

Proverbs 5 - 9 is like a play, written in different scenes with primarily 4 characters. Solomon is like the sage - the commentator who introduces us, the audience, to each of the actors in the play. He points out the moral dilemma that our young man is facing between the other two characters of the play, Lady Wisdom, bearing a remarkable resemblance to his soon-to-be-wife (the one of chapter 31). Our young man's relationship with his right woman - his wife will prove to be a rewarding, fulfilled life - one with blessing, many children and prosperity.

Prov 3:13 "Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding,¹⁴ for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold.¹⁵ She is more precious than rubies; nothing you desire can compare with her.¹⁶ Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor.¹⁷ Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace.¹⁸ She is a tree of life to those who embrace her; those who lay hold of her will be blessed.¹

The other lady is no lady. She is characterized as the adulterous "other man's wife." Solomon warns our leading actor that a relationship with this woman results in death and a life filled with regrets.

Prov 5:3 For the lips of an adulteress drip honey, and her speech is smoother than oil;⁴ but in the end she is bitter as gall, sharp as a double-edged sword.⁵ Her feet go down to death; her steps lead straight to the grave.

Prov 5:12 You will say, "How I hated discipline! How my heart spurned correction!¹³ I would not obey my teachers or listen to my instructors.¹⁴ I have come to the brink of utter ruin in the midst of the whole assembly."

This section (chs 5-9) starts and ends with a warning by Solomon about this adulteress (*compare 5:1-6 with 9:13-18*).

Solomon's Dual Teaching Method

In many cases Proverbs teaches truths about the spiritual, the word of God using truths about marriage. We need to understand Solomon's allegorical approach to his little play here in order to derive benefit from both areas of truth. Solomon is using one battle to teach another. Here are the two battles; the battle within is between lust and our spiritual nature and the battle without is between a right relationship with our spouses and a wrong attitude towards the opposite sex. Both battles rage within and without our young man - it is difficult to separate the two at times.

¹ All passages are NIV unless otherwise noted.

Now, we will see lust's temptation in action.

Lust Only Has Power over the Careless and Casual Christian

Prov 7:6 "At the window of my house I looked out through the lattice.^{Prov 7:7} I saw among the simple, I noticed among the young men, a youth who lacked judgment.⁸ He was going down the street near her corner, walking along in the direction of her house⁹ at twilight, as the day was fading, as the dark of night set in."

Our heavenly father does not subject us to unfair temptation from the adulteress, lust². Freedom from slavery to lust comes from an active life of pursuing lady wisdom and her kinsman, understanding - (Prov 7:4) "**say to wisdom, "you are my sister," and call understanding your kinsman; ⁵ they will keep you from the adulteress, from the wayward wife with her seductive words.**" The battle of lust over the mind of our young man is a fierce one. Human viewpoint and the inner desires of the flesh are an unholy team that would seduce him to come into their home.

This young man is making his first mistake - he is walking in the neighborhood of sin. He should have been with his surrogate spouse wisdom.³ He should have been actively clinging to God's word, learning it and applying it to his life. Yes, he would have made mistakes - **but the promise to the immature, naive young man is that wisdom and understanding (lessons learned from life's mistakes after correction by God's word)⁴ will protect him from lust and her knowledge, human viewpoint. This is a promise to the young Christian no matter how immature he is.**⁵ He just needs to fulfill Proverbs 2:1-7.

There is no rest from lust's attractive appeal

Prov 7:10-21. Lust seeks after the young man while he is in her neighborhood. She is crafty - smarter than our young man without Lady Wisdom's counsel (*Prov 9:10*). She is loud and persuasive (vs' 11-21). She actively seeks him (vs' 13-15). She offers great pleasure (vs' 16-18).

She Offers a False Sense of Unaccountability - Vs' 19, 20.

² James 1:13

³ Prov 4:4-13

⁴ 2 Tim. 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

⁵ Proverbs 2:8

Prov 7:19 "**My husband is not at home; he has gone on a long journey.** ²⁰ **He took his purse filled with money and will not be home till full moon.**"

When a Christian plunges himself into a life-style of sin. He does not consciously hate God, or hate his word. Here is a short list of the pathway to a lifestyle of sin:

- First, there is an erosion of interest in the Lord's will -
- then there is the distraction from the Lord to self's needs. It's like an unholy amnesia cloaks the mind of our "victim." When we depart from the path of God's will it is like an idle curiosity - a distraction.
- Then we put God on hold while we take this side-trip into sins's neighborhood.

Lust says that accountability to God (her husband in this story) has taken a vacation. That sin at this point can be indulged without consequence - there is plenty of time to retreat from sin to our Heavenly Father's safer neighborhood - that's the lie Lust wants our young man to believe.

Lust Can Be Very Persuasive about Sin's Pleasure - Vs' 21.

Prov 7:21 "**With persuasive words she led him astray; she seduced him with her smooth talk.**"

Actually, lust can speak to the mind of the Christian in a very basic, primeval way. The words do not have to be there - the suggestion of pleasure is eloquent. The smooth talk and persuasive words are couched in the language of the body - the flesh as our young man beholds her the temptation is rushing toward him like a run-away train - he stands there transfixed by the prospect of it all... **Deer jacking is illegal in New Hampshire.** **Deer jacking is where hunting is done at night with a gun and a flashlight - the stronger the better.** The deer stands transfixed by the light - the hunter has a huge advantage with those two bright reflectors of the deer's eyes as he stands there transfixed by the flashlight. Our young man in this text is like that deer - transfixed by the attractiveness of temptation.

The Decision for Sin Is Sudden - vs 22.

Prov 7:22 "**All at once he followed her like an ox going to the slaughter, like a deer stepping into a noose.**"

The picture of our hapless young man is that of a sudden decision with great force of movement - it's almost like, being persuaded, he literally carries lust off in his eagerness to sin. The ox is an interesting picture - he is not fighting his slaughter, but rather is stumbling along to his demise. The deer is completely unaware of his danger

until the snare springs its deathly noose. The picture here is of the suddenness of the decision and the frantic pursuit to fulfill lust's call to sin.

Death Is Sure - vs 23.

Prov 7:23 "till an arrow pierces his liver, like a bird darting into a snare, little knowing it will cost him his life."

The believer living in sin is an enigma. *Our young man is the son of a king, Solomon. It makes no sense for him to be in the neighborhood of this adulteress in the first place. It makes even less sense for him to throw away his integrity for the fleeting pleasures that a adulteress could offer.* We are not talking of the occasional sin that a believer commits. The confession and the blood of Christ covers that situation. What we are talking about is what Solomon lived and what he is trying to talk his son out of - a life-style, a way of life where the son of a king is living like the fool - whose loose living eventually is his undoing.

The death here is of a Christian who is living as though he were still a slave of Satan's kingdom. Fellowship is broken with his Heavenly Father - he knows only of fleeting pleasures of sin. The joy of his salvation is gone. Eventually he forgets who he really is. This is called by some theologians as the Christian's temporal death.⁶ The issue is clear - either let lady wisdom and her brother understanding be your close companions or lust will ensnare you and you will die.

2 Peter 1:8 "For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." (KJV)

⁶ Still saved but not operating in the spiritual realm.