

How Shall the Young Secure Their Hearts?

Psalm 119:9

INTRODUCTION:

- A. One of the songs, written by Isaac Watts _____ ago in 1719, begins with the phrase and question, “How shall the young secure their hearts?” Must have been a concern then. # _____ in our present song book.
- B. Let’s define the terms of this lesson title.
- “How” – “in what manner or way”
 - “Shall” – “will be able to”
 - “The” – “Definite article used as a function word before a noun or a substantivized adjective to indicate reference to a group as a whole” . . . in this case, the group of youth.
 - “Young” – “Being in the first or an early stage of life, growth, or development . . . Having little experience.”
 - “Secure” – Free from danger . . . free from risk of loss . . . affording safety . . . a secure hideaway . . . a secure foundation” that is trustworthy and dependable”
 - “Their” – As a member of an age range known as you, but still as an individual, you have a biblical heart . . . You have a soul!
 - “Heart” – Here we turn to the Creator, not Webster: the spiritual heart . . . mind . . . soul
- C. No doubt, Isaac Watts had **Psalm 119:9** in mind when he penned these verses of “How Shall the Young Secure their hearts.”
- “How can a young man cleanse his way?” (NKJV)
 - “How can a young man keep his way pure?” (NASB)
 - “How can a young person live a pure life?” (New Century Version)
 - “How can a young person live a clean life? (The Message)
- D. The answer appears right after the question:
- “By taking heed according to Your word.” (NKJV)
 - “By keeping it according to Your word.” (NASB)
 - “By living according to Your word.” (NIV)
 - “By guarding it according to Your word.” (ESV)
 - “By keeping Your word.” (HCSB)
 - “By obeying Your word.” (New Century Version)
 - “By carefully reading the map of Your word.” (The Message)
- E. In this study we want to share some exhortations to our young people (and some of our not as young, young people) as to how to keep our lives and hearts pure.
- As we give encouragement to our young people, much will also apply to all age groups as well.

2. When many of us were young and going to Sunday School there was a good bit of emphasis put on the memorization of Scripture, and also on the books of the Bible.
 - a. “Love your neighbor.”
 - b. “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”
 - c. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”
 - d. “Children obey your parents in the Lord for this is right
 3. As we got older, we were encouraged to memorize more passages, relevant to new struggles we would be facing:
 - a. “Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. **2 Timothy 2:22**
 - b. “Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil.” **Ephesians 4:26-27**
 - a. We need passages like these because of the oppositions we would be facing to secure our hearts.
 - b. **Illustration:** When the water rises a little bit, you do not need as many sandbags as when it begins to rise a lot.
 4. Much will be involved to secure your heart . . .
 - a. It will take the effort of the child, adolescent, or teenager.
 - b. It will take the effort of the parent
 - c. It will take the combined effort of parent and child
 - d. It will take the combined effort of parent and child and church
 - e. It will take the combined effort of parents, child, church, and God!
 5. Each of these efforts will be opposed by any and all forces and individuals that do not want your heart to be secured with God.
 - a. Satan foremost
 - b. Many of your peers
 - c. Many of your friends
 - d. Many others
 6. May God’s Word reach out to you ... And, may you reach back to it.
- F. Statistics . . . Current at one time.
- Look at what happens each day in the lives of American youth in the United States . . .
- **2,795** Teens become pregnant
 - **372** Teens miscarry
 - **1,106** Teens get abortions
 - **1,295** Teens give birth
 - **689** Babies are born at low birth weight
 - **67** Babies die before they are one month old
 - **105** Babies die before their first birthday
 - **27** Die from poverty

- **10** Children are killed by guns
- **30** Are wounded by guns
- **6** Teens commit suicide
- **135,000** Bring a gun to class
- **7,742** Teens become sexually active
- **623** Teens contact a Venereal Disease
- **211** Are arrested for drugs
- **437** Are arrested for drunk driving
- **1,512** Drop out of school
- **1,849** Children are abused or neglected
- **3,288** Run away from home
- **1,629** Children are in adult jails
- **2,556** Babies are born to single parents
- **2,989** Children see their parents divorce.

G. Drugs and Alcohol.

- a. Use of alcohol:
 1. 8th grade = 30%
 2. 10th grade = 45%
 3. 12th grade = 53% use alcohol.
- b. 32% of teenagers report having been drunk in last 30 days.
- c. 30,400 annual deaths involving drugs & alcohol (mostly automobile accidents)

H. Sexual Immorality 5,000,000 teenagers contract STD's each year.

I. Suicide The 3rd leading cause of death among teenagers.

- a. A wealthy/popular college student took his life several years ago. He left a note, *"I'm sick & tired of having so much fun."*
- b. Like Kurt Cobain or Anna Nicole Smith, he had all the money, sex & drugs one could want - and was miserable.

J. Young people, if you truly want to secure your heart . . . You can! But there are some things you are going to need.

- a. The right Foundation to make it work
- b. Parents and others willing to take the time to listen, advise, and help.
- c. Understand the importance of responsibility, because whether you understand responsibility or not . . . Ultimately, you will be the one responsible.
- d. The Right Companions. It is easier to find wrong ones than to find right ones.
- e. The Right Opportunities . . . And these must be willfully sought.

K. Five major exhortations will be set forth over the course of our studies:

1. **Separate** yourself.
2. **Surrender** yourself.
3. **Deny** yourself.

4. **Stand** Strong.
5. **Develop** yourself.

SEPARATE YOURSELF

A. From **PLACES** of sin.

1. Like Nehemiah, refuse to go down to the plain of Ono where detractors from God's will are.
2. Some places are detrimental to your spiritual health.

B. From **PEOPLE** of sin.

1. **2 Corinthians 6:14** – “Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? ”
2. Choose your friends wisely. They have a strong influence over you.
1 Corinthians 15:33 – “Do not be deceived: Bad company ruins good morals.” (ESV)”

C. From the **POWER** of sin.

1. Don't be conformed to this world. Don't join with the world. Don't love the world.
 - a. **Romans 12:2** – “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is-his good, pleasing and perfect will.”
 - b. **1 John 2:15 – 17** – “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.
For all that is in the world -- the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life -- is not of the Father but is of the world.
And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”

D. From the **PRACTICE** of sin.

1. As the apostle Paul said to Timothy, “Keep yourself pure.” **1 Timothy 5:22**
2. Purge yourself from sin. Cleanse yourself. **2 Corinthians 7:1** – “Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.”
3. Don't tamper or meddle with sin. if you do, you will get burned.
Proverbs 6:27 – “Can a man scoop fire into his lap without his clothes being burned?”

E. From all **APPEARANCE** of evil. **1 Thessalonians 5:22** – “Abstain from every form of evil.”

1. Be wise enough to identify things that are harmful to your soul and avoid them.

2. Satan will disguise evil to look good. God’s Word uncovers evil to reveal that it is bad.
3. To know good one must know God.

SURRENDER YOURSELF

A. Surrender your TIME.

1. Use your time wisely. **Ephesians 5:15-16** – “Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.”
2. Time is a precious resource. Once lost it can never be reclaimed.
3. For example: It is difficult to comprehend the amount of time wasted from watching television. This is not to suggest that all television viewing is wasteful.
 - a. By the age of 20, the average American will have been exposed to at least 20,000 hours of television.
 - b. Calculate for a moment what could have been done with even a part of those hours.
 1. 5,000 hours are what a typical college undergraduate student spends working on a bachelor’s degree.
 2. In 10,000 hours, you could have learned enough to become a doctor, lawyer, or an engineer.
 3. In that time you could have learned to speak several languages fluently.
 4. You could have had enough time to walk completely around the world and written two books about it.

B. Surrender your SPEECH.

1. Discipline yourself to have pure speech. Learn to have a spiritual vocabulary. **Ephesians 4:29** – “Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. ”
2. Speech is a window to one’s heart. Through one’s speech you can see what the person really is like. **Proverbs 4:23** – “Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.”

C. Surrender your THOUGHTS.

1. Physically speaking, you are what you eat. Spiritually speaking, you are what you think.
2. We must strive to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. **2 Corinthians 10:5** – “Casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.”
3. We should strive to have the mind of Christ. **Philippians 2:5** – “Let this

mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.”

D. Because all these things are a part of being a Christian, Satan will attack them in order to remove you from Christ.

DENY YOURSELF

A. Observe the words of Jesus in **Luke 9:23**. Four profound Ds in this verse:

1. **DECISION** - “If anyone desires to come after Me.” We must make a choice.
2. **DENIAL** - “Let him deny himself.” We must be willing to sacrifice.
3. **DEDICATION** - “And take up his cross daily.” We must make continual commitment.
4. **DETERMINATION** - “And follow me.” We must follow the Lord wherever He leads.
 - a. In **Matthew 4:19**, the Lord told those early disciples, “Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.”
 - b. The next verse says “They immediately left their nets and followed him.”
Matthew 4:20

B. Deny yourself of **PRIDE**.

1. Notice this wisdom from a poster: “Attention Teenagers - If you are tired of being hassled by unreasonable parents, now is the time for action! Leave home and pay your own way while you still know everything!”
2. It seldom occurs to teens that someday they will know as little as their parents.
3. **Illustration:** The following was written by an unknown author. It is very true to life.
 - 4 years of age - My mommy can do anything.
 - 8 years of age - My mom knows a lot . . . A whole lot.
 - 12 years of age - My mother doesn't know quite everything.
 - 14 years of age - Mother doesn't know anything.
 - 16 years of age - Mom is hopelessly old-fashioned.
 - 18 years of age - I know so much more than mom does.
 - 25 years of age - It's amazing how mom has gotten wiser.
 - 35 years of age - Before we decide, let's get Mom's opinion.
 - 45 years of age - What would Mom have thought about it?
 - 65 years of age - Wish I could talk it over with Mom.

C. Deny yourself of **INTEREST** that is solely of yourself.

1. Instead of being wrapped up in your own interest, learn to genuinely submit to your parents, and love them.
2. **Ephesians 6:1-3** – “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is

right. Honor your father and mother' (this is the first commandment with a promise), that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.”

2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Consider this old illustration: Ancient history records that a certain city was besieged, and at length was encouraged to surrender. In the city were two brothers to whom, in some way, the conquering king was indebted. As a result, they received permission to leave the city before it was destroyed, taking with them as much of their property as each could carry on his person. Accordingly, the two young men appeared at the gate of the city, one of them carrying their father, and the other their mother.

KEEP YOURSELF STANDING STRONG . . . TAKE A STRONG STAND

- A. Make your own stand for the Lord. **Ephesians 6:10** – “. . . Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.”
 1. Have purpose of heart like Daniel. Daniel 1:8
 - a. Approximately 70 years later, Daniel’s purposed to live for God delivered him safely from the den of lions.
 - b. He made a commitment and there was no turning back.
 - c. The first major step is to make that commitment.
- B. Make your stand for the lord as did the three Hebrews in Daniel 3:24-27
 1. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were gladly willing to make a stand even though they knew full well it would cost them their lives.
 2. Joshua made his stand. **Joshua 24:15** – “Choose this day whom you will serve . . . But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”
- C. Make your own stand for the Lord when various problems arise.
 1. Put on the whole armor of God for that which the evil one will send forth to do battle with you. Ephesians 6:13
 2. If we don’t make our own stand for the Lord, and his cause, He will not be compelled to stand on our behalf in the great day of judgment. Mark 8:34-38

DEVELOP YOURSELF

- A. Develop your own **SPIRITUAL RELATIONSHIP** with God—God’s way.
 1. Make God a vital part of your life.
 - a. **Ecclesiastes 12:1** – “Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come and the years approach when you will say, ‘I find no pleasure in them’”
 - b. **Proverbs 3:6-7** – In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil.”

- c. **Isaiah 40:29-30** – “He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall.”

2. It is your decision as to how you will develop.

B. WORSHIP God regularly.

- 1. Make up your mind that you will, and that you will do it for the rest of your life.
- 2. Worship with the people of God as commanded in the Scriptures.

C. STUDY the Word of God for yourself. Psalm 119:9

- 1. “Speak Lord, for your servant hears.” **1 Samuel 3:10**
- 2. “Buy the truth and sell it not.” **Proverbs 23:23** Look at that complete verse.
 - a. “Buy wisdom and sell it not”
 - b. “Buy instruction and sell it not.”
 - c. “Buy understanding and sell it not.”

D. TRAIN yourself.

- 1. Don’t be a weak, sick, lukewarm Christian.
- 2. Develop yourself into a knowledgeable, capable teacher of God’s Word.
- 3. By doing this, you will make yourself strong, and through the years come
And you will lead others to salvation.

E. WORK for the Lord.

- 1. Be a ready volunteer in the Lord’s service.
- 2. Put your heart and soul into it and do it.
- 3. **Psalm 110:3** – “. . . You have the dew of your youth.”

CONCLUSION:

- A. To our young people we say, “May the eternal God richly bless you in every good way, as well as all of us, as we endeavor to do His will.
 - 1. It is our hope and our prayers, that all of our youth grow and develop so that things will always be well with your soul.
- B. And in the ages to come, when these bodies of ours have long since been laid to rest, may we stand together on Mt. Zion, singing the new song of Moses and the lamb.
 - 1. When asked, “Who are these arrayed in white robes before the throne?”
 - 2. The answer will come. “These are the redeemed from the earth who followed the lamb wherever He went.”
 - 3. “These are those who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb.”
- C. Being a faithful Christian in your youth and from thereon, will spare you a mountain of regrets shared by others who waited to obey the Gospel until much later in life.

1. Bill Murray - “I wish I had done it much earlier.”
2. Many have said - “I wish I had been a Christian while my children were little so I could have taught them and brought them up in the church.”

D. A final look at our lesson text.

1. The question has an answer.
2. The answer goes unnoticed.
3. The question: “**How can a young man cleanse his way?**”
4. The answer: “**By taking heed according to Your (God’s) word.**”
5. That answer is what we have been trying to share with you.

Ecclesiastes 12:1 - “Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, “I have no pleasure in them.”

E. **God’s Plan for Man’s Salvation**