

Subject: **PROVERBS**

Title: **Word...Widsom...Heart...Mouth...Eyes...Feet**

Text: **Proverbs 4**

INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 3, we saw what the Bible teaches to be the very top priorities of the Christian life:

1. An intimate relationship with God (3:1-6)
2. A thorough application of godly principles (3:7-12)
3. A godly perspective of life (3:13-20)
4. A godly dependence for daily living (3:21-26)
5. A blessing and reward (3:33-35)

In Chapter 4:1-22, we see many things that we have already dealt with in several previous messages from Proverbs Chapters 1-3, so the focus of this message will be Proverbs 4:23-27. We will quickly lay the foundation in the first 22 verses.

I. Learn God's Word (4:1-4)

Proverbs 4:1 Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.

4:2 For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law.

4:3 For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother.

4:4 He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live.

A. "Hear...the instruction" (4:1)

B. "Attend to know...good doctrine" (4:1-2)

C. "Let thine heart...retain my words" (4:4)

D. "Keep my commandments" (4:4)

II. Obtain Godly Wisdom (4:5-9)

4:5 Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.

4:6 Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee.

4:7 Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.

4:8 Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her.

4:9 She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.

* "Wisdom is the principal thing" (4:7)!

III. Practice Godly Living (4:10-13)

4:10 Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many.

4:11 I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths.

4:12 When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.

4:13 Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life.

A. *“The way of wisdom” (4:11)*

B. *“Right paths” (4:11)*

C. *“Steps...runnest...” (4:12)*

* Life is like running a race.

IV. Choose Godly Companions and Influences in Life (4:14-19)

4:14 Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men.

4:15 Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.

4:16 For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall.

4:17 For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence.

4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

4:19 The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.

A. **The Path of the Wicked (4:14-17)**

1. *“Enter not” (4:14)*
2. *“Go not” (4:14)*
3. *“Avoid it” (4:15)*
4. *“Pass not by it” (4:15)*
5. *“Turn from it” (4:15)*
6. *“Pass away” (4:15)*

B. **A Path of Darkness and Stumbling (4:19)**

C. **The Path of the Just (4:18-19)**

1. *“Shining light”* - that shines brighter as the days go by and one follows it.

V. Conclusion (4:20-22)

4:20 My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings.

4:21 Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart.

4:22 For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.

A. “Attend to my words” (4:20)

B. “Incline thine ear” (4:20)

C. “Thine eyes” (4:21)

D. “Keep them in the midst of thine heart” (4:21)

E. “They are life...health” (4:22)

VI. Admonitions (4:23-27)

4:23 Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

4:24 Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee.

4:25 Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.

4:26 Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.

4:27 Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.

The Chapter ends with seven very important admonitions:

1) “Keep thy heart”

2) “Put away....a froward mouth”

3) “Let thine eyes look right on”

4) “Ponder the path of thy feet”

5) “Let all thy ways be established”

6) “Turn not to the right...nor...left”

7) “Remove thy foot from evil”

A. “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life” (4:23).

This is one of the most important and powerful of all of the statements in the Word of God.

Out of the heart are the issues of life!

Mark 7:21-23, For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

Romans 10:9-10, That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Proverbs 23:7 For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee.

Matthew 22:37, Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

Matthew 15:19, For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

Luke 43-45, For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

Matthew 5:28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

“Keep thy heart” means to guard or protect your heart.

Heart-belief, heart-conviction, heart-purity, heart-conversion and heart-loyalty are all necessities for genuine worship of God.

What do you presently long for more than anything in this life?

- * Personal happiness
- * Restored health
- * Human love and affection
- * Money, job security
- * Social acceptance and prominence
- * Power or authority over others
- * A possession or possessions

B. “Put away a froward mouth” (4:24).

The word froward means “not willing to yield or comply with what is required or is reasonable; obstinate; cross.”

We are talking about establishing good and godly attitudes in life in general.

Matthew 12:34-37, O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

In other words, what is in our hearts comes out of our mouths.

James 3:2-11, For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?

The froward mouth is:

- * a lying mouth
- * a flattering mouth
- * a slandering mouth
- * an exaggerating mouth
- * a boastful mouth
- * a gossiping mouth
- * a cursing mouth

C. “Let thine eyes look right on” (4:25).

Paul says it very concisely in Philippians 3:14, “*I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*”

Job gives us a good, practical application. In Job 31:1-12 Job writes that he would not even look upon a young woman lest he be tempted to turn from the right path, essentially saying, “Think of the ultimate, potential consequences of the first look if it is followed through” (see the story of David and Bathsheba and consequences in II Samuel 11-12).

Jesus calls it the “single eye” in Matthew 6:22, “*The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.*”

Matthew 6:21 says “*Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also*” - a single heart results in a single eye.

Avoid the winking eye (sinister eye).

Proverbs 6:12-14, A naughty person, a wicked man, walketh with a froward mouth. He winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers; Frowardness is in his heart, he deviseth mischief continually; he soweth discord.

Avoid the backward look.

Luke 9:62 And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

Use the forward look.

Hebrews 12:2, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

D. “Ponder the path of thy feet” (4:26).

1. The path of life

Psalms 16:11, Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

2. Paths of righteousness

Psalms 23:3, He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.

3. Thy paths

Psalms 25:4, Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths.

Psalms 25:10, All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.

4. Plain path

Psalms 27:11, Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.

5. Path of thy commandments

Psalms 119:35, Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight.

6. Light unto my path

Psalms 119:105, Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

7. Good path

Proverbs 2:9, Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.

8. Old paths

Jeremiah 6:16, Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.

Where are you going? What path are you on? Are you confused? Disoriented?

E. “Let all thy ways be established” (4:26).

Established or fixed. There are some decisions that can be made early in life before the questions or temptations are presented.

Character building: honesty; integrity; purity; hard work; loyalty; charity; forgiving; etc.

Principles of character which are not to be compromised under any circumstances. “I am not for sale, I cannot be bought!”

* Marriage vows

* Work commitments

* Financial obligations - payment of loans

F. “Turn not to the right or the left” (4:27).

You will not turn to the right or left if you are looking straight ahead, e.g., tendency to drive where you are looking in a car or to put or hit where your feet are facing. If you are looking to the right or left, you’ll stray from the path.

Purposed. Resolved. Not easily distracted. Glancing to the flanks you lose sight of the goal, i.e., bowling, baseball.

G. “Remove thy foot from evil” (4:27).

Proverbs 4:14-15 Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.

“Can I be a friend to this person with whom I’ve committed adultery?”

“Can I go to the bar with my drinking buddies and drink Coke?”

“Can a person on a diet walk into Wegman’s on Latta Road?”

Do everything you can do to avoid it. Don’t walk in the path of the wicked.

In summary from Proverbs 4:23-27:

1. *“Keep thy heart.”*
2. *“Put away....a froward mouth.”*
3. *“Let thine eyes look right on.”*
4. *“Ponder the path of thy feet.”*
5. *“Let all thy ways be established.”*
6. *“Turn not to the right...nor...left.”*
7. *“Remove thy foot from evil.”*