanswered. Pressures remain.

David knew these moments well. He did not hide them. He brought them honestly before God.

“How long, LORD?”

This is not rebellion. This is relationship. God does not require you to pretend certainty when you feel uncertainty. He does not ask you to conceal disappointment behind strength.

He invites you to bring what you cannot fix. What you don’t understand. What is wearing you down. Troubling you. Everything that is hitting your heart. Bring it.

Something shifts when you do. Not always externally at first. Internally.

You are no longer holding it alone. God meets you there. Not at the end of the process. Right in the middle of it.

Quote

“The Psalms teach us how to bring every emotion before God.” —Tim Keller

Practice

List 3 things you cannot fix. Consciously hand them over to God praying, “These belong to You, Lord.”

Day 11- Bringing Your Fear Instead of Carrying It

Scripture

“I sought the LORD, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears.
— Psalm 34:4

Reflection

Fear has weight. Not always obvious. Not always visible. But present. It settles quietly into your thinking. It shapes how you see the future. It narrows your willingness to step forward.

Many men carry fear silently. They continue functioning externally while something inside them tightens.

David did something different. He brought his fear directly to God. Not after he eliminated it. But while he was still struggling with it.

“I sought the Lord...”

Fear loses its isolating power when it is brought into God’s presence. Not because fear disappears instantly. But because you are no longer alone inside it.

God’s presence restores perspective. And perspective restores steadiness.

Quote

“Fear is not the opposite of faith. Fear is an opportunity for faith.” —John Ortberg

Practice

What fear have you been hesitant to bring to God? What would one step towards that conversation look like today?

Day 12- Bringing Your Disappointment

Scripture

“My tears have been my food day and night...”

— Psalm 42:3

Reflection

Disappointment can quietly reshape a man. Expectations unmet. Efforts that didn't produce. Outcomes unrealized.

Many men absorb disappointment without acknowledging it. They try and dig deep. Move on. But something inside them dies a little bit.

They're less hopeful.

Less open.

Less passionate.

Less adventurous.

They're less.

David didn't ignore disappointment. He carried it into the presence of God. Not to accuse God. But to remain connected to Him within it.

God does not withdraw from you when you are disappointed. He remains ever-present. David writes in Psalm 139:8, “If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.”

God isn't just in the high times. He's with you in the deepest, darkest valleys. Right smack dab in the middle of your disappointment.

So bring your disappointments. That practice prevents your heart from growing hard. That practice helps you realize God is still writing your story. It keeps your heart open.

And open hearts remain capable of trust.

Quote

“We become fully human not by suppressing our emotions but by surrendering them to Christ.” — John Ortberg

Practice

Did you have a disappointment come to mind as you read this today? I dare you to bring it to Him. Let God meet you right there.

Day 13- Bringing Your Questions

Scripture

“Why, LORD, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?”

— Psalm 10:1

Reflection

Questions are part of every man’s faith journey. Moments when God’s timing is unclear. His actions are hard to understand. And He feels as if He is hiding from you.

Many men hesitate to bring their questions to God. They assume questions signal weak faith. But Scripture reveals something very different. The Psalmists asked questions...a lot! Regularly. Repeatedly. Relentlessly.

Not because they lacked faith. Because they were determined to stay with God. Their honest questions deepened their faith over time. They grew to realize they could talk to God about anything and everything.

The Psalmist’s realized an unsubmitted question could create unwanted distance between them and their God. So, with fervency they learned to close any perceived gap with an honest question.

God does not reject honest questions. He meets you within them. Not always with immediate answers. But always with His presence.

Quote

“The great temptation is to try to present to God a false self—one that is neat, spiritual, and in control. God does not ask us to be perfect. He asks us to be honest.” — Henri Nouwen

Practice

Bring one question you’ve been holding to God today. Do not rush to resolve it.

Listen for what He might say to you.

Day 14- The Strength of a Waiting Heart

Scripture

“I waited patiently for the LORD; He turned to me and heard my cry.”

— Psalm 40:1

Reflection

This is where the rubber hits the road. God holds the timer. We don't. Oh, we have ideas of when something should happen...but they're just ideas. The rock-solid reality is we don't have the clock. God does.

I hate waiting. How about you? You love long lines at the DMV? The “waiting” room at Urgent care (there really appears nothing urgent there...right?) Waiting. Waiting for that call. Waiting for your turn. Waiting for that package. Waiting for the light to change.

All that waiting can weary the soul...if we fail to look for God's listening ear. David declares, “He turned to me and heard my cry.” You see we tend to look at the clock. It works better if you stare at God's face. He's listening. Do you see that?

Quote

“The Psalms teach us that waiting and praying are inseparable.” — Eugene Peterson

Practice

Practice slowing today. Choose the long line. Drive slowly (I know it feels like agony!) Pause between meetings. Slow down.

SUBMIT IT *Release what you cannot control.*

Recognizing your heart brings clarity.

Bringing your heart brings connection.

Submission brings freedom.

But that last sentence usually comes with a “huh”? How does submission bring freedom? This is where many falter—not because they lack sincerity, but because control feels like safety. Control creates the illusion of stability. And that’s a BIG illusion. Fact is, we have very little control. Believing otherwise creates significant strain to our hearts.

The Psalmists lived out of the reality that submission was freeing. They entrusted their hopes, dreams and hearts to God. They understood that submission isn’t passive. It is alignment.

It is placing yourself, your future, and your unresolved circumstances into stronger hands than your own.

And that is the safest place for your heart to rest.

Day 15- Releasing the Outcome

Scripture

“My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done.”

— Matthew 26:42

Reflection

Jesus personally knew the rigor of submission. He had brought His heart honestly to the Father. In the garden, He expressed His desire clearly. But his greatest desire was, “Your will be done.”

Submission is not pretending you do not care. It is entrusting what you deeply care about into the hands of God. Andrew Murray says, “God is ready to assume full responsibility for the life wholly yielded to Him.”

That’s a tremendously comforting thought: “God is ready to assume full responsibility for the life wholly yielded to Him.”

You in???

Quote

“There are only two kinds of people: those who say to God, ‘Thy will be done,’ and those to whom God says, ‘Thy will be done.’” —C.S. Lewis

Practice

Identify one situation you are holding tightly (especially in regard to the outcome). Write it down. For you to turn this situation over, what help do you need from the Lord? Ask Him for that grace and help right now. (*“Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.”* Hebrews 4.16)

Day 16- Letting Go of What You Were Never Meant to Carry

Scripture

“Cast your cares on the LORD and he will sustain you.”

— Psalm 55:22

Reflection

Lots of men carry stuff. Not so much physical stuff. It’s internal. Note...not eternal, but internal. The stuff piles up on our insides. Responsibilities keep coming. Concerns grow. Expectations rise. Uncertainty accumulates.

Over time, this internal weight begins to shape your heart. It creates tension. Fatigue. Strain. You can feel like life is swallowing you whole. Your toast.

God never asked you to carry your life alone. He asked you to entrust it to Him.

“Cast your cares on the LORD...”

Casting is active. Intentional. It requires release. Your release. Your thoughtful release.

Not once. Repeatedly. Often. Each time you release what you cannot control, your heart gets lighter. Not because circumstances change immediately. Because you are no longer carrying them alone.

God sustains what you entrust to Him.

Quote

“You can carry your burdens, or you can cast them. You cannot do both.” —Max Lucado

Practice

What is a burden you have been carrying for quite some time? Find a small object (stone, coin, etc.) to represent this burden. Carry it in your pocket all day. Notice when you feel it there. As you do, ask God to help you unload it. Sometime at the end of your day get alone and throw that thing as far as you can (so far there’s no chance you can find it again!). Now tell the Lord: “I release this to You.”

Day 17- Submission Restores Internal Alignment

Scripture

“In you, LORD my God, I put my trust.”

— Psalm 25:1

Reflection

Trust is not merely a belief. It is an internal posture. A positioning of your heart. Submission restores alignment between your heart and God’s leadership. Without submission, your internal world remains unsettled. You may believe in God—but still live carrying your future alone.

Submission changes that.

It allows God to carry what was never yours to manage fully.

David lived this way. He faced uncertainty constantly. First, as a kid with 7 older brothers. That’s life threatening! Secondly, as a shepherd. Sheep wandering. Lions and bears stalking your flock. And can you imagine the uncertainty of having a mad king and his army chase you around the countryside?

David knew he couldn’t possibly control all this. His response was to repeatedly trust God. He sings, “The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold” (Psalm 18.2). All those metaphors David uses for his Lord are place you put yourself. The rock. A fortress. The refuge. Behind a shield or in a stronghold. It’s posture language. It’s where you put you to be safe. Settled. Secure.

Submission does not eliminate all uncertainty. But it stabilizes you. You become steady—not because the future is clear and everything is rosy—but because God has become your Rock, Refuge and Stronghold.

Quote

“Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God.” —Corrie ten Boom

Practice

Memorize: “In you, LORD my God, I put my trust” (Ps. 25.1). As you go through your day, at every twist and turn recite your verse to yourself. Slowly. Listen to it. Lean on it... “IN You, Lord my God, I put my trust.”

Day 18- The End of Striving

Scripture

“Be still, and know that I am God.”

— Psalm 46:10

Reflection

There’s a lot of scrambling, clambering and striving in our world isn’t there? People hurrying here and there. Businesses gulping up other businesses. Leaders invading countries. This group against that group.

This well-known verse from Psalm 46 is wrapped in the news that the sea is heaving and the mountains are quaking. It sounds like the Psalmist world is crumbling. In the midst of this God interrupts the Psalmist writing to make a public service announcement: “Be still, and know that I am God.”

That’s it. When your world is shaking. Do this: be still.

How?

By knowing He is God. Not god. God. Capital G.

The One. The Only. The Maker of heaven and earth. By knowing Him.

And in response; being still.

Stillness restores clarity.

It reminds you that God is already working within your circumstances.

That awareness and submission allows your internal striving to settle.

Not because everything is resolved.

Because God is.

Quote

“The Psalms train us in stillness before God.” —Eugene Peterson

Practice

Sit for 3 minutes. No phone. No reading. No productivity. Sit. Still.

This retrains your nervous system. It also quiets the heart.

Day 19- Releasing the Need to Control**Scripture**

“...for we walk by faith, not by sight.”

— 2 Corinthians 5:7

Reflection

Control is often our attempt to create certainty. To reduce risk. To secure stability. But our control has limits. BIG limits. This creates internal tension.

Faith offers a different way.

Not certainty about outcomes.

Certainty about God.

David did not know exactly how events would unfold. But he knew where his trust rested. Submission does not remove uncertainty. It removes isolation.

Now...you are no longer facing the future alone.

God walks with you.

Quote

“Faith rarely knows where it is being led, but it loves and knows the One who is leading.”

—Oswald Chambers

Practice

Tell God honestly: “I release my future into Your hands.”

Day 20- The Great Exchange

Scripture

“Casting all your cares upon Him, for He cares for you. .”

— 1Pe 5:7

Reflection

Notice...Peter doesn't say, “deal with your cares.” Neither does Peter exhort us to manage them, minimize them, or power through them. He says to **cast** them.

The word “cast” literally means “throw off”. Casting is an act of release. It is the movement of taking what has been resting on your shoulders and placing it onto Someone stronger.

Most of us live the opposite way. We carry what God has invited us to release. We hold what God has asked us to hand over. We trust ourselves with burdens we were never designed to bear.

But Peter gives us both the instruction and a reason.

Cast your cares... because He cares for you.

This is not some emotional technique. This is relational trust.

When you cast your care onto God, you are not sending it into emptiness. You are placing it into the hands of a Father who is attentive, present, and deeply invested in you. The same God who governs galaxies is willing to carry what is weighing on your heart today.

What a great exchange:

You release your cares.

You receive His care.

Quote

“We don't pray our emotions to get rid of them—we pray them to give them to God.”

— John Mark Comer

Practice

Write down one specific burden you are carrying right now. In prayer, consciously hand it to Jesus: “Lord, I give you this _____.” Pause. Watch for His care. Listen for His voice. When you are ready, flip the paper over and write down, “On this date I handed this over to the Lord.” Keep that paper somewhere you can find it as a reminder.

Day 21- The Strength of Your Life

Scripture

“The LORD *is* the strength of my life...”

— Psalm 27:1

Reflection

There is an exchange available to you. Not a denial. Not a distraction. An exchange.

David does not say, “The LORD gives me strength.” He says, “*The LORD is the strength of my life.*” Strength is not something God merely hands you. He gives you Himself.

Which means the invitation is not just to survive your burdens—but to bring them to Him and receive something of Him in return.

You bring your fear. He gives you His steadiness.

You bring your exhaustion. He gives you His sustaining presence.

You bring your uncertainty. He gives you Himself as your ground.

This is the quiet miracle men slowly learn: you do not have the strength you need within yourself. But you do have access to the One who does.

Most men carry their burdens alone for far too long. They brace. They tighten. They endure. But David learned a different way. He turned toward the Lord and made the exchange.

“Lord, here is what is heavy in me. Would You be my strength now?”

And over time, David discovered something profound. The burden didn’t always disappear immediately—but his sense of being alone did. Strength began to rise—not from effort, but from nearness.

The Lord Himself became the strength of his life. He will become yours as well.

Practice

Find a small smooth stone. Something you can stick in your pocket or put on your desk.

David knew God was his Rock. David knew he could fling a stone at the giant, but it was the Rock who would knock him out. David knew God was the strength of his life. David knew.

You need to know as well. Let that stone remind you, “with God all things are possible.”

Quote

““God does not give us strength apart from Himself. He becomes our strength as we rely on Him.” —John Eldredge

ENTRUST *Live with a steady heart.*

Recognition brought awareness.

Bringing brought connection.

Submission brought release.

Entrusting brings a settled heart.

Something deep inside you...shifts. You no longer live reacting to fear, pressure, demands, or uncertainty in the same way. Not because those things disappear. Because your heart is anchored. Guarded. Settled.

This is the invitation of the Psalmists. To find settled in the One who never changes. Everything else does. Not Him. He is the Rock. Unshifting. Unchanging. Unwavering.

You can bank on that. With your whole heart.

Day 22- Confident Trust

Scripture

“But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation.”

— Psalm 13:5

Reflection

Trust begins as a decision. But over time, it becomes a posture. Your initial trust decision has been confirmed by experience and now it has become a state of being.

But note: David wrote these words while his circumstances were still unresolved. Nothing external had fully changed. But in his heart, something had settled. (Please read the entire Psalm)

“I trust in your *unfailing* love.”

David had a “hall of faith” he could mentally walk through. A showcase of all the places God had come through for him. And when he needed to summon new trust, he rooted it in all the history he had with the Lord.

God had become trust-worthy to David.

You might say, “I don’t have much of a hall of faith” to walk through. Well right now is a golden opportunity to start building one!

As you continue entrusting your heart to Him, you begin to live from something deeper. Something sturdy. Something sure.

“On Christ the solid rock I stand, all else is sinking sand.”

Quote

“You are my refuge and my shield; I have put my hope in your word.”

Practice

Write down some places you saw God working in your life. Not long accounts, but enough to hang on the wall of your “hall of faith.” As you do, thank God for His help and faithfulness.

Day 23- Don't Take it Back**Scripture**

"Cast your cares on the LORD and he will sustain you."

— Psalm 55:22

Reflection

When you release something to God, it does not disappear.

It is carried. By Him.

Many men are tempted to take back what they have entrusted.

Not intentionally. But gradually.

Emotions return.

Fears resurface.

Panic hits.

Heart attack.

We attempt to take "control". And there we are...holding the burden once again.

You see, entrusting your heart is not a single act. It is a way of life. The faithful life.

Each time you entrust your burdens to God's care, steadiness grows.

God is not fragile.

He is fully capable of carrying what you entrust to Him. He is faithful.

Leave it with Him.

Quote

"He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose." —Jim Elliot

Practice

What do you need to entrust to God? Ask a friend or pastor to pray with you. As you two pray, release it into God's hands. Give your friend permission to remind you next time you're tempted to take it back.

Day 24- Trust Changes How You Experience Pressure

Scripture

“The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and he helps me.”
— Psalm 28:7

Reflection

Pressure does not disappear when you trust God. But its effect changes. It no longer threatens you with the same power. It no longer presents as the “all-mighty” of your life. In the shadow of the true Almighty these “Goliath-like” pressures take a knee.

David faced constant demands. Leadership. Opposition. Uncertainty. Challenges.

The peace he craved would not be found in ordering his external world. No, that kind of peace can only come by teaching your heart to trust in the Lord. That practice leads to what the prophet announces, “You will keep *him* in perfect peace, *Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.*” (Isaiah 26.3)

Notice: BECAUSE he TRUSTS in You.

Quote

“God is our refuge and strength, not our escape from trouble but our companion in it.”
— Charles Spurgeon

Practice

When pressure hits today: Pause. Take a breath. Remember: “...my heart trusts in him, and he helps me” Thank the Lord for that.

Day 25- Fear Fades in the Face of God**Scripture**

“When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.”

— Psalm 56:3

Reflection

You may be trusting God and fear still lingers. But it no longer leads. This is the difference. Fear now meets the resistance of faith.

Now, you recognize it.

You bring it to God.

You submit it to His truth.

You entrust yourself to God despite it. In fact, fear can become a friendly reminder to once again lean your heart on the Lord’s trustworthiness.

This is real strength. Not the absence of fear. Freedom from being ruled by it.

Legend has it that General Patton was asked, “What is it like to be free of fear?” To which the renown General answered, “Free? Free of fear? I’ve known, as all my men, what it is to fear greatly. But I’ve learned long ago not to take the counsel of my fears.”

Quote

“Our greatest victories begin on the inside.” —Mark Spencer

Practice

When fear hits, ask: “What is this fear trying to tell me?”

Then pray: “Lord, what do you say to this fear?”

Day 26- Your Heart's Strength**Scripture**

“My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.”

— Psalm 73:26

Reflection

A strong heart is something that forms. Slowly. Quietly. Through repeated moments of entrusting your heart to God.

You may not notice the change immediately. But it is happening.

Situations that once unsettled you no longer disrupt you in the same way.

Fear still appears—but it no longer defines you.

Pressures still exist—but they no longer drive you.

Your heart is settled. Guarded. At peace. Not in circumstances. Not in our own strength.

In God.

Put your trust IN God.

“My flesh and my heart may fail...but God is the strength of my heart...forever.”

Quote

“When your heart is faint, lean hard on God. His strength loves to carry what your strength cannot.” — Charles Spurgeon

Practice

Take a moment to recall a place where God steadied your heart.

Thank God for His work.

Day 27- God Is With You Here

Scripture

“Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me.”
— Psalm 23:4

Reflection

God’s presence doesn’t remove you from trouble. It sustains you within it.

David walked through dark valleys. But he did not walk alone.

This is what entrusting your heart builds. A keen awareness that God is with you.

Not far off. Here. With you.

Reality is: He lives IN you. That’s how close He is. Inside your heart. (Note: Colossians 1:27: For God wanted them to know that the riches and glory of Christ are for you Gentiles, too. **And this is the secret: Christ lives in you.** This gives you assurance of sharing his glory.)

This awareness anchors your heart. Not because everything becomes easy. Because you are never alone.

God is present in every moment you face.

Quote

“If God is with you, it matters not who is against you.”
— Charles Spurgeon

Practice

Get 3 sticky notes. Write on them, “Fear not for I am with you.” Put them someplace you can’t miss them. Every time you see one...pause and acknowledge His presence with you.

Day 28- You No Longer Carry Your Life Alone**Scripture**

“Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this.”

— Psalm 37:5

Reflection

Too many men carry their lives alone. Maybe responsibility generates this pattern. Shame doesn't help. Certainly, the world around us reinforces this isolation. It screams at us, “Deal with it. No one cares.”

God does. He really does.

He cares so much that he made the first move. “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3.16)

Your move.

Will you trusting God with your heart and break this isolation?

Every time it shows up?

Quote

“The secret is Christ in me, not me in a different set of circumstances.”

— Elisabeth Elliot

Practice

Tell one trusted man one of your real burdens. Pray it on to Jesus' shoulders together.

Remember: Isolation weakens trust. Connection strengthens it.

Day 29- This Is Your New Way of Living**Scripture**

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.”

— Proverbs 3:5

Reflection

This heart work isn't something you visit occasionally. It's where you live.

Guarding something well isn't a haphazard occasional check-in. To guard is to remain watchful. Vigilant. Protecting. Defending. Shielding.

That's guarding. With God.

So you practice recognizing what's in your heart.

You bring it honestly to the Lord. Submitting it to His truth and entrusting your heart to His care.

Moment by moment. Day after day. Like Enoch who walked with God (Genesis 5.24). Every step...with God.

You and God. Together.

Quote

“The Christian life is not a matter of learning how to get God into your life, but of learning how to recognize that He is already there.” —Eugene Peterson

Practice

When you wake up take a moment to recognize what is in your heart. Bring it to God. Entrust it to Him. Then, tonight thank Him for His help.

Day 30- A Man After God's Own Heart

Scripture

"...the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart..."

— 1 Samuel 13:14

Reflection

David was not chosen because he was fearless. He was chosen because he was honest. He did not hide his heart from God. He brought everything.

His fear.

His anger.

His confusion.

His trust.

Over time, this formed something in him. A sturdy heart. One that could navigate the waves of emotion and hold fast to faith. Face lions and bears. Giants and threats. A mad king and his army. And even his own terrible sin (see Psalm 51).

All of it. Not perfectly. But faithfully brought to the King of Hearts.

This is what God is forming in you. Not a life without difficulty but a heart that remains anchored amidst it.

You will still face pressure.

Uncertainty.

Moments of fear.

But now you know where to bring your heart. You know how to entrust yourself to God.

This is how steady men are formed.

Quietly. Faithfully. Over time.

Quote

"Our greatest victories begin on the inside." —

Practice

Write your own Psalm. You can follow the Psalmist's pattern if you like. Name what you are feeling. Bring it to God. Declare who God is over that burden or care. Thank Him for His help.

Final Commissioning: Guard Your Hearts!

Men, the Psalmists have given us a great gift. A way to guard our hearts. It's not just an idea, but a way of life.

If we are to hear those comforting words, "Well done good and faithful servant." It will be a result of us being faithful.

Faithful to recognize what's going on in our hearts.

Faithful to bring it to Him.

Faithful to submit to his ways.

Faithful to insistently entrust our hearts to Him.

This is not something you leave behind. It's something you carry forward.

You will face moments that test you. Moments that unsettle you. Moments that challenge you.

When they come, return here.

Recognize.

Bring.

Submit.

Entrust.

Not perfectly. Faithfully.

Guard your heart well brothers...for everything flows from it.

Your brother, Mark