

03/19/14 - Protect Your Heart

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Proverbs 4:14-27

Many people use the words "guard your heart" as advice about dating and romance. In the context of Proverbs 4, this phrase takes on a much deeper meaning. The heart is the very source of life, out of which everything we do flows forth. To guard one's heart is to protect the very center of one's being.

How do we guard our hearts? The writer of Proverbs suggests two key guidelines. First, our mouths are to be free from perversity. Ugly speech would include swearing, taking God's name in vain or using hate-filled words. Lies and half-truths also corrupt our speech. Jesus spoke of the link between pure words and a guarded heart, saying "the mouth speaks what the heart is full of" (Matthew 12:34).

Second, we keep our eyes gazing straight ahead. The best way to make forward progress is to determine our goal or target, then focus on the goal while we move toward it.

The disciplines of pure speech and focused attention will keep our hearts pure and our lives pleasing to God.

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