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AUGUST 2024



**THE MIND AND
BODY CONNECTION**

**ALLOW HIS WORD
To OVERTAKE
YOUR FLESH**

**It's GREEK To ME
(SUBSTANCE)**

**THE HEART
MATTERS**



THIS IS HOW I SEE IT...

Vashti

We have all been blessed to have our own opinion, perspective, or point-of-view....

It's not necessary that we all agree.

It is my hope that you see the truth within my words for this is how I see it....

bycherylvashti

ALLOW HIS WORD TO OVERTAKE YOUR FLESH

'AND THE WORD BECAME FLESH AND WALKED AMONG US'

His word became flesh and walked among us. When we allow God's word to be the operating system of our lives, we, too, become His word and walk on this earth. He made us in His image and likeness. As we accept and become aware of God, our transformation begins—we are born again and transformed into the very representation of God Himself.

In other words, God desires to reveal Himself through us, walking on this earth and making His reality known. We leave behind the old ways developed from childhood into adulthood, and place our complete trust in His abilities working through us. He wants the words of our mouths and the meditation of our hearts to be acceptable in His sight, which means thinking on things that are honest, pure, and of good report so that the words we speak are positive. It's about having a "What Would Jesus Do?" mindset not only in obstacles but in everyday moments as well.

Our transformation begins when we allow His word to abide in us. His word becomes part of us, and we walk among our families, friends, and even adversaries, changed by His presence. As our flesh surrenders its desires, we walk this earth embodying love, hope, faith, joy, and peace.

The opportunity for transformation was given to us at the cross when Jesus—God Himself—shed His blood so that we might have the chance, through our choice, to receive Him. This decision restores us to God's original design: a life filled with love, peace, joy, and harmony.

God's desire for us is to live in His strength, not our own. It's about embracing His thoughts for us—thoughts of peace, not destruction. His plan for us is health, for by His stripes, everything was restored to the way He intended before time began. In this original plan, sickness, disease, lack, poverty, and emotional turmoil have no place.

God's idea is for us to live out the reality of His word in our flesh and to be representatives that draw wounded souls back to His original plan for their lives.

We are called to do greater works as we evolve in Him. But how do we do that? Only when we allow God to work through us can these greater works manifest.

We are vessels—like Jesus—through whom God accomplishes what He established from the beginning of time. His presence has always been within us since the day of conception. We are God's idea, His greatest creation, made from His thoughts. Although our spiritual connection was broken by the fall, the wires of that disconnect remained within us, waiting to be reconnected through our acceptance and belief in Jesus Christ (God in man). Through His death and resurrection, we are restored to God's original plan.

Belief in God (Jesus Christ, God in man) reconnects those spiritual wires, allowing us to receive, believe, understand, and abide in His word. As His word takes hold of our flesh, our spirit begins to guide our actions. We walk in the spirit—like Jesus—which is invisible to the eye until we allow our spirit to govern our flesh. The word became flesh and walked among us. God Himself (Spirit) became flesh (Jesus) and walked among us.

But how do we live this out after receiving Christ (God in man)?

Through forgiveness: By forgiving, we release ourselves from the emotional entanglement of the assault. Forgiveness allows us to let go of the pain

and bitterness that can hold us back, freeing our hearts to walk in the love and peace that God desires for us.

Ephesians 4:31-32

- Through our thoughts: By thinking on things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report and things with virtue and praise,...we can transform our thoughts and even our gene expressions.

Philippians 4:8

- Through meditation: We meditate on His word and His ways day and night, allowing His truth to take root in us.

Joshua 1:8

- Through surrender: Old things pass away, and behold, all things become new. Every day is a new beginning.

2 Corinthians 5:17

- Through releasing stress: Being anxious for nothing and thankful in all things, trusting in His peace. *Philippians 4:6:*

1 Thessalonians 5:18

Changing and surrendering who we once were—formed by the environments we lived in—and becoming a new creation with new hearts, new thoughts, new ideas, and new expressions brings us to the place where God's word again becomes flesh through us and walks among this world. ————— ♥ —————

**“WHEN WE ALLOW GOD'S WORD
TO TAKE HOLD WITHIN US,
OUR FLESH SURRENDERS,
AND WE WALK THIS EARTH EMBODYING
LOVE, HOPE, FAITH, JOY, AND PEACE—
TRANSFORMED BY HIS PRESENCE.”**

This Is How I See It!



The Heart MATTERS

Guard Your Heart!

bycherylvashti

The scripture, “Guard your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life” (Proverbs 4:23), while often interpreted spiritually, can also be seen through a more literal, physical lens. This ancient wisdom speaks not only to the importance of emotional and spiritual care but also to the significance of guarding our physical heart, the organ that sustains life. Exploring the connection between the heart and the autonomic nervous system deepens our understanding of how “guarding the heart” applies to our physical well-being.

THE PHYSICAL HEART: THE LIFESPING OF THE BODY

The physical heart is a marvel of human biology. It is the organ that pumps blood through our bodies, supplying oxygen and nutrients to our cells and removing waste products. The heart's rhythm and function are essential for life, and when we fail to care for it, the “issues of life”—our health, vitality, and longevity—can be compromised.

Modern medicine emphasizes how lifestyle choices such as diet, exercise, stress management, and avoiding harmful substances directly impact heart health. In this sense, “guarding your heart” means protecting it from factors that lead to heart disease, high blood pressure, or other cardiovascular issues. Taking responsibility for our physical health, with the same diligence spoken of in Proverbs, helps ensure that the heart can function optimally, allowing us to live fully.

THE AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM AND THE HEART

One of the most fascinating aspects of the heart is its relationship with the autonomic nervous system (ANS). The ANS is responsible for controlling involuntary physiological functions, such as heart rate, digestion, and respiratory rate. It operates largely unconsciously, working tirelessly to maintain the body's homeostasis—or balance.

The ANS is divided into two main branches: the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. These systems have opposing roles in heart function:

- **SYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM:** Often referred to as the “fight or flight” system, it prepares the body for stressful or emergency situations by increasing heart rate and blood pressure. When we experience stress, fear, or excitement, the sympathetic nervous system kicks in, triggering the heart to beat faster and pump blood more forcefully to ensure the body is ready for action.

- **PARASYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM:** In contrast, the parasympathetic system is often called the “rest and digest” system. It promotes relaxation, lowering heart rate and supporting recovery and maintenance of the body. After a stressful event, the parasympathetic system helps to calm the heart and return it to its resting state.

GUARDING THE HEART THROUGH BALANCE

Just as the spiritual heart must be guarded from emotional turmoil, the physical heart requires protection from the harmful effects of chronic stress and imbalance in the autonomic nervous system. When the sympathetic system dominates for prolonged periods due to ongoing stress or

anxiety, it can lead to adverse health effects such as hypertension, arrhythmias, and even heart attacks. An overactive stress response can weaken the heart, leading to serious, life-altering health consequences.

This is why stress management and mindfulness are critical aspects of guarding the heart. Activities that engage the parasympathetic nervous system—such as deep breathing, meditation, prayer, exercise, and relaxation techniques—help maintain balance within the autonomic nervous system, keeping the heart healthy. Regularly engaging in these practices can reduce the strain on the heart and promote cardiovascular health.

A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO GUARDING YOUR HEART

Understanding the relationship between the heart and the autonomic nervous system emphasizes the importance of a holistic approach to heart health. We cannot separate our physical heart from our emotional and spiritual well-being, just as we cannot separate our heart from the influence of the nervous system.

When we are diligent in caring for both our physical and spiritual hearts, we create a cycle of wellness that supports life in every sense. The “issues of life” that spring from the heart are not just metaphorical—they are literal as well. A heart that is well-guarded and balanced leads to vitality, longevity, and the capacity to live life to the fullest.

PRACTICAL STEPS TO GUARD YOUR PHYSICAL HEART

To guard your heart with all diligence, consider the following steps that support both your physical heart and the balance of your autonomic nervous system:

- **PRIORITIZE STRESS MANAGEMENT:** Incorporate practices like prayer, meditation, or yoga into your daily routine

to help regulate the autonomic nervous system and reduce the physical impact of stress on your heart.

- **MAINTAIN A HEART-HEALTHY DIET:** Foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids, antioxidants, and fiber can reduce inflammation and support cardiovascular health. Avoid excessive intake of salt, sugar, and processed foods, which can lead to heart problems.

- **EXERCISE REGULARLY:** Cardiovascular exercise strengthens the heart, lowers blood pressure, and helps balance the autonomic nervous system by promoting both sympathetic and parasympathetic activity in healthy measures.

- **GET ENOUGH REST:** Sleep is essential for the parasympathetic nervous system to do its job. A well-rested body supports a well-functioning heart.

- **MONITOR EMOTIONAL HEALTH:** Emotional stress directly impacts the physical heart. Seek support for anxiety, depression, or unresolved emotional issues. By guarding your heart emotionally, you are also protecting it physically.

CONCLUSION: THE HEART AS THE WELLSPRING OF LIFE

The scripture’s wisdom transcends time, encouraging us to guard our hearts diligently in every sense. By recognizing the profound connection between the physical heart and the autonomic nervous system, we see that protecting our hearts requires more than spiritual vigilance—it requires conscious care of our bodies and minds.

When we embrace this holistic view, we live out the call of Proverbs 4:23 in its fullest form. By diligently protecting our hearts physically, mentally, and spiritually, we ensure that the “issues of life” spring forth with vitality, peace, and purpose. Guard your heart, for it is truly the wellspring of life.



PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING FOR TRANSFORMATION AND SURRENDER

Heavenly Father,

Because Your Word has already been established, I choose to walk in Your Word and allow Your Word to be my guide. I come before You with a heart full of gratitude. Thank You for creating me in Your image and for the gift of Your word, which became flesh and walked among us. I praise You for the transformation that is already taking place in my life as Your word takes root within me.

Thank You, Lord, for helping me release my old ways—my fears, doubts, and past. I rejoice in the trust You have built within me as I rely fully on Your power working through me. I am grateful that my thoughts are now pure and honorable, and that the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart are pleasing in Your sight. I walk in love, faith, joy, and peace, knowing that I am embodying Your presence with each step.

Father, I thank You for allowing me to surrender control and for guiding my life with Your perfect wisdom. I praise You for restoring me through the sacrifice of Jesus and for the strength and peace I now live in daily. I rejoice that I am no longer relying on my own strength, but on Your Spirit within me. Thank You for transforming me into a vessel of Your love and truth.

As I walk this earth, I am grateful that I

reflect Your light in all that I do. Your word has become flesh in me, guiding my actions and transforming my spirit, and through this, others are being drawn closer to You. Thank You, Father, for the greater works You have already prepared for me to accomplish. I am thankful for Your presence within me and the purpose You have laid before me.

In Jesus name... I give thanks. AMEN



It's All Greek to Me! (“SUBSTANCE”)

“hupostasis”

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for...”
(Hebrews 11:1)

Many Christians think of faith as something ethereal, intangible, or abstract. But faith has **substance**! Faith is rooted in the present, and those who walk by faith must believe they already possess what has been promised. The Greek word for “**substance**” in this passage is **hupostasis**. This word carries various meanings in Greek, but let's focus on two: “**foundation**” and “**building material**.” Faith, quite literally, is the foundation and building material upon which God's promises are constructed.

Standing in faith is not the same as wishing on a star or crossing your fingers in hope. Faith is solid. It's the real, **tangible foundation** for the promises of God, even though we may not see or touch them yet. When we stand in faith, we must envision ourselves already possessing the promise. And when we truly see ourselves with it now, it will manifest!

Even if our present reality doesn't reflect what we are believing for, faith assures us that what we seek is already ours. Time, delays, or circumstances may challenge us, but faith remains our sure **foundation**—the building material that guarantees God's promises are real and are already in our possession.





The Mind-Body Connection

NURTURING HEALTH FROM THE INSIDE OUT

by michaelaarongordon

NURTURING HEALTH FROM THE INSIDE OUT: THE MARVELOUS MIND-BODY CONNECTION

In the ever-evolving world of natural health, there's one concept that really takes the cake (but it's gluten-free and sugar-free, don't worry): the mind-body connection. Picture it as a dynamic, ongoing dance between your brain and your body—a salsa where both partners need to stay in sync to avoid stepping on toes, literally and metaphorically.

THE SCIENCE THAT BACKS IT UP (SO, IT'S NOT JUST HOCUS POCUS)

Now, this isn't just some feel-good, “woo-woo” or “new age stuff as I've heard some church folks call it. Science is totally on board with this connection! Stress, for example, isn't just an annoying buzzword—it's like a switch that sends your body into full “fight or flight” mode. Imagine your body getting ready to escape a charging bear every time you face a tight deadline. Heart racing? Check. Immune system out to lunch? Double check. Prolong this state, and you could be looking at a list of unwelcome side effects: upset stomach, heart issues, and more.

THE MIND IS NOT THE BRAIN—HERE'S WHY THAT MATTERS

Before we dive into practical tips, let's clear up a common misunderstanding: the mind is not the same thing as the brain. Your brain is the physical organ sitting in your skull, made up of neurons and biological processes. It's where thoughts are processed, but it's not where your thoughts originate. The mind, on the other hand, is more like the invisible force behind

Hippocrates —
'Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food.'

your thoughts, feelings, and awareness. It's the seat of your consciousness—the part of you that makes decisions, experiences emotions, and perceives the world. The mind uses the brain like a tool, sending signals to your body and helping guide your actions. Understanding this distinction is key to grasping the depth of the mind-body connection.

FUN (AND EFFECTIVE) WAYS TO BOOST THE MIND-BODY CONNECTION

There's a buffet of ways to strengthen that mind-body connection, and the best part? They're not just good for you—they're enjoyable, too:

- **Meditation:** Forget the image of a monk on a mountain. Meditation can be as simple as taking a few minutes to breathe deeply and let your thoughts chill out. It's like hitting the reset button for your brain, leaving you with lower stress and a better mood.

- **Mindfulness:** You know those times you're on autopilot, like when you suddenly realize you're holding an empty chip bag? Mindfulness helps you tune in to your thoughts, feelings, and even those sneaky cravings, without judgment. It's like having a superpower that helps you break out of old patterns.

- **Mindful Stretching:** Think of it as a gentle movement practice that combines controlled breathing with thoughtful poses and stretches. It's a full-body tune-up that helps release physical tension while calming

the mind—a win-win for holistic health.

- **Nature Time:** Ever notice how even a quick walk in the park can clear your head? Studies back it up—nature is like therapy, minus the hourly rate. Fresh air, trees, and birdsongs can lower stress, lift your spirits, and even boost your brainpower.

- **Gratitude Practice:** Sometimes life can feel like a never-ending list of things that went wrong. But flipping the script and focusing on what you're grateful for can be like a turbo boost for positivity. Whether it's jotting down three things you're thankful for each morning or simply pausing to appreciate a small joy in your day, gratitude shifts your mindset and helps you maintain a positive vibe. This practice trains your brain to focus on the good, reinforcing a healthier mental state that keeps both your mind and body in sync.

- **Staying Focused:** In a world full of notifications, pop-ups, and endless to-do lists, staying focused feels like a superpower. Practicing focus can strengthen the mind-body connection by helping you remain present, reducing stress, and enhancing productivity. Try techniques like the Pomodoro method (work for 25 minutes, then take a break) to build concentration muscles and give your mind the clarity it needs.

- **Managing Negative Distractions:** Let's face it—life throws a lot of curveballs, and it's easy to get knocked off track by negative thoughts, news, or even that one toxic person in your group chat. The key is learning to identify distractions early and gently steer your attention back to what matters. Whether it's a mantra, deep breathing, or simply reminding yourself of your goals, staying anchored helps you maintain balance and keep your mind-body groove going strong.

MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE: REWIRING PAIN WITH POSITIVITY

I've noticed the power of the mind-body connection in my own life, especially when it comes to managing physical pain. Whether it's sore muscles after a workout or an annoying toothache, I've found a surprising way to dial down the discomfort. When I focus on how that muscle felt before it was sore, or even on how other non-sore muscles currently feel, something amazing happens. My brain and nervous system seem to get the memo and start "turning off" the pain. It's like my body is reminded of what feeling good is supposed to be like and begins adjusting accordingly. It's a small shift in focus, but it has a huge impact on how I feel.

THE TAKEAWAY: HOLISTIC HEALTH MEANS TREATING THE WHOLE YOU

The mind-body connection is your gentle reminder that you're a complex (and wonderfully and beautifully made) mix of mental, physical, and emotional layers. When you nourish your mind, your body reaps the benefits—and vice versa. A healthy body makes it easier to think happy thoughts, while a peaceful mind sets the stage for better physical health.

So, what's the big picture? True health isn't just dodging disease; it's about feeling good inside and out—body, mind, and soul. By embracing this connection, you can tap into deeper levels of wellness, vitality, and maybe even learn to enjoy life's little quirks a bit more. After all, what's life without a little joy and a lot of laughter?

**AND AS ALWAYS REMEMBER:
IF GOD DIDN'T MAKE IT, DON'T TAKE IT.**



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PLAN OF SALVATION

Jesus loved you enough to die for YOU so that you could have eternal life. (John 3:16) If you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, He will come into your life now. (Acts 16:33; Luke 13:3) Just do these four things to begin your new life in Christ.

1. Realize that God loves you and has a good plan for your life. (John 3:16; Romans 10:10)
2. Realize that Man is sinful and separated from God and, therefore, cannot know or experience God's love and plan. (Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23)
3. Realize that Jesus Christ is God's only provision for man's sin. Only through Him can you know and experience God's love and plan. (Romans 5:5; 1 Corinthians 15:3-6)
4. Realize that we must individually receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Then we can know and experience God's love and plan for our lives. (John 1:12; Ephesians 2:8-9; John 3:1-8)

If you are ready, I invite you to pray this prayer and God will come into your life right now: *Lord Jesus, I need You. Thank You for dying on the cross for my sins. I open the door of my life and receive You as my Lord and Savior. Thank You for forgiving my sins and giving me eternal life. Take control of my life and make me the kind of person You want me to be.*



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P.O. BOX 208413
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60620

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COMMUNITY OF LOVE MINISTRIES

P.O. BOX 208413
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60620
MICHAEL GORDON, ORGANIZER
contact: 773 • 617 • 5161
Email: askmike2006@gmail.com