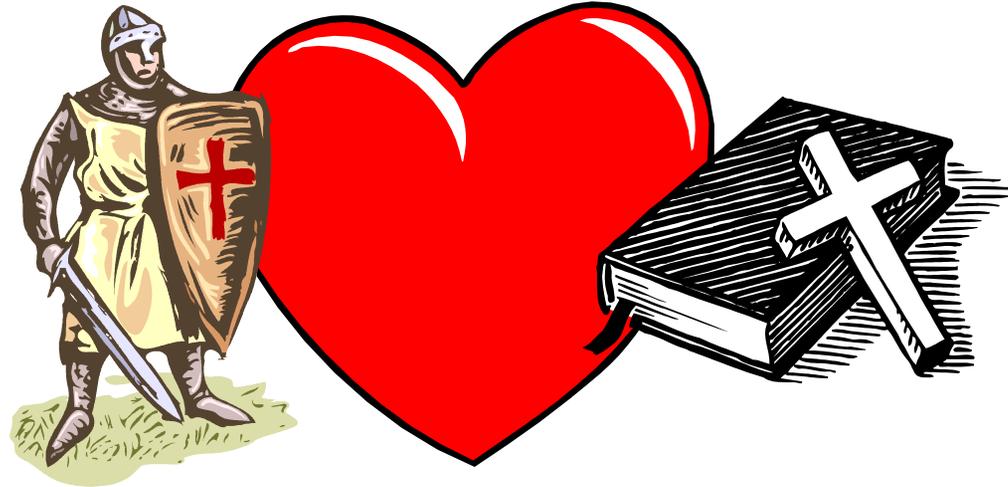


Guard Your Heart with God's Word



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By guarding it according to your word...
I have stored up your word in my heart,
that I might not sin against you.

- Psalm 119:9, 11

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These verses ask one of the most important questions in the Christian life. "How can a young man keep his way pure?" Sin pollutes our hearts, our minds, and sometimes even our bodies. How can we avoid the pollution of sin and, instead, learn to live in a way that pleases God? By *knowing* and *obeying* God's Word.

First, we must guard ourselves with the Word. This means doing what God tells us to do in the Bible. We must learn to say "NO" to sins like selfishness, unkind words, and anger. We must say "YES" to loving God and others, to encouraging words, and to obeying our parents. Just as mom or dad protects us by warning us, "Don't touch that stove, it's hot," God protects us from sin and the consequences of sin as we obey his Word.

Second, we want to store up God's Word in our hearts so we know his commands. Memorizing the Bible allows us to take God's Word with us wherever we go, so we can obey God in any situation. Remember when Jesus was tempted in the wilderness? He used God's words to resist the lies of the devil. We can, too. A wise Sunday school teacher once said, "The Bible will keep you from sin." It will, if you store it up in your heart and learn to do what it says.

Does this mean we can be saved by our obedience? No. The Bible says we fail to obey God every day. We cannot earn our salvation through our own obedience. We can only be saved by trusting in Jesus. When we do, God gives us his Spirit who helps us understand and obey his Word. So, these verses don't tell us how to be saved, but rather how we live the Christian life once we are saved.