



## THE WARNINGS OF WISDOM TO PAY ATTENTION 4:1-27

*Solomon* in this chapter, with a great variety of expression, restates many of the things that he had already stated in the previous chapters. In this chapter he gives emphasis to some of the things he has already stated.

### I. THERE IS AN URGING TO ATTAIN WISDOM [verses 1-9]

In these verses he reaffirms and explains the command at the beginning [1:8].

**1. Acquire Wisdom [verses 1-2, 5, 7].** In verses 5, 7 there is the command to “*get wisdom*” To “*get*” is “*to obtain, receive, and procure*” IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EVERY CHILD OF GOD TO OBTAIN WISDOM! The way to achieve this is to “*bear.....instruction*” [verse 1], to “*attend*” (take part, pay attention) *to know* (to be convinced of) *understanding*” [verse 1], and “*forsake* (abandon) *ye not my law*” [verse 2], and remember [verse 5], and “*neither decline* (slide, fall) *from the words of my mouth*”

**2. Embrace Wisdom [verses 4, 8].** The words of “*wisdom*” must be retained-“*Let thine heart retain* (maintain and preserve) *my words*” [verse 4]. The rules of “*wisdom*” must be kept-“*keep* (beware, be circumspect, take heed) *my commandments*” [verse 4]. “*Wisdom*” is to be given a place of honor-“*Exalt* (hold in high esteem) *her*” [verse 8], and to be held securely-“*embrace* (clutch) *her*” [verse 8].

**3. Love And Cherish Wisdom-“*love her*” [verse 6].** There is to be a deep affection, an attachment, a devotion towards, and an endearment to heavenly “*wisdom*”

#### STEPS TO ACQUIRING WISDOM

Embrace Wisdom [verse 8]

Give Wisdom A Place Of Honor [verse 8]

Love Wisdom [verse 6]

Be Steadfast In The Words Of Wisdom [verse 5]

Remember Wisdom [verse 5]

Always Be Conscious Of The Commandments Of Wisdom [verse 4]

Retain The Words Of Wisdom [verse 4]

Abandon Not The Laws Of Wisdom [verse 2]

Take Part In And Pay Attention To Instruction [verse 1]

Hear Instruction [verse 1]

### II. THERE IS A WARNING TO KEEP WISDOM [verses 10-19]

**1. Another Command To Hear And To Receive Instruction [verses 10-12].**

Heavenly “*wisdom*” comes through the hearing of wise instruction, so the exhortation is repeated “*Hear, O my son*” [verse 10], but wise instruction must not only be heard, but **received-**“*and receive my sayings*” [verse 10]. THERE MUST BE A SPIRITUAL RECEIVING OF WISE INSTRUCTION! The value and benefit of **hearing** and **receiving** wise instruction:

☞ “*and the years of thy life shall be many*” [verse 10]. This goes back to what was said in [3:2], and speaks of a **useful, full, and joyful** life.

☞ “*When thou goest, thy steps (ordinary course) shall not be straitened*” [verse 12]. LIFE WILL NOT BE FILLED WITH INSURMOUNTABLE OBSTACLES IN THE WAY! Many obstacles are self-made through the neglect and refusal of wisdom’s instruction. In **hearing** and **receiving** wise instruction, steps are not hampered!

☞ “*and when thou runnest, (extraordinary undertakings) thou shalt not stumble*” [verse 12]. In **hearing** and **receiving** wise instruction, one is not tripped by the deceitfulness of sin, or by the snares and temptations of Satan.

## 2. Another Command To Hold Tight Wise Instruction [verse 13].

☞ “*Take (lay hold of) fast (secure, firm) hold (clutch, grip) of instruction*” These words show the **struggle** necessary to retain godly principle.

☞ “*let her not go: keep her*” This is another way of saying “*take fast hold of instruction*” and again reveals that there is a struggle and battle going on, that there is opposition.

☞ “*for she is thy life*” This is the **reason** or **encouragement** to hold tight, and not to let go of wise instruction and “*wisdom*”

## 3. A Warning Concerning A Specific Danger [verses 14-15].

The advice given in verses 14-15 follows the instruction given in verse 13. The idea is that fellowship with the “*wicked*” loosens the tight hold of godly instruction! Also failure to “*take fast hold of instruction*” will lead to fellowship with the “*wicked*”

☞ “*Enter not into the path of the wicked*” [verse 14]. To “*enter*” is to “*go or come in*” to “*gain admission*” to “*join*” to “*make oneself a party to*” The word translated “*wicked*” refers to that which is “*morally wrong and ungodly, that which is condemned*” The “*path of the wicked*” is so contrary to the way of God, that in order to enter into it, the way of God must be forsaken!

☞ “*and go not in the way of evil men*” [verse 14]. The previous warning was to not set the feet in the path of the wicked. Here, the warning is, that if you find yourself in “*the path of the wicked*” DO NOT CONTINUE IN SUCH A PATH!

☞ *“Avoid it, pass not by it”* [verse 15]. To *“avoid”* is to *“keep away from”* to *“refrain”* THAT WHICH LEADS TO OR EVEN BORDERS TEMPTATION MUST BE AVOIDED! The warning is KEEP A DISTANCE FROM SIN AND THAT WHICH WILL LEAD TO SIN!

☞ *“turn from it, and pass away”* [verse 15]. The child of God is to strive by God’s grace to avoid sin, to keep at a distance, but if for some reason they find themselves near it, they are to *“turn from it, and pass away”* THERE IS TO BE NO TAMPERING WITH SIN OR THAT WHICH MAY LEAD TO SIN!

---

The examples of *Lot* [Genesis 13:10-13; 14:12], of *Dinah* [Genesis 34:1-2], of *Solomon* [I Kings 11:1-5], and *Jehoshaphat* [II Chronicles 18:1-3; 19:2; 20:35-37], teach that NO ONE COMES OUT OF THE PATH OF THE WICKED WITHOUT HURT!

---

#### 4. The Practice Of The Wicked Described [verses 16-17, 19].

These verses are written to encourage the people of God to take heed to the warnings of verses 14-15.

#### 5. The Path Of The Just Described [verse 18].

This also is written to encourage God’s people not to enter *“the path of the wicked”* or go *“in the way of evil men”* to avoid such a path, and to turn from it.

☞ *“But (in contrast to the wicked) the path of the just (righteous and wise), is as the shining light”* This suggests beauty, glory, gladness, and order.

☞ *“that shineth more and more unto the perfect day”* This speaks of the spiritual progress and growth of such who walk in this path [Job 17:9; Psalm 92:12].

### III. THERE IS A WARNING TO EARNESTLY PAY ATTENTION [verses 20-27]

#### 1. Give Attention To Sound Instruction [verse 20].

In light of what is said concerning the path of the *“wicked”* this serves as a warning, to pay special attention to, and to listen carefully to wise instruction.

#### 2. Keep Sound Instruction Before Thee [verse 21-22].

☞ *“Let them (my words and sayings) not depart from thine eyes”* [verse 21]. After hearing wise instruction, one must be constantly looking to it to govern the life.

☞ *“keep them (my words and sayings) in the midst of thine heart”* [verse 21]. This is more than a superficial acquaintance with the instruction of God’s Word. ONLY IN THE HEART WILL THE WORD OF GOD BE OPERATIVE!

☞ “For *they* (my words and sayings) *are life* (the means of) *unto those that find them, and health* (medicine) *to all their flesh*” [verse 22]. This is said by way of encouragement to follow what is said in verse 21.

### 3. Pay Close Attention To The Heart [verse 23].

☞ “Keep (guard and garrison) *thy heart* (inward thoughts, motions and affections), *with all diligence*” (haste, perseverance, conscientiousness). The “*heart*” has reference to “*the whole inner being*” It is that which “*controls and gives character to all that we do*” It is “*the source of all human conduct*” There is never a time when it is not to be guarded diligently because it is prone to go astray. This is a work that is **personal**, it is **definite**, it is **urgent**, it is **imperative**, it is **difficult** and **hard**, it is a **constant** work, and it is a **worthwhile** work.

- There are many instructions concerning the “*heart*” in the book of Proverbs:

Apply The Heart To Understanding [2:2; 22:17; 23:12]

Keep Commandments [3:1; 4:4, 21]

Write Commandments On It [3:3; 7:3]

Trust In The Lord With It [3:5]

Bind Commandments Upon It [6:21]

Do Not Lust In It [6:25]

Be Wise In It [11:29; 16:21]

Retain Wisdom In It [14:33]

Be Merry In Heart [15:13, 15]

Apply It To Instruction [23:12]

- The “*heart*” is to be kept from becoming:

Discouraged [Numbers 32:7-9; 35:5]

Obstinate [Deuteronomy 2:30]

Proud [Deuteronomy 8:14; Psalm 101:5]

Wicked [Deuteronomy 15:9]

Froward [Proverbs 11:20; 12:8]

Fretting [Proverbs 19:3; 24:19]

Bitter [Ezekiel 27:31]

Uncircumcised [Ezekiel 44:7]

Foolish And Darkened [Romans 1:21]

Impenitent [Romans 1:21; 2:5]

Hard [Deuteronomy 15:7; Psalm 95:8]

Covetous [Jeremiah 22:17; II Peter 2:14]

Double [James 4:8]

- The “*heart*” is to be kept in order to be:

Willing [Exodus 25:2; 35:5, 29]  
 Trembling [Isaiah 66:2]  
 Perfect [I Kings 8:61; I Chronicles 29:9]  
 Tender [II Kings 22:19; II Chronicles 34:27; Ephesians 4:32]  
 Soft [I Samuel 24:5; Job 23:16]  
 Pure [Psalm 24:4; Matthew 5:8]  
 Upright [Psalm 32:11; 36:10; 64:10]  
 Clean [Psalm 51:10; 73:1; Proverbs 20:9]  
 Fixed [Psalm 57:7; 112:7]  
 Meek And Lowly [Matthew 11:29]  
 Honest And Good [Luke 8:15]  
 Single [Acts 2:46; Ephesians 6:5]  
 True [Hebrews 10:22]  
 Compassionate [Psalm 55:4; Jeremiah 4:19]

☞ *“for out of it (the heart) are the issues of life”* Give the utmost attention to your heart, because **thoughts** are formed there, **purposes** are planned there, **words** originate there, and **actions** proceed from there.

#### 4. Pay Close Attention To The Mouth [verse 24].

☞ *“Put away from thee a froward (disobedient and adverse) mouth”*

☞ *“and perverse (corrupt, improper, incorrect, obstinate) lips put far from thee”* **Froward** and **perverse** lips would include:

- **Vain talk**-That which is *“empty, idle, and worthless”* [I Timothy 6:20; II Timothy 2:16].
- **Backbiting**-That which is *“malicious or false when one is not present, to talk behind someone’s back”* [Psalm 15:1-3; Proverbs 25:23].
- **Slander**-*“The utterance of false charges or misrepresentations which defame and damage another’s reputation”* [Psalm 101:5].
- **Hasty Speech**-That which is *“without thought”* [Proverbs 29:20].
- **Irreverent Speech**-That which *“lacks proper respect or seriousness”* [Malachi 3:13].

---

The best way to guard the **“mouth”** is to **“Keep thy heart with all diligence”** This will cause one’s words to be right, and right words have **power and influence** [Job 6:25; Proverbs 15:1; 25:15], are **pleasant and helpful** [Proverbs 16:24], are **appropriate and beautiful** [Proverbs 25:11], are **gracious** [Ecclesiastes 10:12], and are **comforting** [Isaiah 50:4].

---

#### 5. Pay Close Attention To The Eyes [verse 25].

DO NOT GET DISTRACTED! Keep looking straight ahead! Keep your eyes on the straight and narrow path.

**6. Pay Close Attention To The Feet [verse 26].** The word *“ponder”* means to *“weigh in the mind”* to *“reflect and think upon”* to *“contemplate and consider”* There are many traps laid, therefore it is of necessity that one carefully consider their steps. EVERY STEP MUST BE CAREFULLY CONSIDERED! Every step should be estimated by its conformity to the known will of God.

**7. Shun Evil [verse 27].**

☞ *“Turn not to the right hand nor to the left”* DO NOT MAKE THE SLIGHTEST TURN TOWARD ERROR [Deuteronomy 5:32; 28:14; Joshua 1:7].

☞ *“remove thy foot from evil”* KEEP A DISTANCE FROM EVIL [Job 28:28; Psalm 34:14; 97:10; Proverbs 14:16; Romans 12:9; I Corinthians 10:6; I Peter 3:11].

---

We are reminded in this chapter of the danger of the neglect of that which is spiritual and that which tends to heavenly *“wisdom”* The key to guarding the **mouth**, the **eyes**, the **feet**, and the key to **shunning** evil is *“Keep thy heart with all diligence”*

---