

Protecting Your Person - Prov. 4:20-27

A heart that is disciplined, devoted, and conformed to the Scriptures will insure a walk in the truth (4:21).

1. Guard your heart – Act straight (Prov. 4:23)

Explanation/heart: The word (Hebrew: *leb*) means *inner man, mind, will*, “**heart (internal feature)** — *the locus of a person’s thoughts (mind), volition, emotions, and knowledge of right from wrong (conscience) understood as the heart*”.¹ This would be the *control center* of your life.

While this would include our mental and emotional capacity, it would include our *inner* desires, thoughts, and values. The center of this would be the mind, but would include our emotions and will.

Quote: “Just as a healthy human heart is at the center of the body and absolutely essential for physical life and health, so too a healthy spiritual heart (intellect, emotion, will) is at the center of one's inner being (soul) and is vital for a healthy soul, serving as the "fountain" of all moral attitudes and actions. Our spiritual heart thus controls our actions and our actions determine our habits, which in turn determine our character. When God measures the "worth" of a man's life He puts the measuring tape around his heart, not around his head. Be a man after God's Own heart (Acts 13:22). We must continually "post a guard" at the doorway of our heart, so that every avenue for sin's entry is blocked”.

Explanation/diligence: The meaning of the root word is *to exercise great care over*. There is a sense of being careful, vigilant, but the main meaning of this word is to guard as a person would watch over someone in prison or under confinement. Some translations use the idea of *diligence* or *above all else*. No matter what way you look at this, Solomon’s point is that this will not be an easy task.

Application Truths/Questions

- a) How often are you doing this? Sunday AM only?
- b) What part of your being is open to attack? What area of life do you struggle with?
- c) When was the last time you prayed for victory in an unprotected area?
- d) What are you doing to protect yourself?

2. Guard your speech – Speak straight (Prov. 4:24)

Application: Our mouths should be truthful, without deceit, and without perversion. Part of guarding our heart is guarding our mouth. It is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaks (Matt. 12:34). The person who speaks with a perverted mouth is not in submission to God. A person who exhibits godly wisdom will discipline his/her mouth to manifest the goodness of God.

3. Guard your eyes – Look straight (Prov. 4:25)

Application: The goal as believers is to not lose focus by looking at the things of the world. Quit being distracted. Do not turn aside to the evil way. Follow the path of wisdom. Phil. 3:14; Heb. 12:1.

¹ Brannan, R., ed. (2020). In [Lexham Research Lexicon of the Hebrew Bible](#). Lexham Press.

4. Guard your walk – Walk straight (Prov. 4:26-27)

Application: If you want to have your ways (comings and goings) established, firm, and steadfast, then you must conform to God's standard. The word *ponder* means *to give careful thought or consideration to something*; in this case to where you are going. We must turn our feet from evil and not turn aside from the wisdom path. In the end this is what will keep us from wicked actions.

Conclusion

“To walk with God necessarily means to be misjudged and misunderstood by unspiritual persons who are ignorant of the power of God and the value of His truth. But if one has His approbation [approval], there need be no consulting with flesh and blood, but implicit obedience to what He has said in His Word” (Ironsides 55).