

A. Life is full of dilemmas.

1. When we have to make hard decisions, we need God’s wisdom to do what pleases Him.
2. Taking the best path takes wisdom. **James 1:5-6** tells us, “**But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously & without reproach, & it will be given to him. ⁶ But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like...**

B. The Proverbs are immensely valuable for our day & age. It does not make sense to ask God for wisdom according to **James 1** yet neglect His divinely inspired Proverbs

Seek God’s wisdom to walk carefully.	I. <u>ATTEND TO WISDOM</u> II. <u>GUARD YOUR HEART</u> III. <u>WALK CAREFULLY</u>
--------------------------------------	---

I. ATTEND TO WISDOM (**vv20**)

A. Solomon’s primary, intended audience was his son, yet as being given inspiration by the Holy Spirit, God intended for us to be the recipients of these words of wisdom.

B. When God speaks to us by means of Script, He wants us to pay close attention

1. Especially during the preaching of God’s Word, it is not a time for daydreaming.
 - a. It should bother us when our minds wander during our reading & especially as we listen...
 - b. Parents, try to remove distractions from yourselves & Your kids as you read devotions.
 - c. I voiced my upset to a pastor once about my wondering mind during his preaching.
 - 1) He said if an idea or concern came to my mind during the sermon, jot it down.
 - 2) Taking sermon notes is another important way we can pay better attention.
 - d. Remove mental distraction by making simple Lord’s Day meals at home.

2. Get adequate rest to prepare for Lord’s Day.

C. (**vv21-22**) give us a call to memorize the Word of God.

1. The goal of attention is for true learning— long term memory so that the word does not depart from your mind & heart

2. **Ps 119:10-11** “**With all my heart I have sought You; do not let me wander from Your commandments. Your word I have treasured [hidden] in my heart, that I may not sin against You.**”

- a. Greater love for what you are listening to leads to greater attention span.
- b. It is almost impossible to treasure or hide the Word of God in your heart unless you memorize it.
- c. When tempted, the Holy Spirit allows Scripture to come to our minds to convict us so that we do not sin against God.

II. GUARD UR HEART (v23) “Watch over Ur heart with all diligence, for from it *flow* the springs of life.”

A. Before we can understand what it means to guard our hearts, we must define “heart.”

1. One author wrote “... more than 200 [OT uses of ‘heart’] deal with one’s thought life, emotions, the wellsprings of life, those things that motivate & mold us.”¹

a. More accurately, from the heart can come wellsprings of life or streams of wickedness.

1) Gen 6:5 “the Ld saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, & that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”

2) Gen 8:21 “I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man’s heart is evil from his youth; & I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done.

b. By God’s grace, man’s heart can be transformed from being evil continually to a heart that desires what God desires & hates what God hates.

2. The heart is more than just one’s inner thought life. The principal parts of saving Faith include:

a. notitia- knowledge of the facts (demons can attain to this- James 2:19)

b. assensus- assent or agreement of these facts to be true & apply to you

c. fiducia- trust or spiritual resting on Christ & His Word which is a matter of the heart

B. To guard your heart is to watch-over where you set your greatest affections or desires.

1. → Turn to Mat 6:19-21 to read of Christ’s warning.

2. St. Augustin: “You have made us for yourself, O Lord & our hearts are restless until they rest in You”

C. God not only wants us to guard our hearts; he wants us to guard our lips: (v24)

1. (v23) “from it [the heart] *flow* the springs of life;” that includes what flows from our lips.

→ (Luke 6:45) “The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; & the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart. → It seems natural that a perverse heart produces perverse speech.

2. Ps 141:3 “Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; Keep watch over the door of my lips.”

3. Like David, we need to pray for God’s supernatural grace to control our lips

III. WALK CAREFULLY (vv25-27)

A. If Jesus has called you to follow Him, He calls you to enter through the narrow gate (Mat 7:13-14). He wants you to look straight ahead & not turn back as if you are plowing a row in a field.

1. Lu 9:62 “No one, after putting his hand to the plow & looking back, is fit for the Kingdom”

1. When driving, taking your eyes off the road can put you in a ditch or a head-on collision.

B. (v25) warns of distractions. A person who starts out being zealous for Christ can later allow the cares of the world [desires for romance, money, prestige] choke out the wd so that life becomes fruitless.

C. Keeping your eyes on right path helps you to discern God’s will & how to turn away from evil.

1. Eph 5:15-17 “Be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. . . do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”

2. Other times our daily decisions are rather black & white. Don’t push the limits. → Heb 6:4-12

Review / Conclusion / application:

¹ <https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/topical-studies/how-to-guard-your-heart.html>