

Message #16

Proverbs 4:20-27

There is, within every human heart, a spiritual heart that has a very serious problem which is called depravity. Every heart is deceitful and desperately wicked (Jer. 17:9) and if left untreated, will bring serious trouble and even death.

A HEALTHY HEART IS DEVELOPED BY TAKING IN THE WORD OF GOD AND BY APPLYING IT TO LIFE.

Solomon wanted his own son to know that if he would take in regular doses of the Word of God and would make the changes God requires, he could take a heart that was depraved and rebellious and start the therapeutic process of developing a heart God views as vital, full, healthy and alive.

CHALLENGE #1 – The challenge to pursue instruction. **4:20-22**

In this challenge, Solomon exhorts his son to use his physical senses in pursuing the spiritual instruction of God.

(Exhortation #1) - Solomon exhorts his son to use his ears. **4:20**

The verb “give attention” or “attend” is one that means to perk up one’s ears. It was used of animals who would have their ears drooped and upon hearing a sound would perk-up their ears and focus all of their attention on the place from which the sound originated. The verb “incline” is one that means to lean. Solomon not only wanted his son listening to Biblical instruction, but leaning his life in that direction.

(Exhortation #2) - Solomon exhorts his son to use his eyes. **4:21a**

Solomon is telling his son that his eyes should constantly be focused on the wise teachings of God’s Word.

(Exhortation #3) - Solomon exhorts his son to use his mind. **4:21b**

The word “keep” is a word that stresses an intense guarding. The word “heart” is not referring here to the physical organ, but the intellect, emotion and will.

The key to having a solid mind and heart is careful guarding of God’s Word.

It is no coincidence that the key to getting the Word of God into the center of your heart is by using your ears and eyes.

Now we may notice that **verse 22** gives his son a specific reason for using his eyes and ears and heart to pursue a careful understanding of God's Word; because your entire physical and spiritual condition will be revitalized.

CHALLENGE #2 – The challenge to guard your heart. **4:23-27**

The main challenge comes from **verse 23** and then in **verses 24-27**, we are given some specifics which are necessary for guarding one's heart.

(Specific #1) - You guard your heart by guarding your speech. **4:24**

Solomon stresses two things here—first, and most obvious, do not ever let this type of speech come out of our mouth. Second, get far away from this kind of speech.

(Specific #2) - You guard your heart by guarding your sight. **4:25**

What Solomon is saying here is that his son should keep his sight on things ahead of him, specifically things that are against him.

(Specific #3) - You guard your heart by guarding your steps. **4:26-27**

Four keys to guarding your steps:

Key #1 - Get rid of all obstacles. **4:26a**

Key #2 - Carefully calculate all movement. **4:26b**

Key #3 - Stay on the right path. **4:27a**

Key #4 - Stay off the wrong path. **4:27b**

God can and will perform a wonderful surgery on our hearts if we will keep our focus on these things.