

# The Safety of Wisdom, part 3

“Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”  
The Apostle Paul

## Proverbs 4:20-27 Christian Standard Bible

### The Straight Path

20 My son, pay attention to my words;  
listen closely to my sayings.

21 Don't lose sight of them;  
keep them within your heart.

22 For they are life to those who find them,  
and health to one's whole body.

23 Guard your heart above all else,[a]  
for it is the source of life.

24 Don't let your mouth speak dishonestly,  
and don't let your lips talk deviously.

25 Let your eyes look forward;  
fix your gaze[b] straight ahead.

26 Carefully consider the path[c] for your feet,  
and all your ways will be established.

27 Don't turn to the right or to the left;  
keep your feet away from evil.

### Footnotes

a. 4:23 Or heart with all diligence

b. 4:25 Lit eyelids

c. 4:26 Or Clear a path

### Something to think about...

What decision are you facing now in which you are tempted to foolishness but called to wisdom?

## A CLOSER LOOK: PROTECTING THE HEART

In a third appeal to his son, the father calls once more for close attention to his important words. The message coming in the next few verses is crucial, so you should keep it central in your thoughts. Don't let it out of your sight; keep it within your heart, in the center of your soul. If you want life, pay attention to wisdom. And he promises that you will not only enjoy life, but you will flourish in your physical health. Like many other promises in Proverbs, this does not guarantee total immunity from illness, but it does reflect the fact that many maladies stem from foolish choices.

The heart in the Old Testament includes more than just the emotions; it can refer to the whole personality, the inner life of a person. And as such, it is the wellspring of life. As Jesus explained, the heart is the source of words and actions (Luke 6:45), so it is the key to controlling behavior.

Returning to the imagery of walking down a path, the father implores his son to keep his eyes straight ahead. Do not allow your gaze to wander off to the side where temptations might lead you astray. If the eyes wander, the feet soon go astray.

**If the heart remains pure, the rest of the body will stay on course.**

## “LET US PRAY...”

Lord we are thankful you have given us a heart, a heart with God given emotions for your glory and our good. Please protect our hearts and lead us to protect the hearts of others. Fix our eyes on your path Lord and help us to lead others along the same way. Thank you for forgiveness when we stray and when we struggle. We love you Lord and look forward to all you have in store for us on this journey AMEN