

Soul Prep

Train Your Senses, Fortify Your Mind

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Dedication

It is with deepest gratitude that I dedicate this book to ... My late grandmother, Opal Cook, who taught me how to love and serve with God's love through the example of her life. My mother, Billie Scroggins, who loves unconditionally, and has been my greatest support. She believed in me when I didn't believe in myself. She truly exemplifies Proverbs 31. My dad, Norman, who came alive when he learned the truth about the heart we give to God, Nancy Harmon, who taught me the power of a strong prayer life, and Loraine Daniel, who mentored me in God's Word and taught me how to study and teach it in a practical way making it applicable to life. Teresa Hurt, my BFF, who has been my most loyal friend and who tirelessly edited my work, and my son, Justin, whose talent in graphic design brought it all together.

About the Author

SHARON BOLAND has traveled throughout the United States evangelizing, speaking at conferences, was a soloist with Nancy Harmon Ministries, served as Vice President of the Apple of His Eye Ministries, and has been a frequent guest of the Love Special, TBN, Daystar and Cornerstone Television Network. She founded Loving Life Cancer Recovery in 1995, which is presently a part of Living Hope, Inc. She has served as Senior Pastor in Pennsylvania and Georgia.

Sharon's desire has been to empower people as she speaks God's Word with practical application, giving hope to those who are discouraged, disheartened, or disillusioned. Sharon is an ordained minister, gospel singer, a gifted and true servant of the Lord, with a genuine love for people that shows and communicates.

Introduction

Evil bombards our mind on a daily basis. It comes to render us powerless. It comes to pull us away from the safety, virtue and power of God's Word. It is important that we understand that evil comes to our mind. It is important that we understand God's Word as it pertains to how we overcome evil. Far too long, many Christians have aspired to serve God with an abstract relationship never understanding how we truly connect to Him. Scripture says, *"And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength."* Mark 12:30

Soul Prep is a simple, practical tool that will empower you as you learn how to fortify your mind. It will help you learn how to overcome the difficulties of life by making deliberate decisions resulting in a positive outcome. It will encourage you to trust God. It will help you see that you are here for the purpose of loving God and serving others with eternal reward. Every day we live, we are to strive to develop the character of Jesus Christ. It seems that much of our character development comes through our troubles. I pray that you will see, as never before, who you are in Him. You are of tremendous value to God and others. Let's begin this journey of Soul Preparation!

My Heart is Fixed

*“My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed;
I will sing and give praise.” Psalm 57:7*

Have you ever noticed how fickle people are? Too many are vacillating back and forth with what they believe. We are living in a generation that is gray; anything goes as long as it doesn't hurt anyone. The problem with that belief system is that someone is always hurt. God's Word has never changed, and it will never change. In fact, it says in Hebrews 13:8, *“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.”* It really comes down to this ... either you believe His Word to be truth or you don't.

Let's look at these two words **heart** and **fixed** in this scripture.



There are two Hebrew words for **heart**:

- 1.) **lebab**, the heart, the middle of something, the center, the physical heart in the chest, the blood pumping organ.
- 2.) **leb**, the deepest inmost part of you, inner or immaterial nature, seat of reason, emotions, understanding, the will, mind, passions, intellect.

The Hebrew word for **fixed** is **kuwn**. It means **established, stable, firmly established, securely determined, be settled.**

The word **heart** David is talking about isn't the heart in your chest. It does nothing but pump blood throughout the circulatory system. There is nothing spiritual about the heart in your chest. It cannot reason or think. The **heart** David is talking about is the heart of **your mind, your will, your intellect**, that inmost part of you no one knows but God. David has determined that his heart (mind, his will) is firmly established as to whom he is serving. His mind is made up. No vacillating. No question. It is settled.

Proverbs 4:23 says, *"Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."* This simply means to guard and protect your mind because out of it flows the results of your life. This is something we must do.

In every chapter of this book, you will see over and over again one pattern of thought and purpose, and that is you must give your mind, your will, your intellect totally to God. There is one place the devil comes to tempt you, discourage you, and to defeat you. It is in your mind. We must fortify our minds by reading, understanding, and appropriating God's Word to our life. We must daily reinforce our faith in God through His Word and action. For when God has our will, our heart, He has all of us.

PRAYER

Father, today I have determined to give You all of me. I give You my heart. I desire for Your will to be mine. Give me a clean heart today to serve and please You. Give me a heart to serve others and to help them learn how to connect with You. Total surrender is what You desire, and I totally surrender to You today. Amen.

REFLECTION

Have you truly given your heart to God? Is your heart settled on serving the Lord?

Wisdom

“How much better to get wisdom than gold, and understanding than silver!” Proverbs 16:16

As we begin our journey into ‘Soul Prep’, wisdom is one of the first things we need to ask God for. Is your deepest desire to see as many people come to know Jesus through your life as possible? I know it is mine. For that to happen, we need God to give us wisdom. Oh, we have our plans and ideas, our schemes and dreams, but what about wisdom? We read how to be successful in magazines, books, how to become wealthy, prosperous people, but we seldom hear anything about true wealth, which is found in wisdom.

Wisdom coupled with understanding is better than gold and silver. Many would question that nowadays. To have wisdom and understanding is to truly be wealthy. Ultimately, as God gauges it, we will be successful if we can attain wisdom, common sense and integrity. We must pursue it, and in asking get understanding as to what is ‘true riches’. I see ‘true riches’ as things which have eternal value.



The word **wisdom** comes from the Greek word *chokmaw* and it means **to be wise, in mind, word, or act; skillful, ethical, common sense.**

The word **understanding** comes from the Hebrew word *biynah* and it means **understanding, knowledge, and discernment.**

“He grants a treasure of common sense to the honest. He is a shield to those who walk with integrity. He guards the paths of the just and protects those who are faithful to him. Then you will understand what is right, just, and fair, and you will find the right way to go. For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will fill you with joy. Wise choices will watch over you. Understanding will keep you safe.” Proverbs 2:7-11

If there were ever a day in which we need wisdom, it is today. In all decisions we make, we need **wisdom** from God. To reach this generation for Christ, we need His guidance and understanding. Wisdom isn't something you're born with ... it is something we ask God for. In fact, I will go so far as to say that we cannot live successfully without it. As you begin this journey of 'Soul Prep', begin it with asking God for wisdom and understanding.

PRAYER

I know that true success is in those things that are eternal. I spend so much of my life striving to be successful here on the job, in school, raising a family, but if I could just wrap my brain around the fact that **success is beyond this life**. Help me to succeed in Your eyes. Give me wisdom to make right decisions. Help me to be a witness today to someone You bring across my path. Help me to **live out my faith**. Help me to be a **real** follower of **Christ Jesus**. Please Father, give me **wisdom**. Amen.

REFLECTION

Can you think of some things that have hindered your pursuit of wisdom and understanding? What is it that hinders your example of Christ to others?
