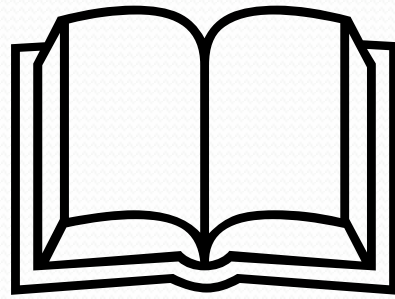


**Grace Bible Church**  
**Dr. Michael Grisanti**  
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**Proverbs 4:20-23**

**“The Heart: The Fountain of  
Our Identity”**



## The Mosaic Law

## ● Proverbs 4:20-27:

- <sup>20</sup> My son, pay attention to what I say;
- listen closely to my words.
- <sup>21</sup> Do not let them out of your **sight**,
- keep them within your **heart**;
- <sup>22</sup> for they are life to those who find them
- and health to a man's **whole body**.
- <sup>23</sup> Above all else, guard your **heart**,
- for it is the wellspring of life.
- <sup>24</sup> Put away perversity from your **mouth**;
- keep corrupt talk far from your **lips**.
- <sup>25</sup> Let your **eyes** look straight ahead,
- fix your **gaze** directly before you.
- <sup>26</sup> Make level paths for your **feet**
- and take only ways that are firm.
- <sup>27</sup> Do not swerve to the right or the left;
- keep your **foot** from evil.



# I. The Command: Guard Your Heart

## A. The Object of This Command: Your Heart

Prov. 16:9- “*In his heart a man plans his course*, but the LORD determines his steps.”



## **B. The Significance of This Command**

### **1. The Meaning of this “Guarding”**

**Psalm 141:3-** “Set a guard over my mouth, O LORD; *keep watch over the door of my lips.*”



Proverbs 3:21- “My son, *preserve sound judgment and discernment*, do not let them out of your sight.”

Proverbs 4:13- “Hold on to instruction, do not let it go; *guard it well*, for it is your life.”

Proverbs 6:20- “My son, *keep your father’s commands* and do not forsake your mother’s teaching.”



## **2. The Magnitude of this “Guarding”**

**“Above all else, guard your heart!!”**

**“More than anything that needs guarding, give attention to guarding your heart!!”**



## **II. THE MOTIVATION: THE HEART MAKES US WHO WE REALLY ARE**

**“Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.”**

**“For it determines the course of your life”**

**“For everything you do flows from it”**

## “Heart” in the Psalms

*\*Someone’s heart can be filled with joy (4:7; 119:11), destruction (5:9), or sorrow (13:2).*

“You have *filled my heart* with greater joy than when their grain and new wine abound” (4:7).

*\*Sin is cherished in the heart.*


“If I had *cherished sin in my heart*, the Lord would not have listened” (66:18).

*\*The psalmist declares that God's instructions are "in his heart" (37:31; 40:8; 119:11), i.e., they impacted his life.*

**"I desire to do your will, O my God; *your law is within my heart*" (40:8).**

*\*The expression "upright in heart" occurs 8 times (7:10; 11:2; 32:11; 36:10; 64:10; 94:15; 97:11; 125:4).*

**"Light is shed upon the righteous and joy on *the upright in heart*" (97:11).**




*\*The psalmist regularly uses the phrase “with all my heart” to describe their total commitment to a spiritual activity (9:1; 86:12; 119:2, 10, 34, 58, 69, 145, 169; 138:1).*

**“Blessed are they who keep his statutes and seek him *with all their heart*” (119:2).**

*\*God himself searches a person’s heart (7:9; 17:3; 26:2; 44:21; 139:23).*

**“Test me, O Lord, and try me, *examine my heart* and my mind” (26:2).**



*\*What God wants and values is a contrite or submissive heart (51:17).*

**“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and *contrite heart*, O God, you will not despise” (51:17).**

*\*The psalmist recognized that God is the only one who is ultimately responsible for creating a new heart (51:10).*


**“*Create in me a pure heart, O God*, and renew a steadfast spirit within me” (51:10).**

## NT Gospels—Heart and Life

*\*The heart is the engine that gives direction and momentum to life.*

“For where your treasure is, *there your heart will be also*” (Matt. 6:21; cf. Lk. 12:34).

“You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For *out of the overflow of the heart* the mouth speaks” (Matt. 12:34; cf. Lk. 6:45).



**“But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man ‘unclean.’ For *out of the heart* come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander” (Matt. 15:18-19; cf. Mark 7:21).**

**“The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For *out of the overflow of his heart* his mouth speaks” (Lk. 6:45).**



*\*God condemned his people for appearing to pursue Him, when their hearts wanted nothing to do with him.*

“These people honor me with their lips, *but their hearts are far from me*” (Matt. 15:8; cf. Mk. 7:6).



*\*God is the one who knows each heart.*

**“He said to them, ‘You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, *but God knows your hearts.* What is highly valued among men is detestable in God’s sight’” (Lk. 16:15).**