



Proverbs chapter 5:1-7:27

Taught at our Sunday evening service, 19th September 2021 @ Deal Christian Fellowship

Reading: John 8:2-11

Good evening. Let's pray.

Introduction

We are in the book of Proverbs - an amazing book of the Bible that contains practical wisdom you and I very much need today. But as I've mentioned a few times now, it won't do you any good if you don't apply it to your life.

Tonight, we are going to study chapters 5-7 (85 verses in all) which touch a few topics, but are largely devoted to one - sexual integrity. And yes, I did just use the S word. In church. Sadly, this is a topic often avoided in churches, but we cannot avoid it if we study the Bible, or want to please God. That is abundantly clear from what we read in 1 Thessalonians 4:

1 Thessalonians 4:1-8

Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God; for you know what commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified. For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness. Therefore he who rejects this does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit.

Yet, the common theme of the day in churches is compromise - and it is always moving in the direction of accepting the worlds standards, or lack thereof.

DA Carson warns:

We drift toward compromise and call it tolerance; we drift toward disobedience and call it freedom; we drift toward superstition and call it faith. We cherish the indiscipline of lost self-control and call it relaxation; we slouch toward prayerlessness and delude ourselves into thinking we have escaped legalism; we slide toward godlessness and convince ourselves we have been liberated.

DA Carson

We must not do the same.

As we study these passages this evening, take note. It doesn't have to be with a pen and paper, or with your fingers on your phone. It can be mentally. But take note. What we read here is so, so important. For if you fail to listen to the wisdom of these chapters, you'll be heading for a world of pain for yourself. And for others.

Overview of chapter five

Let's take a quick look at the breakdown of each chapter, starting with chapter 5, which focusses on sexual morality:

- v1-14... the immoral woman
- v15-20... keep sex in it's place
- v21-23... God sees (what we do & the result of it)

Overview of chapter six

Chapter six can be broken down into four topics:

- v1-5... Debt
- v6-11... Work
- v12-19... Wickedness & pride

- v20-35... Stay away from adultery

Overview of chapter seven

And then in chapter seven, we see some warnings, followed by an example not to follow:

- v1-5... Treasure my commands
- v6-27... the stupid man & immoral woman

Chapter five

So let's get into chapter 5.

As with last week's study, I'll **highlight** the many instructions that require action, both here on the slides and notes that will go online afterwards (even if I don't specifically mention each one).

We read in verse 1:

Proverbs 5:1

My son, **pay attention** to my wisdom;
Lend your ear to my understanding,

Pay attention. Why? We'll start to see that in verse 2. But are you? Are you paying attention?

Lend your ear to my understanding. What was it that Solomon knew? Well, he was both the wisest man who ever lived, yet at times, he was still stupid. He knew what it was to compromise in relationships, and in his walk with the Lord - the two of which were and are linked.

Proverbs 5:2

That you may preserve discretion,
And your lips may keep knowledge.

In other words, that you may make good judgements, good choices.

Proverbs 5:3

For the lips of an immoral woman drip honey,
And her mouth is smoother than oil;

That is, don't fall for someone because of their compliments, flattery or flirting.

That guy you like might have a smooth-talk-tongue, or the girl you like might be so sweet - but you have to be on your guard. You need to make good choices. Why? Because of the danger to your soul, to your body, to your life. We read...

Proverbs 5:4-5

But in the end she is bitter as wormwood,
Sharp as a two-edged sword.
Her feet go down to death,
Her steps lay hold of hell.

And you need to be open to this now, for you won't want to listen when you're in love. So have people close enough to you that can be honest with you if you're making a bad choice. You need good Christian friends. But also, be willing to let your parents be involved, especially if they are Christians - and listen to them!

But we need to be willing to be those people too. It's so very hard to do, but we must. Solomon is talking of this in terms of life and death importance. And continues...

Proverbs 5:6

Lest you ponder her path of life—
Her ways are unstable;
You do not know them.

If you want to figure out the best way to live - don't look at the immoral woman, or the immoral man - for they're not even sure of their own path! Instead, unsurprisingly, Solomon will call us to wisdom:

Proverbs 5:7

Therefore **hear me now**, my children,
And **do not** depart from the words of my mouth.

Solomon is speaking as if to his own children, asking them to listen. And most of us would do well to assume that our parents actually know what they're talking about.

Proverbs 5:8

Remove your way far from her,
And **do not** go near the door of her house,

There is such wisdom in this. The places you go, the way you go about your life, need to be carefully considered. At the door of the immoral woman's house, you hear "want to come in for a coffee?", or "want to come up to my room, my flat, my hotel room?" etc. Even Hollywood get's this right - it's not for coffee, and you know it. And we'll see how well this works out in chapter 7. Solomon warns:

Proverbs 5:9-10

Lest you give your honour to others,
And your years to the cruel one;
Lest aliens be filled with your wealth,
And your labours go to the house of a foreigner;

What does this mean? Reputation and consequences.

Matt shared a great analogy at Home Group recently, that reputation is like adding marbles to a bag one by one over the years. And it takes lots of individual actions to do that. But it can be undone in a moment by dropping the bag.

As for consequences? Consequences of children being born outside of marriage. I have known men who have seen much of their salary rightly go to support children they fathered in casual relationships, yet they seldom see them.

The immoral woman may cost you far more than your integrity.

Proverbs 5:11

And you mourn at last,
When your flesh and your body are consumed,

In this day and age, most have some awareness of the damage sexually transmitted infections can cause - yet so many people think "It won't happen to me". But more than a million times each day, that's proven to be wrong.

According to the World Health Organization;

- Each year, there are an estimated 376 million new infections with 1 of 4 STIs: chlamydia, gonorrhoea, syphilis and trichomoniasis.
- More than 500 million people are estimated to have genital infection with herpes simplex virus.
- More than 290 million women have a an HPV infection.

And that's just the start. It doesn't only affect those taking part either - in 2016 nearly a million pregnant women were infected with syphilis, resulting in over 350'000 adverse birth outcomes including 200'000 stillbirths and newborn deaths.

"Oh, but what about safe sex?" you may ask. The world might offer safer sex. But safe sex only exists where both husband and wife wait until marriage, and remain faithful.

Much more could be said, but what's truly important here, is to not be foolish but wise. Despise wisdom, and you'll end up in verse 12:

Proverbs 5:12-14

And say:
"How I have hated instruction,
And my heart despised correction!
I have not obeyed the voice of my teachers,
Nor inclined my ear to those who instructed me!
I was on the verge of total ruin,
In the midst of the assembly and congregation."

It's a horrid thing to make a mess of your life when you should have known better. Especially when your stupidity was so plain for others to see.

Solomon continues:

Proverbs 5:15-16

Drink water from your own cistern,
And running water from your own well.
Should your fountains be dispersed abroad,
Streams of water in the streets?

When you realise what Solomon is saying here, you realise it's quite explicit. And he's saying don't sow your wild oats around. Don't sleep around, for you'll find yourself walking around the town or the supermarket, not knowing if the children you see could be yours. Verses 17-19 set out a better way:

Proverbs 5:17-19

Let them be only your own,
And not for strangers with you.
Let your fountain be blessed,
And rejoice with the wife of your youth.
As a loving deer and a graceful doe,
Let her breasts satisfy you at all times;
And always be enraptured with her love.

Solomon is saying, don't undervalue your body. Instead, place great care upon it, using it only as your maker has designed. With sex kept in the safe place of marriage.

It is a great shame that sex is talked about in a negative way in Christian circles - because it is something very good that God has created. And he wants you to have an amazing sex life! He designed it. But like anything you use contrary to the manufacturers instructions, if you use sex the wrong way, in the wrong context, things will go wrong.

Make no mistake - this is not easy. Singleness especially, is not easy. But it's easier than the alternative that we saw in verses 12-14.

Proverbs 5:20-21

For why should you, my son, be enraptured by an immoral woman,
And be embraced in the arms of a seductress?
For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD,
And He ponders all his paths.

That is, God sees everything you do. Nothing is ever really done in secret, at least, not hidden from God. And He knows how things will work out if you go down the wrong route.

Proverbs 5:22-23

His own iniquities entrap the wicked man,
And he is caught in the cords of his sin.
He shall die for lack of instruction,
And in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.

If you want to avoid getting all tangled up in life, getting tangled up in sin, then follow God's instruction. Listen now. And apply wisdom to your life.

For all who fall, there is God's amazing grace. But like the woman in John chapter 8, you are to go and sin no more.

Chapter six

As we move into chapter six, we temporarily change topics:

Proverbs 6:1-2

My son, if you become surety for your friend,
If you have shaken hands in pledge for a stranger,
You are snared by the words of your mouth;
You are taken by the words of your mouth.

This is talking about debt. And as it has been well said, before lending money to a friend, decide which you need most. But if you borrow, be quick to repay...

Proverbs 6:3-5

So **do this**, my son, and deliver yourself;
For you have come into the hand of your friend:
Go and **humble yourself**;
Plead with your friend.

Give no sleep to your eyes,
Nor slumber to your eyelids.
Deliver yourself like a gazelle from the hand of the hunter,
And like a bird from the hand of the fowler.

Debt is not a good place to be. But we so easily get trapped in it. We say "Let's put it on card - we'll pay it off next month". It is very hard being patient. And so easy to justify our lack of patience because we have grand plans for what we'll do with borrowed money! A car to give lifts. A house for church meetings. A loan for new instruments.

But the Bible says we are to honour the Lord with the firstfruits of our increase, not honour the Lord by borrowing money. If in doubt, approach borrowing in this way:

- Pray that you would receive Godly counsel, and be open to accept it
- Ask yourself if the decision is for your flesh - why do you really want whatever it is?
- Ask yourself if God will be glorified in the decision

But again, if you have to borrow, be as quick to repay as you can.

Next, Solomon gives wisdom for our attitude to work:

Proverbs 6:6-7

Go to the ant, you sluggard!
Consider her ways and be wise,
Which, having no captain,
Overseer or ruler,
Provides her supplies in the summer,
And gathers her food in the harvest.

When Alexander the great had conquered the known world, someone asked him "What is the secret of your success at such a young age?". He answered, "three words: do it now".

Procrastination is damaging. So is laziness. Are you lazy? How well do you work at home? Or unsupervised? Do you steal time from your employer?

The Christian should have an altogether different approach:

Ephesians 6:5-7

Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men,

We continue...

Proverbs 6:9

How long will you slumber, O sluggard?
When will you rise from your sleep?

This isn't just a useful verse to put on a note to slide under your teenagers door! This applies to school and to work! Are you someone who is idle? Do you have a reputation as a hard worker? Again, we are to do all as if doing it directly for Jesus Himself.

Proverbs 6:10-11

A little sleep, a little slumber,
A little folding of the hands to sleep—
So shall your poverty come on you like a prowler,
And your need like an armed man.

Laziness doesn't see the problem coming. I've seen it a few times at work, where those who couldn't be bothered to work hard, found their services were no longer required and were made redundant or fired.

Don't be that person! Of course, do not overwork to be rich. Don't chase silver and gold more than wisdom. But don't go to the other extreme either.

Parents, like Solomon, you have great opportunity to teach your children the value of work. A story is told of a farmer's sons whose job it was to hoe the garden. Someone came by and said, "Why are your sons hoeing your vegetable garden? You don't need those vegetables. You have a whole farm. I'm not raising vegetables," the farmer answered. "I'm raising sons."

Parents - teach your children the value of work.

Next, Solomon warns of the wickedness and pride...

Proverbs 6:12-14

A worthless person, a wicked man,
Walks with a perverse mouth;
He winks with his eyes,
He shuffles his feet,
He points with his fingers;
Perversity is in his heart,
He devises evil continually,
He sows discord.

We are to watch out for the lazy and the wicked. The dreamers and the schemers. For both can cause much difficulty, and neither are examples to follow.

In the case of the wicked man, every thing he does is with poor intent. Even his body language is used to convey his evil intentions. But so is his language.

As Christian's, how we act should be markedly different from this! Yet I've been out with other Christian's and the topic of conversation has been very uncomfortable, very suggestive, and quite frankly, incredibly unhelpful as a single man. Let us not be that way. But may where we go and that which we do with our mouths, eyes, feet, fingers, and heart truly honour the Lord!

Proverbs 6:15

Therefore his calamity shall come suddenly;
Suddenly he shall be broken without remedy.

In the end, a life lived contrary to the Lord will result in an eternity without Him. Now, let's pay close attention to these next verses...

Proverbs 6:16-19

These six things the LORD hates,
Yes, seven are an abomination to Him:
A proud look,
A lying tongue,
Hands that shed innocent blood,
A heart that devises wicked plans,
Feet that are swift in running to evil,
A false witness who speaks lies,
And one who sows discord among brethren.

Here, Solomon lists 7 of the 20 things he will say are an abomination to the Lord. Things that God hates. And if God hates them, we should certainly not be doing them!

And we need to be careful that none of these things creep subtly into our lives. As Matt noted this morning, there are themes in what other churches are asking us to pray for. Unity is one of them. And we continually need that here in our fellowship. So note, if you sow discord among this church, or any church, know that you are an abomination to God!

So stop it!

Proverbs 6:20-22

My son, **keep** your father's command,
And **do not** forsake the law of your mother.
Bind them continually upon your heart;
Tie them around your neck.
When you roam, they will lead you;
When you sleep, they will keep you;
And when you awake, they will speak with you.

The responsibility is two-fold. Children, listen to your parents. But parents, teach your children. Note what we read in Deuteronomy chapter 6:

Deuteronomy 6:6-9

And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Proverbs 6:23

For the commandment is a lamp,
And the law a light;
Reproofs of instruction are the way of life,

Just like Psalm 119 says "Your word is a lamp to my feet, And a light to my path.", so we read here that God's instruction will help you. It will guide you. Yes it will correct you, but you'll find that to be a good and healthy thing too. Remember that whom the Lord loves, he corrects.

And to which area of life does Solomon apply this? To romantic relationships. We read...

Proverbs 6:24-26

To keep you from the evil woman,
From the flattering tongue of a seductress.
Do not lust after her beauty in your heart,
Nor let her allure you with her eyelids.
For by means of a harlot
A man is reduced to a crust of bread;
And an adulteress will prey upon his precious life.

Solomon, perhaps more than many others, knew what was at stake. He had seen the consequences in the life of his parents; David and Bathsheba. And 1 Kings 11:1-13 gives us the context for Solomon's own disobedience in this area, which would have consequences for his children, for the nation, and generations to follow.

And the decisions you make will affect your life, and the lives of others, more than you can likely know in advance. But know this - your choices in relationships, especially in regard to sexual integrity - that is, whether you have sex outside of marriage or not - have extremely far reaching consequences. Indeed, just a moment of lust can destroy your life.

And as Solomon notes in verse 25, you have to guard your heart - for as Jesus said in Matthew 5:

Matthew 5:28

But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Affairs start in the head, before they do in the bed.

Solomon makes it clear:

Proverbs 6:27-32

Can a man take fire to his bosom,
And his clothes not be burned?
Can one walk on hot coals,
And his feet not be seared?
So is he who goes in to his neighbor's wife;
Whoever touches her shall not be innocent.
People do not despise a thief
If he steals to satisfy himself when he is starving.
Yet when he is found, he must restore sevenfold;
He may have to give up all the substance of his house.
Whoever commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding;
He who does so destroys his own soul.

The act of adultery, unlike the hungry thief who steals bread, is not about need. It's about lust. We mustn't get the two confused. For there is something very special about sex. It is not merely a physical act. And Solomon warns - don't destroy your soul!

Proverbs 6:33-35

Wounds and dishonor he will get,
And his reproach will not be wiped away.
For jealousy is a husband's fury;
Therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.
He will accept no recompense,
Nor will he be appeased though you give many gifts.

Oh, but I'd never do that! Really? Don't be so sure.

Chapter seven

As we now move into chapter 7, we'll soon see a stark warning through an example Solomon shares. But first, he pleads again for us to listen, giving 8 commands in the first 4 verses:

Proverbs 7:1-4

My son, **keep** my words,
And **treasure** my commands within you.
Keep my commands and live,
And my law as the apple of your eye.
Bind them on your fingers;
Write them on the tablet of your heart.
Say to wisdom, "You are my sister,"
And **call** understanding your nearest kin,

Do you treasure God's commands? Do you consider obedience a big deal? We need to take this seriously. Why?...

Proverbs 7:5

That they may keep you from the immoral woman,
From the seductress who flatters with her words.

May we, Like David say;

Psalm 119:11

Your word I have hidden in my heart,
That I might not sin against You.

It has been said that most battles are won or lost before they are ever fought. I think that is especially true in relationships, marriage, and purity. If you don't consider now how you'll act then, then you'll face temptation unprepared. And you'll likely yield.

Look at, listen, and learn from the example that Solomon closes this trio of chapters with: an account of a stupid man and immoral woman. We'll see him make 6 mistakes, and whether through her intent, or the strategy of the enemy, we'll see 10 traps or snares laid for him...

Proverbs 7:6-7

For at the window of my house
I looked through my lattice,
And saw among the simple,
I perceived among the youths,
A young man devoid of understanding,

This is the young man's FIRST mistake - for being devoid of understanding has more to do with effort than intellect.

Proverbs 7:8

Passing along the street near her corner;
And he took the path to her house

The SECOND mistake - he went near. Don't go near where you're tempted.

Then the THIRD mistake - he took the wrong path.

Proverbs 7:9

In the twilight, in the evening,
In the black and dark night.

So his FOURTH mistake - in secret. No accountability.

Proverbs 7:10

And there a woman met him,
With the attire of a harlot, and a crafty heart.

And so the FIRST snare is laid - she tries to allure him by dressing provocatively.

Proverbs 7:11

She was loud and rebellious,
Her feet would not stay at home.

The SECOND snare - a rebellious personality. Nothing wrong with outgoing or bubbly. But here we see a girl who is continually wanting to go out out. More interested in partying than praying.

Proverbs 7:12

At times she was outside, at times in the open square,
Lurking at every corner.

This is the THIRD snare - that there many women like this. Not just one. And there are many guys like this too. Solomon uses the example this way round, but ladies do not be fooled for a moment into thinking men don't act immorally! Lurking at every corner.

Proverbs 7:13

So she caught him and kissed him;
With an impudent face she said to him:

This is the FOURTH snare - she started with physical before even talking

Proverbs 7:14

"I have peace offerings with me;
Today I have paid my vows.

And the FIFTH snare - "I'm a Christian", "I believe in God". "I'm a good person". "I'm interested in coming along to church". Don't be fooled by causal spiritual language. Do they REALLY love Jesus? Are they part of a church? Are they serving there? Do they believe the Bible? Is there spiritual fruit in their life? Merely stating they are a Christian in conversation or selecting that on a dating profile isn't good enough.

Proverbs 7:15

So I came out to meet you,
Diligently to seek your face,
And I have found you.

Now the SIXTH snare - making you feel special. We all respond to that, right?!

Finnis Dake notes: She implied that she came to meet him and no one else, but if this young man had not come along, another would have been the same to her.

Proverbs 7:16-17

I have spread my bed with tapestry,
Colored coverings of Egyptian linen.
I have perfumed my bed
With myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.

In these two verses we see the SEVENTH SNARE - she now gets suggestive

Proverbs 7:18

Come, let us take our fill of love until morning;
Let us delight ourselves with love.

The EIGHTH snare? - now she has become explicit, saying what she wants do to with him

And the NINTH snare - this promise this will be amazing! Oh, and how he might enjoy his sin for a season. But he'll reap the terrible reward. And in verses 19-20 we read the shocker...

Proverbs 7:19-20

For my husband is not at home;
He has gone on a long journey;
He has taken a bag of money with him,
And will come home on the appointed day."

Only now does she mention her husband!

And the TENTH and final snare she now lays is to say "there's no risk". But that's not true... look at David & Bathsheba while Uriah was away. Look at the physical risks far too many brush off thinking they'll get away with it.

And what does the young man do in this situation? Sadly, he was ill prepared, and did not respond as Joseph did, saying "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

But we read...

Proverbs 7:21

With her enticing speech she caused him to yield,
With her flattering lips she seduced him.

Now it's too late, and we see his fifth mistake...

Proverbs 7:22

Immediately he went after her, as an ox goes to the slaughter,
Or as a fool to the correction of the stocks,

So his FIFTH mistake is that he yielded. Oh, how sad this is. But what will you do? We read in 2 Timothy:

2 Timothy 2:22

Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

And that fleeing is exactly what Joseph did...

Genesis 39:11-12

But it happened about this time, when Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the house was inside, that she caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me." But he left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran outside.

Was it a happy outcome for Joseph? Not immediately. But oh how well that worked out in the end! But as for this foolish young man we read...

Proverbs 7:23

Till an arrow struck his liver.
As a bird hastens to the snare,
He did not know it would cost his life.

And that is his Sixth mistake - that he didn't think through the consequences of his actions.

He prioritised the instant over the eternal. Just like Esau squandered his birthright for a bowl of soup, this young man followed the lusts and desires of his heart.

So what for us? We need to think about the long game, like Moses, of whom we read in Hebrews 11:

Hebrews 11:24-26

By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.

Solomon closes out this chapter with a final plea:

Proverbs 7:24-26

Now therefore, listen to me, my children;
Pay attention to the words of my mouth:
Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways,
Do not stray into her paths;
For she has cast down many wounded,
And all who were slain by her were strong men.

Be careful if you think you stand strong. Look at how many strong men have failed.

- Samson was physically strong - had won many battles. Knew his strength was from the Lord.
- David was a man after God's own heart.
- Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived.

Do you think you are physically stronger, spiritually focused, or wiser than these men?

I encourage, in fact ask you; pray for your pastor, elders, and those in leadership here. Pray for those in prominent Christian ministries. But pastors especially - for as a pastor you put a large target on your back - if you can hit the shepherd the sheep scatter.

This IS a big deal. We read...

Proverbs 7:27

Her house is the way to hell,
Descending to the chambers of death.

Don't be either person in this story.

Summary

There are several things we can conclude from these chapters, and from the rest of scripture:

- Prostitution is sin (selling or paying for sex)
- Adultery is sin (sex with someone other than your spouse)
- Fornication is sin (sex outside of marriage)
- Lust is sin (lusting for others, pornography included)
- Whoever does these things is unwise, and damages and hurts themselves (let alone others)
- God is gracious, but that's not an excuse for sin (go and sin no more)

Application questions

- Are you involved in any sin that you need to repent of, turn from, ask God's forgiveness for?
- What are you doing to ensure you're not devoid of understanding?
- What are you doing to equip yourself ahead of temptation?

Let's pray.