

“Whoever winks with their eye is plotting perversity; whoever purses their lips is bent on evil.”

Proverbs 16:30 (NIV)

Understanding the Verse

At first glance, Proverbs 16:30 might seem like a simple warning about body language. But there's much more here than meets the eye.

This verse isn't condemning the physical act of winking or keeping silent; it's addressing the heart attitude behind subtle and deceptive behavior. To interpret this correctly, we need to look at the broader message of Proverbs and the Bible as a whole.

Misconceptions Clarified

Some might think this verse teaches that closing your eyes leads to evil thoughts. But if that were the case, closing our eyes in prayer would be wrong! In fact, closing one's eyes or keeping quiet can be acts of wisdom or reverence, depending on the context.

For example, when confronted with something sinful, shameful, or violent, a godly person may choose to look away rather than entertain or glorify evil. This was demonstrated by Shem and Japheth, the sons of Noah:

“But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it across their shoulders; then they walked in backward and covered their father’s naked body. Their faces were turned the other way so that they would not see their father naked.”

Genesis 9:23 (NIV)

Here, they showed honor by deliberately choosing not to look at what was shameful. In contrast, Proverbs 16:30 is not about this kind of righteous behavior but about someone who intentionally avoids the truth so they can continue in sin.

Spiritual Blindness and Willful Ignorance

The first part of the verse “*winks with their eye is plotting perversity*” symbolizes someone who uses subtle gestures to manipulate or deceive. But more deeply, it describes someone

who closes their eyes to spiritual truth.

“They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.”

Ephesians 4:18 (NIV)

Just like those who rejected Jesus during His earthly ministry, this person refuses to see or acknowledge God's truth, even when it's clearly presented. Jesus Himself said:

*“For this people’s heart has become calloused;
they hardly hear with their ears,
and they have closed their eyes.
Otherwise they might see with their eyes,
hear with their ears,
understand with their hearts
and turn, and I would heal them.”*

Matthew 13:15 (NIV)

When someone chooses to ignore God's Word especially its calls to repentance they are, in essence, "winking" at sin, dismissing conviction, and continuing down a destructive path.

What About the Lips?

The second part of Proverbs 16:30 says: "*Whoever purses their lips is bent on evil.*"

This isn't a warning against silence itself Proverbs elsewhere praises those who guard their speech:

"Those who guard their mouths and their tongues keep themselves from calamity."

Proverbs 21:23 (NIV)

Rather, this is a warning about a person who withholds good, life giving speech, refusing to speak truth, correction, or encouragement. Instead of edifying others, their silence becomes complicit in evil, or eventually gives way to harmful and wicked words.

This aligns with Jesus' teaching in Luke:

"A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of."

Luke 6:45 (NIV)

Your speech reveals what fills your heart. If your heart is not surrendered to God, your words will eventually reflect it.

Self-Examination and the Need for Christ

This verse challenges us to ask: What do our eyes focus on truth or deception? What do our lips express life or destruction?

But more importantly: Is our heart surrendered to Christ?

Because the truth is, you cannot control your eyes or your tongue unless Jesus Christ reigns in your heart. You may try to be moral or well-mannered, but only the transforming power of the Holy

Spirit can purify your motives and actions from the inside out.

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

Do You Want Help from Jesus?

If your heart is stirring and you desire change, there's good news. Jesus Christ offers forgiveness, new life, and the power to overcome sin but only to those who surrender to Him.

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

1 John 1:9 (NIV)

Your first step is to surrender your life to Him. Let Him forgive your sins and make you new. He will give you the strength to walk in righteousness, speak life, and see with clear spiritual

vision.

May the Lord bless you.

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