

# Sermon Discussion Guide

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## **Proverbs 4:20–27 – “You Need a Change of Heart”**

**Preaching Date: January 18, 2026**

### **Opening Prayer**

Ask God to help us guard our hearts, to seek wisdom with sincerity, and to pursue genuine transformation from the inside out. Pray for grace to identify and root out sin at the heart level, not merely to manage behavior. Thank Him for the new heart and life that come through Christ.

### **Recap**

In Proverbs 4:20–27, Solomon urges his son to treasure his words and guard his heart, for from it flows the wellspring of life. The passage confronts the limits of behavior modification and calls for deep, inner change. Our hearts, Scripture tells us, are not just emotional centers—they are the control center for our entire lives.

We live in a world full of voices—competing messages about identity, success, love, and truth. But Solomon tells us to carefully choose which voice we allow to shape us, because what fills the heart eventually shapes the life.

Ultimately, Proverbs 4 teaches us that true and lasting change can only begin when the heart is made new by God. Christianity is not about trying harder to do better—it’s about being transformed from the inside out by Christ.

### **Understanding the Text**

1. What does Solomon say about how we receive wisdom? Why do you think he emphasizes our ears, eyes, and hearts?
2. How do the messages we consume (music, media, conversation) affect our hearts?
3. What does it mean to “watch over your heart with all diligence”? Why is the heart described as the “wellspring” or “source” of life?
4. How does this verse challenge a surface-level view of spiritual growth?
5. How do our words and actions reflect the condition of our hearts?

6. What does this passage teach us about the connection between direction in life and affection of the heart?
7. What should we do when we realize our “feet” have strayed from the path of wisdom?

### **Personal Reflection & Application**

1. Solomon says to guard the heart—but not with isolation or rules. We guard it by filling it with God’s Word and listening to His wisdom. What practices help you fill your heart with truth instead of folly?
2. Behavior flows from the heart. Can you identify a sin or struggle in your life that is revealing something deeper in your heart (like pride, fear, envy, or unbelief)? How does knowing this help you fight that sin more effectively?
3. Have you ever tried to change through willpower alone? What was the result? How does the gospel offer a better path to transformation?
4. How do you respond when your sin is exposed—do you feel shame and hide, or do you turn to Christ for cleansing and renewal?

### **God Has More to Say**

#### **The Heart as the Source**

Matthew 12:33–37

Mark 7:20–23

Proverbs 27:19

#### **Transformation from Within**

Romans 12:1–2

Titus 3:4–6

2 Corinthians 5:17

#### **The New Heart Promised**

Ezekiel 36:25–27

Jeremiah 31:33

Deuteronomy 30:6

#### **Guarding the Heart**

Psalms 119:9–11

Philippians 4:6–8

Colossians 3:16

### **Jesus in the Text**

Jesus did not come to make bad people behave better—He came to make dead hearts alive. He fulfills the wisdom of Proverbs by being the only One with a pure heart. He alone guards His heart perfectly, walks in perfect obedience, and speaks with complete integrity. And He gives us a new heart when we come to Him in faith.

Through Jesus, we are given new desires, new affections, and new power to live wisely—not because we are strong, but because He is.