

How Shall The Young Secure Their Hearts

1. How shall the young secure their hearts,
And guard their lives from sin?
Thy Word the choicest rules imparts
To keep the conscience clean.

2. Tis like the sun, a heavenly light,
That guides us all the day,
And through the dangers of the night,
A lamp to lead our way.

3. Thy Word is everlasting truth;
How pure is every page!
That holy Book shall guide our youth,
And well support our age.

How Shall the Young Secure Their Hearts is the title of this familiar hymn. It is # 253 in our song book. It was written by Isaac Watts in 1719 and begins with the phrase, "How shall the young secure their hearts?" This was a concern almost 300 years ago. It is still a concern today.

The question "How shall the young secure their hearts and guard their lives from sin?" is answered powerfully and clearly in this song. "Thy Word is everlasting truth; how pure is every page! That holy Book shall guide our youth and well support our age." How true!

No doubt, this is from **Psalms 119:9**. (Scripture reading)
"How can a young man cleanse his way?" (NKJV)
"How can a young man keep his way pure?" (NASB)

Psalms 119:9-16 - "9 How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.
10 With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!
11 Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You.
12 Blessed are You, O Lord! Teach me Your statutes.
13 With my lips I have declared all the judgments of Your mouth.
14 I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, as much as in all riches.
15 I will meditate on Your precepts, and contemplate Your ways.
16 I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word."

In **Psalms 119**, the longest chapter of the Bible, the Psalmist asks the question, "How can a young man cleanse his way?" Another way of saying that is, How can young people keep their life pure? By looking at this passage, we can discover how the youth can secure their faith through God's Word. This lesson can help our young people and some of us not so young to keep our lives and hearts pure.

We live in a time in which our children are more bombarded with temptations of evil than ever before. More and more young people leave the church (about half of them on average between 18 and 25 years old).

Why will half of the church's 18-year-olds be unfaithful to God by the age of 25?

This is the age when their parents' faith must give way to their own. If it is not there, the parents' faith will fade and nothing will replace it.

So what can we do to stop this trend and keep our young people pure and faithful?
It takes strong parenting, great discipline, and encouragement from everyone in the church.

This lesson will discuss what parents can do, the child's responsibility, and how the church can support the family.

This is a **three-way responsibility** involving the church, the parents, and young people.

1. The church must support the family in developing our young people to serve God.

Ephesians 4:11-12 teaches that the leadership of the church must equip the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Our young people are an important part of the body. We must make their involvement and participation one of our priorities.

- Bible knowledge through worship and Bible classes.
- Training classes. **Titus 2:1-8** commands that the spiritually mature members are to teach and train our young men and women how to live godly lives.
- Fellowship activities like our monthly youth events.
- Fort Hill Christian Youth Camp.
- Area youth events with other congregations.

2. Parents have the primary responsibility.

The best way for a child to grow up spiritually strong with his heart secure is for him to be led by great parents who love God as well. This must begin as early as possible in a child's life.

God has left this plan for us to follow. Children need to be taught daily at home. Some favorite verses of mine in **Deuteronomy 6:5-9** illustrate this point. ⁵You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. ⁶And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. ⁷You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. ⁸You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

What a responsibility! Children depend on their parents. **Proverb 22:6** tells us, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." How can this responsibility be fulfilled when parents spend no time with their children? How can our young people grow strong without proper teaching? They can't! How can we have time to study about God when everyone is glued to the TV set 3-9 hours a day? It's impossible! God's Word is important. New Christians, children, and young people must be taught the Word. They must have a steadfast anchor. God's word should be to us as "The sun, a heavenly light, that guides us all the day and through the dangers of the night, a lamp to lead our way."

If we want our children to stay faithful, they need to grow up seeing their parents remaining faithful. There is not much that one resents more than being told by a parent something that the parent does not want to do. "Do as I say, not as I do."

If you want your children to be at church, go to church.

If you want them at Bible class, go to Bible class.

If we want our children to be faithful, they must be well disciplined.

I have seen people who taught their toddler to say curse words because it was cute to hear them.

I have seen people refuse to scold a child for not being obedient, just because he's being a kid.

These are the children who often grow up to be unfaithful and noncommittal when it comes to life.

We must teach our children to love.

We must teach our children to get along with other people.

We must teach our children that education is important.

We must teach our children to treat their families well.

3. Young people have personal responsibility.

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":" (Scripture reading)

Moses – Spent most of his early life in a foster family. He did not speak well. He was still responsible to make the right decisions.

Joseph – Lived in a family where his brothers hated him and his parents misunderstood him. He was falsely accused and spent time in prison. He still determined to make the most of his life and the best of the situation.

My early life.

Our environment and upbringing affect our direction, but we must personally choose whether or not to go the right way or the wrong way. We still have to make the right decisions.

Lack of parental involvement, rough childhoods, and other things like that are no excuse.

God commands us to keep his commands diligently.

Romans 10:17 – Faith comes from reading, hearing, studying Scripture.

Psalms 119:34 – "Give me understanding, and I shall keep your law; indeed I shall observe it with my whole heart."

We must seek to know and grow in knowledge. We will not be put to shame if we have our eyes fixed on His commands.

Psalms 119:101 - "I have restrained my feet from every evil way, that I may keep Your word."

Christians must be grounded firmly in our beliefs. We must always search the Bible to make sure we are doing what is "right and acceptable in the sight of the Lord." Perhaps this is one of the many reasons why new Christians, and often young people fall away from the faith. They aren't grounded firm in the Word of God. They don't really have "an anchor of the soul" which is both "sure and steadfast" - **Heb. 6:19**. By reading and studying the Bible, one can know how to keep his conscience clean. You will know how to stand up and defend the faith.

Young people must guard themselves to have a pure soul.

We must have a soul that is filled with spiritual things and is undefiled with the cares of this world. One way to have a pure soul is to stay away from evil companions. I'm sure you have heard, "Evil company corrupt good habits." - **1 Cor. 15:33**. Peer pressure can ruin a person, but when one has good companions, peer pressure can be good. Our soul and mind are to be clean and not defiled by things that are not acceptable in God's eyes. Christians must stay away from filthy movies, bad language, and suggestive music along with many other things. Not just people are "evil company." Television is bad company at times, magazines can be, as well as music and books.

Also, **1 Timothy 6:11** instructs us to "flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and gentleness." How can young people or any Christians secure their hearts and guard themselves from sin when they are continually around evil company? It's impossible!

We must avoid the:

1. Places of sin.

Some places are harmful to your spiritual health.

2. People of sin.

Choose your friends wisely. They have a strong influence over you.

3. Power of sin.

Don't be conformed to this world. Don't join with the world. Don't love the world.

Romans 12:2 - "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

1 John 2:15-17 - "¹⁵Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For 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. ¹⁷ And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever."

4. Practice of sin.

As the apostle Paul said to Timothy in **1 Timothy 5:22**, "Keep yourself pure."

Don't tamper or meddle with sin. If you do, you will get burned.

Proverbs 6:27 - "Can a man take fire to his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?"

1 Thessalonians 5:22 - "Abstain from every form of evil."

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

Satan will disguise evil to look good. God's Word uncovers evil to reveal what is bad.

Develop yourself.

Develop your own **spiritual relationship** with God - God's way.

Make God a vital part of your life.

Worship God regularly.

Make up your mind that you will, and that you will do it for the rest of your life.

Worship with the people of God as commanded in the Scriptures.

Study the Word of God for yourself.

Train yourself.

Develop yourself into a knowledgeable, capable teacher of God's Word.

By doing this, you will make yourself strong, and through the years come you will lead others to salvation.

Work for the Lord.

Be a ready volunteer in the Lord's service.

Put your heart and soul into it and do it.

Conclusion

It is my hope and prayer that all of our young people grow and develop so that things will always be well with their soul.

As a church we must provide full support for our families.

As a parent or anyone who has influence over children, make sure that Godly values and principles are deeply ingrained in their characters.

If you are still young, apply these things to your life. Make God a priority. Seek assistance whether you think you need it or not. We must grow together. Be sincere about Christianity.

Let the Scriptures be a lamp to your feet and a light unto your path.

Being a faithful Christian in your youth will spare you a mountain of regrets.

The question: How shall the young secure your hearts?

The answer: By living according to God's word.

Only through being strong God's Word can a young person have a hope of surviving the temptations of the teenage and early adult years.

Start by knowing and obeying God's plan for salvation.

Mark 16:16

Acts 2:38-42