

Studies in the Book of Proverbs by [John T Polk II](#)  
For [The Fellowship Room](#)

## (#13) A Father's Wisdom: Focus on What Is Right 4:20-27

**Verses 20-22:** Son, pay "attention" to your father's "words." It is a heavy responsibility for a father to know something important enough to command total attention of his son. It is a grave responsibility for a son to know he needs to give his total attention to something his father has to say. This cannot be done while texting, MP3-ing, phoning, gaming, face timing, etc...nor even if the son is doing these things! The way to a son's "heart" is through his "eyes" and "ears." Lean your ear toward your father; keep your eyes focused on these sayings; center your heart (mind) on these thoughts. In other words, let these guide your thoughts and actions in your future. These wise thoughts will provide "life" and "health," which means better living from now on. The healthiest sons are those who consume wisdom from their fathers.

### **Verses 23-27:**

**Verse 23: Heart**- "Keep it" is a way of saying "guard, protect it," "all diligence" means this should be a constant, daily effort. "The issues of life" are everything we think, say, see, and do, and who we are. Heart disease is the #1 killer of physical bodies, but heart disease is the #1 killer of souls, too! Jesus said, "those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man" ([Matthew 15:18](#)), but we may also act "as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart" ([Ephesians 6:6](#)).

**Verse 24: Mouth**-The mouth is to the heart what Facebook is to the world: a detailed diary. We should be "slow to speak" ([James 1:19](#)) because "the tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body" ([James 3:6](#)), so "if anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body" ([James 3:2](#)). "Deceitful" describes words designed to avoid "truth," and "perverse" indicates words that are out of control and without restraint, thus "an unruly evil" ([James 3:8](#)). This prompted Wisdom to say: "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverse mouth I hate" ([Proverbs 8:13](#)).

**Verse 25: Eyes**-The eyes must maintain their focus "straight ahead," meaning never take your eyes off of where you plan to go, or what you plan to do. Being distracted from God's Wise Way has been the ruin of humanity, from Adam ([Genesis 3:17](#)) to Demas ([2 Timothy 4:10](#)). "Eyelids" must remain open to see, this of course, a figurative application to the awareness of where one is going.



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**Verse 26-27: Feet-**“Ponder the path” means: “think, boy, think.” Think where this path is leading, who has taken this path, who is waiting to waylay you, and what you’ll be doing to yourself if you go this way. If we follow “established” ways, we will not spend our time and energies being rebellious, different, obstinate, or just plain “weird!” There are some wise things that have been proven wise for generations, and a wise son will learn them. Just because a father says them doesn’t make them wrong! Keeping on the right path, watching out for our feet, and never wavering or straying off the path is a formula for guaranteed success. In Ghana, West Africa, their saying is, “No bend, no curve.” Another quote on the subject is: *The greatest compliment you can pay truth is to accept and apply it.*

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