

- **\*READ Proverbs 5:1-4/PRAYER\*** The statistics are not pretty when it comes to what percentage of people truly save themselves for the marriage bed. In fact, multiple research reports I read said that only 3% of Americans save themselves for marriage. We will probably shake our heads and be saddened by that low number and wonder where morals in this country have gone, but the truth is that even in the 1950s only about 11% of individuals practiced abstinence before marriage.
- Neither of those numbers are high by any means, but we would think that the number would skyrocket when we considered religious people write? What is the number for Americans who claim to be serious about their? Sadly, it is only 20%. Now, this isn't necessarily a representation of those in the Lord's churches, but all of the numbers ought to be extremely alarming to us, and they ought to cause us to recognize that sexual immorality is a real and present danger today just as it has been for all of time.
- Apart from locking boys in one room and girls in another room or installing shock collars that zap young people when they get within 3 feet of one another, what can be done to help this problem? Maybe we might ask what is missing that allows these numbers to be so small? Might I suggest that the answer to both is that we emphasize and press upon those of our number the need for wisdom because Wisdom seeks purity in our bodies!
- Did you notice how Solomon begins this fifth chapter of Proverbs? As we recognize from us preparing to read the Proverbs and from our actual reading, Solomon sets us these first few teachings as a father speaking and trying to teach his son those things that would be of the utmost benefit to him in this life. One of those things that he emphasizes and stresses time and time again in these first nine chapters is the need for pursuing purity in our bodies. In fact, we recognize that this is something that fathers ought to be sure they take time to talk to their sons about. Solomon leaves no stone unturned as he addresses the reader on this all important topic and we want to take some time to notice what God's wisdom tells us about seeking purity in our bodies and lives as disciples of His Son. Whether we are single or married, Satan cares not and will seek to cause us to fall prey to the sexual immorality. We all most seek to be wise and listen to what Solomon and the Lord would want us to know on the subject.

**I. Wisdom warns against sexual immorality. (vv.1-9)**

- A. This is exactly where Solomon begins this section of teaching. We have determined that there is a problem, and Solomon offers up the solution first and foremost, "Give attain to my wisdom, incline your ear to my understanding." (**v.1**) If anyone could give wise and sound advice when it came to women and how they could affect a man....well I would suggest that the man who had 700 wives and 300 concubines would be apt to be able to do that.
- B. Notice that Solomon appeals to discretion and knowledge. Discretion is the ability recognize when something is bad news and you seek to avoid it. Think about the saying you sometimes hear before a tv show, movie, or movie trailer, "view discretion is advised." Knowledge of course is knowing what might be the consequences of a particular action or decision. Solomon is calling for the reader to recognize the danger of something and how to avoid so as to not fall prey to its consequences.
- C. That something is mentioned in **v.3**. The subject matter at hand is the adulteress or the immoral woman...the ESV terms this person the forbidden woman. The idea is simply that this is a person who will lead Solomon's son into immorality and sexual sin. Of course this could also refer to men, but with the subject being a son, it is most logical to personify this sin as a woman.
- D. Furthermore, Solomon and his wisdom addresses what makes this woman so dangerous. He says that her lips drip honey and she is smooth in her speech. It isn't surprising that this woman would be such seeing as how sin often presents its as something that is extremely appealing. Satan is a master of making sin look appetizing to the target. Especially with sexual immorality, it presents itself as nothing but enjoyable and a way to fulfill your natural urges. It looks good and appealing on the service, but Solomon quickly follows up by stating just how dangerous it is.
- E. Her lips might drip honey and her words might be smooth...but Solomon warns that her end is more bitter than wormwood (poison) and she cuts like a two-edged sword. In more words, Solomon is simply stating that the path the adulterous puts you on is a path to death and suffering. Her way is unstable and if you decide to walk with her then you are resigning yourself to being on the same unstable path.

## II. Sexual immorality only leads to negative consequences. (vv.11-14)

- A. The unstable path doesn't lead to relief or blessings, but it only leads to negative consequence and Solomon wants to make that abundantly clear to the reader. He really wants to gain the readers attention by again addressing "sons" specifically, and further admonishes the reader to listen very carefully to what he is saying and to plant it in his mind so he can recall it quickly. Why the urgency? Why the seriousness? Solomon is so adamant with these warnings because the consequences of falling into the trap of sexually immorality are severe and far reaching.
- B. "Keep your way far away from her and do not go near the door of her house" are the warnings. Stay far away from her as you can! The temptation is for us to push the limits, and experiment to small degrees without really going all in on many things and that is just a true when it comes to sexual temptations. Solomon implores from the wisdom of God that we stay as far away from the temptation as we can.
- C. But sadly.....some...maybe even many will give into her sweet and smooth words. There consequences will come quickly and harshly. **vv. 9,10** paint a sad picture of a man who has been ruined by his inability to resist the temptations of the adulteress. Our wealth or material means might be taken from us through various means. It might be that we are having to pay for this immoral activity. Maybe we do so as a married person and our spouse lawfully puts us away. Maybe we get in trouble with the law and get caught up in fines, legal fees, or maybe we even face jail time and loss of wages.
- D. But beyond the material loss is the very real possibility of losing years of our lives because disease has overtaken our body because we used it improperly was someone else. Because of his deeds, Solomon says that the person looks back and groans at the foolish and stupid decisions. Every part of him has been decimated and destroyed. All he can do is spout his regrets for hating instruction and ignoring reproving words. He didn't listen to his teachers or instructors. His life and reputation have all been ruined and there really is nothing he can do about it.
- E. How often do we see this kind of situation play out. Sadly the truth is far to often, and we know that no one is above the temptation of sexual immorality. From presidents, to athletes, religious leaders, celebrities, and even some of our own brethren have found themselves overcome and ruined by their unwillingness to avoid sexual immorality at all costs. God's wisdom through Solomon warns us against the adulteress, let's us know what will happen if we give in, but God also gives a way of escape.

## III. God provides righteous satisfaction for sexual fulfillment. (vv.15-20)

- A. vv.15-20 remind me much of what Paul says in **I Corinthians 7** concerning marriage and sexual activity. *"But I say to the unmarried and to widows that it is good for them if they remain even as I. But if they do not have self-control, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn with passion."* (**I Corinthians 7:8,9**) Paul's advice is for people to stay unmarried, yet those who have the right to marry, if they cannot control themselves in the face of sexual temptation then they need to just marry. This is exactly what Solomon speaks to in this third section of **Proverbs 5**.
- B. Solomon could almost anticipate his son responding with, "well what do you expect for me to do, dad? I'm a man and I have the natural urges and desires, what am I to do?" Solomon encourages and admonishes his son to fulfill those urges in appropriate ways. Notice the language used is that of water or something that quenches the thirst of Solomon's son. He's saying, yes son I recognize that you're thirsty and that you have needs, and know that you have a righteous way to quench that thirst and find satisfaction. Seek God's way of escape and don't settle for the selfish choice.
- C. But stuck in the middle of this, Solomon kinda flips the script on him. He switches things around and get him to think about how he would feel if his wife went out on him and quenched the thirst other someone else. He obviously wouldn't be ok with that, and thus Solomon's admonition to be sure that he remembered that and only sought satisfaction from his own wife. She was to be the source of his satisfaction and she alone should bring him the natural exhilaration that comes from the marriage bed.
- D. Solomon finishes this third section by comparing the two options. His son could either enjoy the wife from his youth who he had grown with and become one flesh with, or he could seek out after a stranger who he had no true connect to. God's wisdom shows us the better way of being righteously satisfied with the lawful spouse that He has blessed us with. In that relationship alone is God glorified for His blessings to each of us.

- E. The choice seems easy, but why or how could someone get to the point where they make the wrong decision in this situation? Consider something that Solomon has said earlier in this book in **2:16,17**. In these verses, Solomon describes how it was that the immoral woman came to be to begin with. **v.17** seems to state that there were two things that contributed to her issues. It seems as if her marriage weakened and her faith then weakened, as well. Solomon is implying to us that this type of thing doesn't happen overnight. Settling for sexual impurity is a slap in the face to God who has given us a way to satisfy our sexual appetites in lawful marriage where true devotion and love for another can be found. Unfortunately, those who fail to work on their marriages and faiths and keep them healthy are easily tempted to forsake God's righteous blessing of the marriage bed.

#### **IV. Those who give in to sexual immorality will be found out. (vv.21-23)**

- A. Everything leading up to this final section in the first twenty verses makes a pretty strong argument for our need to avoid sexual impurity by joining ourselves to the immoral person who might present temptation in our lives. We would never want to endure the embarrassment and damages that come from getting caught up in this type of activity, and Satan knows that it will be a deterrent to us. However, he doesn't just give up, and he instead tempts us with the idea that we can get involved with the immoral woman and do it in such a way that no one will find out.
- B. This idea is truly tempting because it involves the all the "best" results in our minds. We gain the enjoyment and exhilaration that comes with the immoral person, but we get to avoid the negative consequences of the loss and shame that so often come with involvement with this sin. It's a win/win!
- C. At least, that is what Satan wants us to think. He wants to tempt us in this way, but Solomon closes this section of teaching by showing that our secret deeds are still well known by God. Man's ways are *"before the eyes of the Lord."* (**v.21**) God watches all of the paths on which man walks. When he walks righteously, God sees it. When he walks in darkness in the open, God sees it. Even when man tries to walk in darkness but tries to do it in secret...you guessed it, God sees that, too. Man is foolish when he thinks that he can fool God and hide his ways from Him. He might fool all of mankind, but God will hold him accountable in the judgement.
- D. But even without considering the fact that God sees all things, consider just how rare it is for people to actually get away with this type of behavior. (**vv.21,22**) The truth is that this type of behavior becomes publicly known more often than not, ask Tiger Woods and others. Truly our sins will find us out either in this life or the next. May we stay strong and not give into Satan's lies that we can get away with it because we surely will not.

We live in a world and are surrounded by individuals who do not see the sanctity or holy nature of lawful physical relationships that God has given between spouses. Whether we are a single person or we are married, Satan continually seeks to put temptations in our path that he believes will cause us to slip up and fall into the traps of the immoral person. We must be committed to God's wisdom and allow it to remind us of the dangers and sad consequences that come from sexual impurity. May we appreciate the blessing of marriage, and the strength that God gives us through learning self-control. May God help us to stay strong and to seek purity as His wisdom would have us to do.