

Straight Eyes in a Crooked World

Proverbs 4:20–27; Psalm 119:9

October 29, 2025

“You can’t stop the birds from flying over your head,” Martin Luther said, “but you can keep them from building a nest.”

Likewise, you can’t stop temptation from flying through your feed—but you can keep it from taking residence in your heart.

How Can We Keep Our Way Pure?

Psalm 119:9 asks the same question:

[9] *How can a young man keep his way pure?
By guarding it according to your word.* (ESV)

Purity isn’t passive—it requires attention, intention, and action.

1. Recognize What Pornography Is—and Reject Its Story

Temptation always comes wrapped in a lie. Porn promises satisfaction but delivers emptiness. It’s built on **self-gratification**, not **sacrificial love**.

- Porn takes what’s sacred and turns it into something you can scroll past.
- It trains the brain to see people as **products, not persons**—turning image-bearers of God into objects for consumption.

Action Steps

- **Call it what it is** — loneliness dressed up as lust.
- **Renew your vision** — study God’s Word on love and covenant (*see Proverbs 7:6–27 for the story of seduction*).
- **Remember:** God’s Word gives life; porn drains life. The high fades, but holiness endures.

Principle:

There’s no neutral ground—everything you let take root will grow.

2. Guard Your Heart—Because Nothing You Let In Leaves You Unchanged

Before sin becomes an action, it starts as an affection.

Your heart is the **soil of your soul**—what you plant will eventually produce fruit.

Action Steps

- **Audit what you allow in.** What seeds are you planting through music, media, or relationships?
- **Set boundaries before the battle.** Decide now what you'll watch, click, and tolerate.
- **Pray:** "Lord, uproot what poisons me and plant what pleases You."

Principle:

An unguarded heart will always numb the conscience.

3. Guard Your Words—Because What Flows Out Finds Its Way Back In

Our words don't just reveal our hearts—they reshape them.

Jesus said, "*Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.*" (Matthew 12:34)

Action Steps

- **Purge perverse humor and flattery.** Speech tills the soil of your heart.
- **Use your tongue to bless, not to bait.** Speak life into others.
- **Confess quickly.** Sin rots faster in silence; freedom begins with honesty.

Principle:

Seal your speech—every word protects or poisons your heart.

4. Fix Your Eyes—Because Direction Follows Focus

What your eyes linger on, your life leans toward.

Distraction is often the first detour from devotion.

Action Steps

- **When temptation flashes, redirect—don’t linger.** What you feed grows stronger.
- **Fix your eyes on Jesus.** Purity isn’t found by looking away from sin, but by looking toward Him.
- **Trade wandering for wonder.** Look long enough at holiness, and you’ll start to hunger for it.

Principle:

You’ll always move in the direction you look.

5. Watch Your Steps—Because Every Path Leads Somewhere

Sin rarely happens in a single step—it’s a slow drift down a well-worn path. Patterns become prisons when we ignore where they lead.

Action Steps

- **Identify where your path bends**—the times, places, people, or patterns that pull you off course.
- **Flee instead of flirt.** Temptation doesn’t need a conversation; it needs a closed door.
- **Walk with others guarding the same ground.** Purity grows stronger in community.

Principle:

The Spirit always provides a way out—wisdom is choosing to take it.

Closing Thought

You can’t live with “straight eyes” in a crooked world unless your focus is fixed on Jesus. Guard your heart, guard your eyes, guard your steps—because purity isn’t just about saying *no* to sin; it’s about saying *yes* to a better story.