

Live in Moral Purity  
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Prov. 5:1-23; 6:20-35

Today, our lesson is about avoiding sexual sin. Before we start squirming in our seats, I'm reminded of a quote from Professor Howard Hendricks at Dallas Seminary:  
*"We should not be ashamed to discuss that which God was not ashamed to create."*

Opening Question: If you were teaching an engaged person or newlywed about staying sexually pure in marriage, what advice would you give?

As we've studied in this series, much of Proverbs is Solomon teaching his sons. This lesson is just that. A father having a man to man talk with his son to warn him of the dangers of sexual sin. We're not just "eavesdropping" on this talk. God inspired this as Holy Scripture that applies to all of both men and women of all ages and stages of life.

The Big Idea: God commands us to live morally pure lives, not to inhibit our enjoyment of life, but to ASSURE it. These verses give a serious WARNING then a POSITIVE PLAN for purity.

Proverbs 5:3-8 (ESV)

3 For the lips of a forbidden woman drip honey, and her speech is smoother than oil,  
4 but in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword.  
5 Her feet go down to death; her steps follow the path to Sheol;  
6 she does not ponder the path of life; her ways wander, and she does not know it.  
7 And now, O sons, listen to me, and do not depart from the words of my mouth.  
8 Keep your way far from her, and do not go near the door of her house,

- Verse 3: Solomon has again used "personification." He personifies any type of sexual sin as the "forbidden woman." **Why is he picking on women? Why didn't he say the forbidden man? To what is verse 3 specifically referring? How can we guard against falling for that?**
- **How do verses 3, 4, & 5 give us a picture of any kind of sin?**
- **Verses 7 & 8: What are the steps to be "on guard" against sexual sin?**
- **Verse 8: What advice does this verse give to avoid sexual sin?**
- Verses 9-14 describe where sexual sin leads those who practice it. Reading from the New Living Translation (NLT):

Proverbs 5:9-14 (NLT)

9 ...you will lose your honor and will lose to merciless people all you have achieved.  
10 Strangers will consume your wealth, and someone else will enjoy the fruit of your labor.  
11 In the end you will groan in anguish when disease consumes your body.

- **What is verse 10 talking about? What about verse 11?**

12 You will say, "How I hated discipline! If only I had not ignored all the warnings!  
13 Oh, why didn't I listen to my teachers? Why didn't I pay attention to my instructors?  
14 I have come to the brink of utter ruin, and now I must face public disgrace."

- Those verses could describe the regrets of anyone who has confessed to moral failure.
- Public humiliation and tough consequences are one thing.
- Solomon reminded his sons of the ULTIMATE accountability we all have with ANY sin:

Proverbs 5:20–23 (ESV)

20 Why should you be intoxicated, my son, with a forbidden woman  
and embrace the bosom of an adulteress?

21 For a man's ways are before the eyes of the Lord,  
and he ponders all his paths.

- One of the greatest deterrents to sexual sin would be to keep verse 21 before us always. God always sees what we do. However, sometimes that reality becomes distant to us.
- Try this: What if you're spouse was watching? Your kids? Your Sunday School class?
- I've heard Chip Ingram say one technique he's used to maintain sexual purity over the years is imagining having to confess failing in this area to his wife and kids (and now grandkids).
- Sexual sin starts as a thrill. Sooner or later it shifts from a thrill to a jail cell. Verse 22:

22 The iniquities of the wicked ensnare him,  
and he is held fast in the cords of his sin.

23 He dies for lack of discipline,  
and because of his great folly he is led astray.

### **How can moral failure through sexual sin become a prison and a death sentence?**

So, what can keep me from this outcome?

Proverbs 6:23–24 (ESV)

23 For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching a light,  
and the reproofs of discipline are the way of life,

24 to preserve you from the evil woman,  
from the smooth tongue of the adulteress.

- "Commandment is a lamp and teaching is a light." God's Word. **How can scripture help us avoid this kind of temptation? Be very practical!**
- Keeping the truths of scripture constantly before us by "renewing our minds" with it, can help us to avoid the first STEP in the direction of sexual sin.
- The reverse is also true. Feeding our minds the sexualized content of our culture gradually shifts our standards so that we will entertain things we would never rationally consider.
- How often do we look at someone who has fallen morally and ask: "WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?" "What did you THINK would happen?" Turn to 6:27:

Proverbs 6:27–29 (ESV)

27 Can a man carry fire next to his chest  
and his clothes not be burned?

28 Or can one walk on hot coals  
and his feet not be scorched?

29 So is he who goes in to his neighbor's wife;  
none who touches her will go unpunished.

Proverbs 6:32–34 (ESV)

32 He who commits adultery lacks sense;  
he who does it destroys himself.

33 He will get wounds and dishonor,  
and his disgrace will not be wiped away.

34 For jealousy makes a man furious,  
and he will not spare when he takes revenge.

**Question: If the consequences are so obvious; why do people still commit sexual sin?**

- So, what do we do to protect ourselves and our marriages from sexual sin?
- The first thing is not to kid ourselves. Here's what I wrote this week:

*Moral failure and infidelity are built on lies. The first lie is saying to yourself: "It could never happen to us."*

- Turn to 1 Corinthians 10:13 (ESV). As Christians we gratefully claim this verse:  
13 No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

- But look back at the verse before it:

12 Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.

Christian counselor Dr. Ken Williams writes:

***We don't "fall" into sin, we slide into it.*** When someone commits sexual sin, we tend to think of them as suddenly falling off the cliff into an abyss. This is rarely if ever the case. An act of sexual sin is the ultimate and logical result of long-term habit patterns of giving in to temptations to less obvious sins.

***The beginnings of the "slide" into immorality often seem so harmless that we may not even be aware of them.*** The process is so slow and subtle that we are rarely aware of what is happening, but as the years pass our hatred of sexual sin is gradually lost.

***Our capacity for self-deceit is virtually limitless,*** according to Jeremiah 17:9, "The heart is deceitful above all things."

***Once we have begun the slide, sexual temptation will probably be the strongest force we will ever experience.*** Its power can grow to the point that we become willing to give up everything to gratify it...And no believer is so special that he or she is immune to its power.  
<http://apps.younglife.org/ServiceCenterDepartments/Training/LeadershipandII/pdf/BSL-Part08.pdf>

- The first step to stay morally pure is to BELIEVE the DANGERS.
- The second is to PROTECT yourself from them.
- So, let's talk practical advice in this area.
- Since this is a couples class let's talk about marriage.
- Solomon gave his sons a NEGATIVE warning earlier in chapter 5. Now he delivers a POSITIVE PLAN for husbands and wives. Look back at Proverbs 5:15-20

Proverbs 5:15–19 (ESV)

15 Drink water from your own cistern,  
flowing water from your own well.

16 Should your springs be scattered abroad,  
streams of water in the streets?

17 Let them be for yourself alone,  
and not for strangers with you.

18 Let your fountain be blessed,  
and rejoice in the wife of your youth,

19 a lovely deer, a graceful doe.  
Let her breasts fill you at all times with delight;  
be intoxicated always in her love.

“Drink water from your own well” — translation: Quench your sexual thirst only at home and only with your spouse! “...be intoxicated always in her love.” — translation: “Keep your marriage bed STOKED!”

Or, as Ray Ortlund described it in his commentary: *“A spring of joyously bubbling sexual happiness between husband and wife.”*

So, What’s The Takeaway?

Sexual temptation is STRONG...we shouldn’t kid ourselves. We need to “take heed, lest we fall.” What are some practical ways we can build walls around our marriages?

In his book: “Love Must be Tough” Dr. James Dobson, Gives us eight ways to do so:

1. Stay honest with yourself and with your spouse. If you find yourself attracted to someone, admit it quickly to yourself and to your spouse. Honesty is the key to preventing a relationship from escalating into infidelity.
2. Avoid magazines, movies and other forms of entertainment that can increase your tolerance of affairs.
3. Try to see your relationships from your spouse’s perspective. What would your spouse be comfortable with? How would he or she feel about what you are doing?
4. Do not flirt. Most affairs begin with what’s considered “innocent flirting,” but there’s no such thing! Flirting is not a part of friendship.
5. Keep your marriage as your No. 1 priority. Make sure you are working to meet your spouse’s most important needs. If you’re not sure what those are, ask.
6. Grow together spiritually. Pray with each other and for each other.
7. Set boundaries about how you will interact with the opposite sex. For instance, you and your spouse may decide that neither of you will be alone with someone of the opposite sex, even for business lunches or late nights at work.
8. Surround yourselves with happily married couples who don’t believe in fooling around.

Great advice from Dr.Dobson! One more important thing to remember...  
The REAL power we have to protect our moral purity is the Holy Spirit of God living in us.  
We can only have that power through a personal relationship with Christ. Deciding to accept the free gift of salvation in Christ is the FOUNDATION for heeding Solomon's warnings on moral purity.