



And Also With You

MID-JANUARY 2016

Grace Anglican Church 817 Estella Drive Fairhope, Alabama 36532
251-929-1606 www.visitgrace.net Frscottdavis@aol.com

JANUARY

SUNDAYS

10:00 am
Worship
(nursery provided)

MONDAYS

10:45am-Intercessors-
706-897-6381
6:30pm-Graham
Cook Bible Study-
Information: 455-5940

WEDNESDAYS

10:30 am
Women's Bible Study
Information: 990-2973

FRIDAYS

8:15 am
Men's Group:
Information 751-5266



CHALICE BEARERS

January 3
Bob and Jane
Grafe

January 10
Becky Johnson
Jan Bogue

January 17
Susan Jones
Maggie Rockett

January 24
Janic Terry
Kitty Barksdale

January 31
Maggie and Julian
Carnes

The Well Spring of Life



The Reverend Scott Davis

Earlier this month several pastors met in Destin for a clergy retreat. Several themes emerged, one being that the heart was the well spring of life and needed to be guarded at all costs. Proverbs

4:23 (NIV 1984) says, *"Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the well spring of life."*

A well spring is the source of a water supply. You cannot live without water and clean water is essential for health and life. 80% of the illness in developing nations is related to unclean water supplies. Clean up the water supply and third world disease is reduced dramatically. It is as simple as that.

Humans cannot live without water and so when a person travels they are instructed to drink only bottled water that they know is pure. If they do not then all sorts of problems can occur.

In the US, municipal water supplies are carefully guarded because they are strategic locations for an enemy attack. Infect the water supply of a city and you effectively neutralize its population.

The Holy Spirit's counsel in Proverbs 4:23 begins with, *"Above all else..."*. Make this priority number one—*guard your heart*. Do not let anything eclipse this imperative. He then goes on to explain why and this insight is worth pondering.



The heart, which is a person's inner most part, is actually the well spring of a person's life. The heart is the life source that flows in and through each person. If the heart is healthy then the person will be healthy. If the heart is ill then the person will be ill, and I do not think the Holy Spirit is speaking only of spiritual realities. If our spiritual heart is sick then our physical body and soul will be sick as well. How often has the body broken down because of stress stemming from other areas of life.

Proverbs 13:12 says that hope deferred makes the heart sick. If the heart is the wellspring of life then a person's body and soul runs the risk of being sick because of hope deferred. We are a trinity of being made in God's own image. Each part affects the others. *"Above all else, guard your heart for it is the wellspring of life."*

I find the concept of *guarding the heart* interesting. We guard what is precious to us, keeping it free of contaminants. We also guard prisoners and people who are wayward so that they cannot escape and hurt

themselves or others. Prison guards must be vigilant since prisoners are always looking for an opportunity to escape. What if the Spirit is directing us to guard the heart because it is wayward and always looking for a way other than God's best. If let loose, the heart pollutes its own wellspring. From time to time I have prayed desperately, *"Lord, save me from myself!"*

Exodus 15:22ff is the story of Moses

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leading Israel after the Red Sea miracle. They travel three days into the desert without finding water. When Israel finally comes to an oasis, they find the water to be bitter. (This is why the place is named *Marah* from whence the names Mary, Maria, or Marie are derived.) Moses cries to the Lord for an answer and the Lord in turn directs him to a piece of wood. What a funny answer to prayer—a stick. Moses, however, throws the wood into the water and the water becomes sweet.

Exodus 15 is full of symbolism that would mean little to Israel yet has great meaning for us today. God’s people trudge through the desert for three days. We call this *tomb time*. Israel finds water after three days, yet it is bitter. The place is called *Marah*. For three



days, there is great bitterness in the heart of Jesus’s mother,

Mary, and several other Mary’s who watch Him die on the cross. In Israel’s story, God shows Moses a piece of wood. Moses does not find the wood—it is God who provides the wood. What do you want to bet that the piece of wood was cruciform in design? Moses throws the wood that God has disclosed into the bitter water and it becomes sweet. Is not this the Good Friday to Resurrection message in a nutshell with a number of Mary’s (*Marah*’s) involved? Our life is bitter until we meet the Savior.

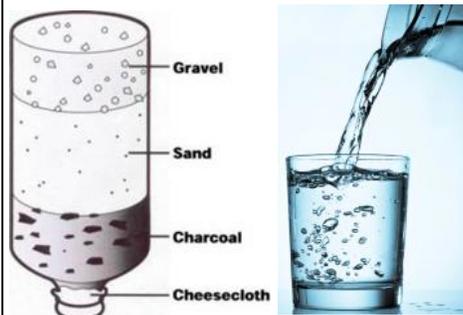
“Above all else, guard your heart for it is the wellspring of life.” If your heart is bitter, if it is *Marah*, then you need God to reveal the

piece of wood to throw into the bitterness. It is only a particular piece of wood that God reveals that can make the bitter sweet again.

What does guarding your heart look like? For me, I have to watch what information goes into it. I have to carefully guard my heart from soulish words that others speak toward me rather than words of the Spirit. I have to watch what I take in through my senses. At the moment, I am especially vigilant towards information that causes me to fear. This means that I work at filtering information such as daily news, through the lens of God’s Word and belief rather than fear. It is like filtering water in the third world. Water is water, yet to be safe it must be filtered. Rocks are used in the filtration process. Water repeatedly flows over them to clean it, and I find it interesting that throughout Scripture rocks/stones are symbols of Jesus. The more my heart comes into the contact with Jesus the cleaner my wellspring becomes until it is able to give life to others and to myself.

There is a lot of fear throughout the body of Christ. We act bravado and swear that we are trusting God, but the fear oozes out of our pores like alcohol from a cheap drunk. Fear is the key infecting agent to any water supply. “Above all else, guard your heart (from fear for instance) for it is the wellspring of life.”

In 2016, let us make guarding our heart a top priority. If *Marah* is there, then ask the Lord to show you the piece of wood to throw into it. Blessings, Father Scott +



Father Scott will be in Israel January 18–27.



Our love and prayers go out to Cynthia and Bill Tunnell on the death of his mother who died in Christ on January 8, 2016.



Fourth Quarter 2015

Income	\$ 51,136
Expense	\$ 51,584
Net	\$ -448

Jan–Dec 2015	
Income	\$207,071
Expense	\$210,418*
Net	\$ -3,347

*This figure includes paying back the reserve fund \$13,900 which was borrowed for operating short-falls in 2014–15.

Maggie Carnes was chosen by the Sabbatical Committee to serve as its chairman. She will



be the liaison between the Sabbatical Committee and the Stewards.