



## Small Group Discussion Guide on Proverbs 4:20-27

This sermon encourages believers to shape their lives by Scripture, viewing every decision through the lens of God's wisdom to align hearts with His will. By highlighting the urgency of listening to divine instruction as a pathway to life and healing, the sermon calls individuals to adopt a worldview rooted in biblical principles, transforming daily habits into acts of discipleship that honor God and produce lasting spiritual growth.

### Section #1 – ENCOUNTER

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#### “Observing God’s Word”

Imagine standing at the edge of a vast wilderness, where every path ahead whispers promises and perils, and the only reliable guide is a father's voice echoing wisdom passed down through generations. In Proverbs 4:20-27, Solomon's words serve as that guiding voice, urging us to listen intently, guard our hearts, and walk steadily amid life's distractions.

As you read this passage, notice how it paints listening not as passive hearing but as active pursuit, leading to life, healing, and a path aligned with God's purpose.

Let's start our study by anchoring ourselves in Scripture. Read Proverbs 4:20-27 (ESV) as a group, family, or an individual, letting God's Word sink in. Picture the scene: A wise father imparting life-saving counsel to his child, emphasizing that true wisdom flows from a heart tuned to God's voice.

#### Core Questions

- What do you notice about Solomon's words and imagery in this story? Why is this relevant?
- What are key words, phrases, or themes that grab your attention in this text?

- What is the main lesson or lessons that you learn about the character of God from Proverbs 4?

## Section #2 – EXPLORE

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### “Understanding the Passage and Sermon”

Let’s unpack the sermon’s Big Idea – “Pursue Wisdom and Listen Carefully in Your Life... What Shapes Your Heart Will Steer Your Steps” – and the three disciplines of listening and learning. Discuss these as a group or reflect on them as an individual.

**Quote** – “The pursuit of God is not a part-time, weekend exercise...The pursuit is relentless. Discipleship requires staying power.” – **R.C. Sproul**

- What does the quote from R.C. Sproul teach us today? Why is this an important lesson to remember?

#### **Discipline #1 – The Law of Listening (Proverbs 4:20-22)**

Solomon writes, “My child, pay attention to what I say. Listen carefully to my words. Don’t lose sight of them. Let them penetrate deep into your heart, for they bring life to those who find them, and healing to their whole body” (Proverbs 4:20-22). The sermon highlights the Law of Listening as the foundation, teaching that spiritual growth begins with humble, intentional hearing of God’s Word, leading to life and renewal.

- How does Solomon’s call to “pay attention” and “listen carefully” challenge you in your daily life?
- Have you ever experienced a moment where truly listening to God’s Word brought healing or clarity?
- In what ways does Proverbs 4:20-22 encourage you as a Christian today?

#### **Discipline #2 – The Sentry’s Charge (Proverbs 4:23)**

“Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life” (Proverbs 4:23). Solomon likens the heart to a fortress that must be vigilantly protected, as it shapes every aspect of our journey.

- What does this teach us about the importance of guarding our inner life against threats like temptation and distraction?
- How can you cherish, recognize threats to, and fortify your heart in practical ways this week?
- How does the quote from Charles Spurgeon apply to this verse?

**Quote** – “Discernment is not simply a matter of telling the difference between right and wrong; rather it is the difference between right and almost right.” – **Charles Spurgeon**

#### **Discipline #3 – The Power of Focus (Proverbs 4:24-27)**

Avoid all perverse talk; stay away from corrupt speech. Look straight ahead, and fix your eyes on what lies before you. Mark out a straight path for your feet; stay on the safe path. Don’t get sidetracked; keep your feet from following evil (Proverbs 4:24-27). This section calls us to align our words, gaze, and steps with God’s will for protection and direction.

- What does this reveal about the role of focus in living a life that honors God?
- How can we cultivate focused words, eyes, and steps in a world full of distractions?

## Section #3 – EMBRACE

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### “Applying God’s Word”

Go deeper into the Word of God by applying what you’ve learned to your life today. Reflect on these action steps and discuss how you can live out the truths from Proverbs 4:20-27.

- **Practice the Law of Listening:** Identify a distraction that hinders your ability to truly hear God’s Word—perhaps social media, busyness, or inner noise. Commit to setting aside focused time this week to read Scripture, perhaps starting with Proverbs 4, and journal how it brings life or healing to your heart.
- **Live Out the Sentry’s Charge:** Examine your heart for unguarded areas, like unchecked thoughts or influences. Pray Psalm 139:23-24, asking God to search you, and take one step to fortify your heart—such as memorizing a verse or seeking accountability from a friend.
- **Learn the Power of Focus:** Choose one area—words, eyes, or steps—to align more closely with God. For words, commit to speaking encouragement; for eyes, fix your gaze on Christ through daily prayer; for steps, evaluate a decision and ensure it follows His path. Share with the group how this focus changes your day.
- **Memorize and Reflect:** Memorize the sermon’s memory verse, Proverbs 9:9 (NLT): “Instruct the wise, and they will be even wiser. Teach the righteous, and they will learn even more.” Reflect on how pursuing wisdom through listening and learning deepens your discipleship. Share with the group how this verse challenges or inspires you.

### Closing Challenge and Prayer

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As a group, pray for one another to embrace the disciplines of listening and learning, just as Solomon urged. Encourage each member to take at least one of the action steps above and follow up next week to share how God worked through their obedience. Consider participating in a Sunday School class or inviting someone new to join your small group to continue growing in faith together.

