

Proverbs - Chapter 5

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Chapter 5 is really dedicated to warnings against sexual sins. And once again, Solomon starts this chapter speaking as a father would to his son, strongly warning him against the pitfalls involved with an intimate relationship outside of God's plan of marriage.

Lust and temptations have taken over many people, and the Bible repeatedly cautions against this.

Romans 6:12 "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof."

Romans 13:14 "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh to fulfill the lust thereof."

We live in a culture that is fascinated with this issue. We've come a long way from where bathing suits covered the entire body, where actors in TV sitcoms could not even lie in the same bed (*I Love Lucy*), and where a scandal was seeing a woman's knee.

In the 1950's Hugh Hefner left his job at Fortune magazine to start *Playboy*, and that opened the floodgates of pornography. Today pornography in the United States is a multibillion dollar industry.

However, the most dangerous message our society is giving right now is that a person can act on their sexual impulses without any consequences. This is one of the enormous lies of our generation. Millions of people today act out every sexual whim and they wonder why their lives are falling apart. And, by the way, the actual act does not have to be committed for us to have sinned against God.

Matthew 5:28 "But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." (Words of Jesus)

This chapter in Proverbs shows that this is not a new problem – it's been around for some time. It's to the point, however, where we have become somewhat desensitized to the damage this type of sin can cause.

READ [v.1 – v.10](#)

v.1 – v.10 – The “strange woman” referred to here was most likely a prostitute. Proverbs has many references to prostitutes and illicit sexual relations. This is likely for several reasons.

First, a prostitute’s charm is painted by Solomon is an example of any temptation we face that entices us to do wrong. Second, sexual immorality of any kind was, and still is, dangerous. It destroys families and marriages, it degrades us to a point where we are just objects, and it eats away at our ability to even love people the way we should. Finally, and most importantly, it is against God’s Law.

But we need to remember that this “strange woman” referred to here could be either male or female. Solomon is writing as a father would to a son. If he had been writing as to a daughter, he would likely have used some similar word for an indiscrete male. It could be a magazine, a TV show, or some other enticing attraction that comes our way and threatens to draw us away from God. The cautions are both both sexes.

This chapter notes that what the temptation promises is always better than what it really delivers. Sexual temptation drips with honey. Honey is something sweet. Here honey represents words of seduction and flattery that appeal to the person’s ego. Words like, “You’re special,” or “You’re attractive,” and “I want you” are words that drip with honey.

Sexual temptation is “smoother than oil.” This is a way of saying that the source of temptation says all the right things; it’s slick.

But in the end, what starts as sweet as honey tastes as bitter as wormwood. When all is said and done, the sweetness is gone, and all that’s left is a bitter taste. Like a sharp sword slashes and cuts, in the end this temptation tears us up inside.

This is true of all sexual temptation. This chapter is not blaming women for sexual temptation, but it’s using a case study to illustrate the power of sexual temptation. This represents all kinds of sexual temptation. So it could just as easily be a man tempting a woman, or the temptation of an internet chat room, or a magazine, or a romance novel, or a movie, or whatever.

The warning Solomon is giving here is clear – The temptation to live outside of the boundaries that God has established for sex always

looks much better than it really is.

What looks as sweet as honey is really bitter. What looks as smooth as oil is really sharper than a sword. Sexual temptation creates an illusion, and then tries to persuade us that this illusion is real – and it's not. Solomon is trying to get us to see sexual temptation for what it really is.

READ [v.11 – v.14](#)

[v.11 – v.13](#) – Have you ever found yourself at a point where you knew the right thing to do, but did the opposite? When you finally realized what a mistake you had made, did you ever wish you had listened to that voice in your head telling you that you were making a mistake? Didn't you wish you could go back and rethink your decision?

In these verses, you can almost hear the sad lament of a person that has strayed away from the right path, and now realizes what a mistake their actions have been. They recall the teaching and instruction they have had in the past, and realize that is was sound teaching – but now, it's too late.

We all find ourselves in this predicament at one time or another. When temptation comes, it is often too late to ask for advice. When our desires are strong, we don't seek advice – we seek satisfaction.

Over the past couple of decades, we've seen ministers of the Gospel fall by the wayside due to sexual temptations – men like Jim Bakker, Jesse Jackson, and Jimmy Swaggart – all gave in to lust and temptations – and it scarred their ministry forever.

Even our former President, Bill Clinton, gave in to sexual sin which became public. And regardless of what you felt about his presidency, what he will be remembered most for in history is his affair with Monica Lewinsky.

The best time to learn about the dangers and the foolishness of going after forbidden relationships like Solomon is referring to, or anything else that is harmful, is long before the temptation occurs. Resistance is easier if a decision has already been made in our hearts and minds.

Solomon's message here is simple – When we go outside of God's boundaries for sex, we end up hurting ourselves immensely.

We don't need to play with temptation to see what happens. We need to prepare for temptation NOW by deciding how we will act when we face it. Temptation will come, sooner or later – but with God's leading, we can overcome anything we face.

READ [v.15](#)

[v.15](#) – **“Drink waters from thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well”** is a picture of faithfulness in marriage. In a desert, water is a precious commodity, and a well was one of the family's most prized possessions. In the times of the Old Testament, it was a crime to steal water from another's well, just as it was a crime to commit adultery with another man's wife.

Remembering how precious water is, and how prized a possession the family well was, marriage should be prized even more highly. Relationships within the bonds of marriage are where both partners find refreshment, sustenance, and life.

Solomon is basically saying here to be faithful to the one you are with. If God brings two people together in marriage, and if both are Christians following Christ together as a family, this should be easy to do.

Where couples find problems are when one of the partners seeks and gives in to temptation outside of marriage. We have seen Solomon encourage us not to even be a part of the evil of this world ([Proverbs 4:15](#) **“Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, pass away.”**.)

If we try not to put ourselves into situations that could result in this kind of temptation, we have a lessened chance of ever giving in to this type of evil. And, if this type of temptation ever crosses our path, always remember that we will not be tempted above that which we are able to bear, and that God will ALWAYS make a way of escape.

READ [v.16 – v.19](#)

[v.16-v.19](#) – Here, Solomon has some very frank language about the joys of an intimate relationship within the bonds of marriage. In contrast to the views of many in the modern world, these verses encourage couples to look to each other for long-term satisfaction, happiness, and companionship.

The Bible has a very positive view of sexuality. And the alternative to sexual sin isn't repression or pretending that our sexuality doesn't exist. But it is to be enjoyed within the bonds of marriage between a man and a woman. God is the one who created it, He's the one who thought of it, and He's the one who made us the way we are, men and women.

Verse 18 tells us that sexual relationships within the bonds of marriage are a blessing, but it also gives us the context for this blessing: marriage.

It tells us to rejoice in our wife or husband. The Bible never talks about sex without being in the context of marriage. God's creation intention in Genesis is always in the backdrop of the Bible's discussion of sexuality. God's creation of the first man and the first woman provides the context for marital relations between a husband and wife.

Many temptations entice husbands and wives to leave when marriages become dull, in order to obtain excitement and pleasure elsewhere. But God was the One who designed marriage in the first place, and He has the answers for a marriage in trouble. Only within this covenant relationship can we find real love and fulfillment. As couples, we need to give ourselves first to God, and then to each other. Remember, the relationship of Christ to His church. He loved the church (His Bride) so much that He gave Himself for it.

God does not intend for faithfulness in marriage to be boring, dull, and with no pleasure. He provided for these intimate relationships within the bonds of marriage for our mutual enjoyment. Real happiness comes when we find pleasure in the relationship that God has given, or will give, to us. There is always danger in doubting that God loves and cares for us. If we do, we may find ourselves resenting His timing and pursue these intimate pleasures without His blessing.

Solomon's message to the reader in these verses is that wise living involves us enjoying sexual relations between a man and a woman within the covenant bonds of marriage.

Within the bonds of marriage, the closeness of a husband and wife is something to be enjoyed. It's also there for reproduction, for us to have children that can help to make our lives fuller.

But God also created a boundary for the enjoyment of sexuality, and that boundary is marriage. When we are intimate with another person,

we are at our most vulnerable position to that person. So God created the safest possible relationship in order to protect us from being hurt deeply. God created a covenant relationship, a relationship of mutual trust and mutual commitment, a relationship that's entered into with vows.

God knows that sexual wounds are among the deepest and most profound wounds that can be inflicted on a person, leaving us scarred for years to come. Children that were molested when they were younger usually live with years of problems, guilt, and regret. It leaves a lasting effect. But God created a special kind of relationship to provide a safe context for sexual expression. Not that we won't get hurt in marriage because we sometimes do. But marriage provides the safest context for us to enjoy our sexuality.

This means that if we express our sexuality outside of this covenant relationship we've gone outside the boundaries. The Bible teaches that premarital sexual expression is wrong and destructive in our lives. The Bible uses the word "fornication" to describe premarital sex. It teaches that all extramarital sexual expression is wrong and destructive in our lives. The Bible uses the word adultery to describe extramarital sex. The Bible also teaches that all same sex sexual expression is wrong and destructive.

God created marriage between a husband and a wife as the context for people to enjoy their sexuality.

Not every person gets married. I don't mean to suggest here that single people live less fulfilling lives. Certainly God calls some people to a single life, just as Jesus lived a single life. God blesses people who make the difficult choice to remain single and celibate, but he does restrict the expression of our sexuality within the context of marriage.

So the alternative to sexual sin is enjoying our sexuality within the context of marriage.

*** See [Song of Solomon Chapter 4](#) for a parallel of the intimate expressions of love Solomon makes in verse 19.*

READ [v.20 – 23](#)

v.20 – v.23 – Solomon ends this chapter, just as he does many of them, with the consequences of not using Godly wisdom in marital and

premarital relationships. Both require self-control and resistance of temptation.

He reminds us that God is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. He is everywhere, knows all, and sees all. We may hide things we do from others, but nothing is ever done in secret away from the eyes of God.

He also calls these types of sexual sins a "great folly". While there is no degree of sin in God's eyes (sin is sin, no matter what it is), the damage this type of sin can bring, not only to the person who commits the sin but also to the people closest to the person, is tremendous and far reaching. Damage caused by a moment of indiscretion can result in a lifetime of pain for many people. We need to remember that, most times, our sins affect more than just us.

If we would always ask the question, "Would God be pleased with me right now?", and let that answer help to guide us to make the right decisions, I feel that we would be in a better position to live a life that is pleasing to Almighty God.

Solomon warns us about the lure of sexual temptation, and he wants us to understand the consequences of giving into that temptation. God wants us to enjoy our relationships within the context of marriage, and He wants us to make wise choices because he knows our choices determine our destiny. This wisdom is against the views of our world today, but it is with the plan of God's creation.