

WISDOM CHOOSES TO GUARD THE HEART

YEAR: KNEEL / FOCUS: LIVING IN WISDOM / SERIES: PROVERBS

BIG TRUTH: WISDOM CHOOSES TO GUARD THE HEART

Philippians 4:6-7; Proverbs 7:25; 1 Peter 5:8; Proverbs 23:26

BIBLE VERSE: PROVERBS 4:23

"Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life."

BIG IDEAS

- Wisdom protects us from folly by constantly calling us to hold fast to what is true.
- Wisdom knows what draws the heart away and chooses to reject what is false.
- Wisdom is a decision to search for God and aim our heart to follow His paths.

BIBLE PASSAGE: PROVERBS 4

KNEEL: LIVING IN WISDOM

The Kneel Year is an exploration of what it means to worship God with our all (Luke 10:26-28) and to use our influence to lead others to do the same. We know that as we pursue a life of worship, we will pursue a life of both wisdom and mission. Throughout this year we will study and pursue the wisdom of God through the book of Proverbs and the mission of God through the book of Acts, and we will learn how both of these things must inform and shape our influence as Jesus followers!

SERIES AIMS



Every student should know...

- What wisdom is.
- Why wisdom is worthy to be pursued.
- How to grow in wisdom.



Every student should feel...

- Love for God who gives all wisdom.
- Satisfied and secure in the wisdom of God.
- Responsible to use their influence to live for Jesus alone.



Every student should strive to...

- Read through the book of Proverbs one time each month.
- Memorize the Bible verse each week.
- Repent of the ways they have not pursued God and His wisdom.



Every student should want...

- To fear the Lord and keep His commandments.
- To live their lives in pursuit of true wisdom.
- To guard their heart from all impurity.

GUIDES AND WORKOUTS

The Guide provides a commentary page on each week's Bible verse and on each Big Idea that unpacks the Big Truth. Each week also includes a Student Workout as a resource to help the student pursue spiritual disciplines on their own. Additionally, each week has a Family Workout that helps equip parents and guardians to have spiritual conversations with their student.



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WISDOM CHOOSES TO
GUARD THE HEART**BIBLE VERSE: PROVERBS 4:23***"Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life."***Our hearts must be kept diligently.***"Keep your heart with all vigilance..."*

- To be vigilant is to watch over something very carefully. One cannot do something with vigilance if they are distracted or consumed with other things. Vigilance requires our full attention and time. When we keep our hearts with vigilance it means that there is never a time when we are not watching over them.
- It can be tempting to let our guard down. We may think we have arrived at a place where we do not need to watch so closely, but as long as we live in this broken world, we must always be on guard.

Keeping our hearts requires sacrifice.*"Keep your heart with all vigilance..."*

- Keeping our hearts with all vigilance means that we must sacrifice other things. We must sacrifice distraction. We cannot let our guard down or think that we no longer need to protect ourselves with God's Word.
- Instead, we must continually seek Him in His Word. We must sacrifice pleasure and leisure in order to protect our hearts. If we are not filling them with the truth of Scripture, then we are allowing them to be penetrated with the lies of Satan.

Keeping our hearts is necessary because our life flows from them.*"...for from it flow the springs of life."*

- Our heart is necessary for life. Without our heart, we cannot live. Our heart is also necessary to our spiritual and emotional life. Our heart is likened to a spring. From the spring flows life or death depending upon what we allow to fill it.
- When we guard our hearts and fill them with the truth of Scripture, life will flow from them. We must keep our hearts if we are to live for Christ on this earth. We must guard them diligently and with all vigilance. The price Christ paid to ransom our hearts is too great for us to take lightly the task of guarding our hearts from the brokenness of this world.

WISDOM CHOOSES TO
GUARD THE HEART**BIG IDEA #1: WISDOM PROTECTS US FROM FOLLY BY CONSTANTLY CALLING US TO HOLD FAST TO WHAT IS TRUE.¹****[THIS]**

When we guard something, we protect it. We put up walls and fences to protect our houses or property or to keep our possessions safe. When we guard our hearts, we put protection around them. The protection we put around them is the truth. Wisdom teaches us to do this by guiding us to hold fast to the truth we learn from God's Word and from walking in communion with the body of Christ. In Ephesians 3:14-19, Paul prays that believers would grow together to know the fullness of Christ. This truth implies that as we fellowship together as a body of believers, we will hold fast together the truth of Christ. By doing this together, we will guard our hearts. Wisdom teaches us to turn away from what is false in this world and cling to God's truth found in His Word and experienced in the fellowship of His body of believers.

[THEREFORE]

Read Proverbs 4:1-4. Knowing truth is found in God's Word, how can you hold fast to truth daily?

In these first four verses, we see the command to cling to and hold fast to the truth that has been taught. We can and should hold fast to the truth of God's Word. He has given us His written Word and we can read it and study it daily to hide it in our hearts. When we do this, we will guard our hearts.

[THIS]

Left to ourselves, we would live sinful, foolish lives. We would seek after folly and pursue temporal things. Wisdom protects us from this. Wisdom teaches us to guard our hearts from these vain pursuits by leading us to pursue truth instead. When we hide God's truth in our hearts, not only do we not pursue folly, but the desires of our hearts begin to change. Instead of desiring the things of this world, we desire the things that God desires. We want the same things He wants. We love the things He loves. In Proverbs 4:16, we see a different picture. We see someone who desires to do wicked things. Wisdom teaches a different path. Wisdom teaches us to guard our hearts from this life and to pursue the path of righteousness. When we do this, we are kept from folly and from living a pointless life.

[THEREFORE]

What is folly in this world? How have you chosen folly at times? How have you chosen to reject folly?

Ephesians 5:15 reminds us to watch how we walk. We are to walk as wise people and not as unwise people. This implies that we must pay careful attention to the path we are choosing. At times we may choose the unwise path. Proverbs 29:11 reminds us that those who lack self-control are those choosing an unwise path. James 3:17 also teaches us what it looks like to choose the path of folly.

How does the world define truth? How is this definition different from God's truth? How can you guard your heart from what is false?

Proverbs 4:14 teaches us to make a choice not to go down the path of the wicked. The world is a fallen and broken place. If we are to guard our hearts, we must make the choice not to follow the world. This means we will not learn what is true from the world. Instead, we will learn truth from God's Word. We guard our hearts from what is false by learning what is true.

1. Proverbs 4:4: Wisdom chooses to hold fast to God's truth by holding fast to His Word.

WISDOM CHOOSES TO
GUARD THE HEART**BIG IDEA #2: WISDOM KNOWS WHAT DRAWS THE HEART AWAY AND CHOOSES TO REJECT WHAT IS FALSE.²****[THIS]**

To protect our hearts, we must know two things: what is true and what is false. It's not good enough just to know what is true and it's not good enough to just know what is false. If we focus too much on what is false, then we will not protect ourselves with the truth. If we only focus on the truth and not warn ourselves of the danger that lies in wait, we will be surprised by the traps set for us. There must be a balance of saturating our hearts with truth and preparing our minds for the battle against the wickedness of this world. Wisdom knows how to do this. Wisdom understands that there is a balance that must be kept, and it seeks to keep it. When we gain this wisdom, we understand what draws our heart from God and we choose to reject that thing. By doing this, we are keeping our hearts from the wickedness of the world.

[THEREFORE]

Wisdom knows what draws the heart away. How can you use wisdom to identify what draws your heart away from the things of the Lord?

In Philippians 1:9-10, Paul writes that his wish for the Philippian believers is that they would grow in their ability to know what is right. Psalm 63:1 teaches us that those who seek God do find Him. Knowing that seeking God means we find Him and that the goal is to grow in knowing what is right, we can use wisdom by seeking God through His Word and His church.

[THIS]

Guarding our heart is not just knowing what is right or what draws it away. It is also making the choice to reject what is false. We have God's written Word. No one really stands without excuse because God has given us His Word to guide us. Because He has revealed His truth to us, we can know and should know what is true. As we grow in our knowledge of what is right, we are faced with the choice of rejecting what is wrong. The challenge in guarding our hearts is that our sin nature fights against us. Our sin nature desires what is wrong. In our flesh, we want the things of the world. It is the Spirit inside of us that draws us away from the brokenness of the world and leads us toward the truth. As we mature in our faith and diligently guard our hearts, we will reject the lies that are characteristic of this world and choose truth instead.

[THEREFORE]

What are some lies that you find hard to reject? Why are these lies easier to believe than the truth?

1 John 4:1 teaches us to not believe everything we hear, or every spirit. 2 Timothy 4:3-4 speaks to the truth that often we willingly believe lies instead of trusting the truth. Sometimes we just prefer the lies to the truth because they seem better or easier.

Read Proverbs 4:24-25. What are some choices you've made that have been difficult, but you've made them to guard your heart?

We all face choices. Wisdom teaches us to make the hard choices even if it means we feel like outsiders. When we choose to do what is right and what keeps us from following the world, we are rejecting what is false and choosing what is true. This is guarding our hearts and keeping us from following our sin nature. This leads to life and not death.

2. Proverbs 4:24: Wisdom knows to reject what is false and wicked in this world.

WISDOM CHOOSES TO
GUARD THE HEART**BIG IDEA #3: WISDOM IS A DECISION TO SEARCH FOR GOD AND AIM OUR HEART TO FOLLOW HIS PATHS.³****[THIS]**

Guarding our hearts involves protecting them. Unless we protect our hearts from the lies of the world, we cannot grow in truth. Wisdom leads us to do more than guard them. Wisdom leads us to actually aim our hearts. When we aim something, we are intentionally choosing a direction. We are choosing a target and heading in that direction. We are putting all of our energy and resources toward hitting the target we are aiming at. Wisdom teaches us that if we want to be successful in guarding our hearts, we must also aim them. When we read Proverbs 4, we learn valuable lessons in how to aim our hearts. In Proverbs 4, we see that a decision has to be made to search for God and to set our life course toward Him. Scripture teaches us that when we seek God, we will find Him. We can be sure that any person who seeks God finds Him.

[THEREFORE]

Read Proverbs 4:20-21. A wise person decides to seek God. How has wisdom led you to choose to seek God in your daily life?

Being attentive to God's truth is a way to seek God. We can grow so accustomed to hearing God's truth that our ears grow dull. We may hear it and not really apply it to our lives. Wisdom teaches us to attune our hearts and minds to hear Him and to seek Him daily.

[THIS]

As we aim our hearts to seek Him, we will desire to follow His paths and not our own. God's path is so unlike the world's. Often, we mistake a moral path for God's path. We think if we're living a moral life and attending church, we are on God's path, but God's path is one of radical obedience to His Word. Following God's path is a complete rejection of the world and its ideals. Our lives will look so radically different that we will stand out and stand up for what God calls us to stand up for. No one will mistake us for just a good person. Instead, they will know that we are a son or daughter of the King, and they will understand where our allegiance lies. When we aim our hearts, our hearts will be satisfied with nothing less than following Jesus by dying to ourselves and pursuing Him completely. Aiming our hearts at God's path requires that we know His truth and His paths. We must be able to recognize His paths. We will know when we are on it and when we stumble off it. We will follow Him and pursue His truth daily.

[THEREFORE]

Read Matthew 7:13-14. What are the two paths that we are faced with aiming our hearts at in this life?

In these verses, Jesus teaches about two paths: the world's and His path. When we aim our hearts, we will aim them at His path. When we do this, we will follow His truth and keep our hearts with diligence from the lies of this world. We will live lives that please God and follow Him in obedience.

Why is aiming our hearts so challenging in this world? What are some temptations that we face along the way?

Proverbs 4:25-27 shows us that we often face the temptation to look at the enticing things of the world. Sin is enticing and leads us away from God's truth. We are wrong if we think that sin will seem ugly or not fun to us. When aiming our hearts, we must know that often sin will look fun and enjoyable, but it always leads to death.

3. Proverbs 4:10: Hearing God and following Him means we are choosing to search for Him.