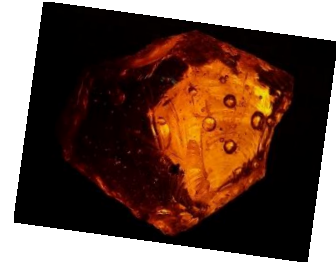




## The Fossicker's Way Lesson 4: Guard Your Heart By Deborah Wassenberg

### You Tube Song Suggestions:

- W.I.S.D.O.M. (Carrickfergus Baptist Church)
- Make Me Wise (URFBC Trailblazers)
- Dig Down Deep (Jana Alayra)
- Boom (chapelhill kids)
- Proverbs Song (What's in the Bible)
- Psalms, Proverbs and Parables Too (Hillsong Kids)



### Story:

Amber's heart was thumping in her chest. Why had she done it? How could she have been so stupid? She looked around her. The campsite was empty. She ran to the open door of their neighbour's caravan and quickly climbed in. She placed a gemstone behind the cushion in the dinette. She turned back to the doorway and took another look around the campsite before leaping down the steps and running to the creek.

'Where have you been, Amber? Look at this agate matrix I found!' Garnet held up a large rock with agate scattered throughout it. Gas bubbles lodged in the volcanic lava had formed the agate thousands of years ago.

'That's a great looking specimen,' said Amber.

'I've found more jasper!' yelled Jasper.

'That's good.' Amber tried to smile, but the guilt over what she had done washed over her again. She had to sit down. Jasper finding the gemstone jasper in plentiful supply in the dry creek bed was what had first made her angry and envious. It had led to her to make the biggest mistake of her life.

Jasper had so many specimens of the gemstone he was named after. Green jasper, brown and orange. Garnet owned a pomegranate coloured red garnet. Pearl had a pearl from Broome in her collection. Opal was excited about the family's trip to Coober Pedy in the coming winter because she was going to find her very own opal. Her Mum, Beryl, had a ring made from pink beryl (morganite) and even her Dad, Barry had specimens of the barite he was named after. But Amber? Amber was hard to find.

Amber is an organic gem. It is fossilized sap, or resin, from ancient pine trees that had decayed thousands of years ago. Sometimes it contained animal or plant matter that had become caught in the sap as it was secreted. All kinds of things had been found in amber. Insects, flowers, wood, feathers and even spiders and cobwebs. It was not a gemstone Amber could fossick or pan for. She would have to travel to the Dominican Republic on the Caribbean Sea, or Alaska, or the Baltic Sea to find the soft precious gemstone and she didn't think her family would be hitching the caravan to visit those places any time soon!

So when an elderly man showed Amber his collection of amber, she had longed to possess a piece. Geoff had pulled into the campgrounds the week before and formed a friendship with the Fossickers over a shared love of gemstones. He had rare examples of green, cherry and blue amber which Amber never would have taken. But he had so many specimens in every shade of yellow and butterscotch, she was sure he wouldn't miss one, so she had tucked a small piece up the sleeve of her windcheater when he wasn't looking. Not half an hour had passed before Amber was overcome with guilt and shame. She had been looking for an opportunity to return the gemstone and finally got her chance when everyone, including Geoff, had gone down to the creek to search for agates.

'What's up, Amber?' asked Mrs Fossicker. 'You look pale. Are you feeling sick?'

Amber nodded.

'Do you want to go and lay down for a bit?'

'No, thanks,' said Amber. Watching her brothers and sisters was at least a distraction. She did not want to be left alone with her thoughts.

When Geoff pulled out of camp the next day, Amber thought she would be able to forget what she had done. All evidence of her theft had gone, but in fact her sin was sealed inside her heart, like a mosquito caught in ancient resin.

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'What's come over you, love?' Mr Fossicker asked Amber a week later. 'You look like you're fretting over something. You haven't been yourself for ages.'

Amber brushed tears from her eyes. 'I can't tell you, Dad. I'm so ashamed. You'd never look at me the same way again. I can't even look at myself.'

'Hey, nothing you say will make me love you any less. I might be hurt or disappointed, but nothing will change my love for you. I think it would help you if you told me.'

So Amber told her Dad what she had done, hesitantly at first, but then the floodgates opened and the whole story spilled out.

'I'm so, so sorry, Dad,' she cried. 'I don't know how I could have done it.'

'Aw, sweetie,' said Mr Fossicker. 'In your heart you coveted that piece of amber. In a split second you decided you had to have it at any cost and so you stole it.'

Amber winced when her Dad used the word 'stole'.

'There's a Proverb,' he said. 'Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life. In other words your heart is like a source of water. You have to guard it to keep it from getting polluted but guarding something is hard work. You have to be vigilant, keeping careful watch for danger or trouble.'

'I dropped my guard,' said Amber. 'I thought having the amber would make me happy but that was a lie and now my heart is poisoned. Every time I hear my name I remember what I did.'

'I'm glad you told me what happened instead of keeping it trapped inside. You need to receive God's mercy and His grace. (*Hebrews 4:16*) You know you've sinned, now it's time to repent and ask God to forgive you. You know He will. And Amber?'

'Yes?'

'Every time you hear your name you remember God loves you. Remember He restores you. He doesn't remember your sin so neither should you.'

'Okay.'

'And Amber?'

'Yes?'

'Remember, I love you, too.'

## Ministry to the Children:

The Bible says, 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (*1 John 1:9*) Admitting to God that you've messed up is important. You're telling Him the truth and not trying to hide what you've done or pretending you're okay. God knows everything anyway! He doesn't want anything getting between Himself and you. He's your heavenly Father. He loves you and wants you close to Him. So if you've sinned and need to ask God to forgive you, ask! Don't put up with condemnation a minute longer. And remember, there's always someone you can talk to. A Chaplain or your Kid's Church Pastor. You are not alone. (*Prayer*)

## Memory Verse:

Proverbs 4:23 Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

### **Snap It!**

*This short verse lends itself to recitation with actions.*

Above (snap, snap) all else (snap snap)

Guard your heart (clap, clap)

For (spin around once)

Everything (snap, snap)

You do (snap, snap)

Flows from it (clap, clap)

Proverbs (point to your temple)

Four (hold up four fingers)

Twenty (hold up two fingers)

Three (hold up three fingers)

## Morning Tea: Pancakes

How about some pancakes with maple syrup? (Might be a fun to share them with Mum's and Dad's after the service.)

## Game: Hunter and Watchman

At the start of the game choose a child to be the hunter and another to be the watchman or guard. The other children are animals.

Mark a 3 metre circle to be the pen where captured animals will be secured. The watchman will guard this area throughout the game. The game starts with the animals running away from the animal pen. The hunter must then try to capture them by tagging each animal and escorting them back to the animal pen.

Other animals can free their team mates by tagging them out of the pen, but they have to beware of the watchman as he will be there stop them. The game ends when all of the animals have been captured or a set time limit is up.

## Craft: Insects

*I found many wonderful insects to make when I searched the internet. Here are a few of my favourites.*

- Dragon fly (using a paddlepop stick)
- Caterpillar (using small pom poms glued to a paddlepop stick)
- Plastic Spoon bugs (plastic spoons and green felt leaves)
- Spoon Ant Craft (Spoons and pipe cleaners)
- Paper Ant Craft (Cardboard and pipe cleaners)