

CHAPTER 12

Love or Lust? Part 2

How is a Person Trapped?

How do people get off the path of purity? Why do they deviate? Why do they leave God's road of rightness? How do they get trapped? How do they get caught? The book of Proverbs has much to say and much warning to give about this subject, especially in the first nine chapters. Let's take a careful look at how a person can be trapped, caught and destroyed.

The Bait

Sexual relations between a husband and wife is a right and wonderful experience within a marriage. But sexual relations outside of a marriage is a terrible pitfall and the devil has used it to bring ruin and sorrow to many. It is this kind of illicit sex that this chapter of notes is referring to.

Every trap must have bait, and the sex trap is baited by a wicked woman (the "worldly woman" that we have already studied about in Proverbs). She is called the "strange woman" (Proverbs 2:16). She is called the "evil woman" (Proverbs 6:24). She is called a "whorish woman" and an "adulteress" (Proverbs 6:26). She is called a "harlot" and a "whore" (Proverbs 7:10 and 23:27). She is described as a foolish woman who "knows nothing" (Proverbs 9:13). She is "an adulterous woman" who acts in secrecy and covers up her wickedness with lies (Proverbs 30:19-20).

At first glance it would seem that every thinking young man would want to run from such a woman. The way that she is described is appalling, not appealing. And yet she is very successful in alluring and attracting men to herself. We shall now see how she does this.

(Note: In Proverbs the emphasis is upon warning the young man about the wicked woman and very little is said about warning the young woman about the wicked man, but the principles hold true for both. Young ladies ought to find as much practical help from these warnings as young men should.)

The Enticement

Every trap must have something that entices and allures and attracts its victims. A mouse trap uses cheese which appeals to mice. The fish hook uses a wiggling worm which attracts fish. Let's see what the wicked woman uses to catch her prey:

1) **FLATTERY**--She "flatters with her words" (Proverbs 2:16). "Her mouth is smoother than oil" (Proverbs 5:3). See also Proverbs 7:21; 6:24 and compare Proverbs 22:14. She uses "sweet talk." She draws the victim to herself with nice, inviting language. She has charm to her voice and her words pull the man to herself as a magnet.

2) **BEAUTY**--The evil woman is outwardly beautiful (Proverbs 6:24-25). She is attractive to the eyes. She can easily become an object of lust. This beauty is deceptive. It is only skin deep. On the inside she is the most ugly thing you could imagine.

3) **LOCATION**--The evil woman knows where to locate herself so as to be most effective in getting her victims (see Proverbs 7:11-12). A skilled fisherman needs to know where to drop his line. To catch mice you need to know where to place the mousetrap. The evil woman knows where to place herself--at the time and place where the man is most vulnerable.

4) **DECORATIONS**--The evil woman knows how to decorate herself and her surroundings (Proverbs 7:10,16,17). The bait must look attractive, and this is done by clothes, perfumes, make-up, etc. All of this is done to draw attention to herself. In contrast, the believing woman is concerned about **MODESTY** (1 Timothy 2:9). She gives careful thought to what she should wear and how she should dress. She is ashamed of wearing anything that would even suggest indecency or in any way incite lust. She knows that she is not to be conformed to the world's sensuous standards (Rom. 12:2), and must set aside many of the popular fashions of the day. At the same time she ought to display good taste in the clothing she wears, not drawing attention to herself with extremism in either direction: "Be not the first by whom the new is tried, nor yet the last to lay the old aside." The message that comes from the life and witness of a modest believing woman is this: "Look at Christ living in me (Gal. 2:20). I belong to the Son of God." Such a woman, sad to say, is rare (Proverbs 31:10). On the other hand, by her dress (or lack of dress) the immodest woman is saying, "Look at me! Look at what I am! Look at what I offer! Look at my body!"

5) **ARRANGEMENTS**--The wicked woman tries to make all the necessary arrangements so that the victim will think that he can spend time with her and get away with it. See Proverbs 7:14 and 7:19-20. This idea is something like this: "It's all arranged. It's all set up. No one will ever know that you were with me. You can do it and get away with it and you will not suffer any ill effects or bad consequences. Everything has been taken care of; there is nothing to worry about and there is no reason why you should not do this!"

6) **THE FINAL INVITATION**--See Proverbs 7:18,21 and Proverbs 9:16-17. By now she is irresistible. The mouse must go for the cheese and the fish must go for the worm. She has him right where she wants him. Now she moves in for the kill!

The Trap

What a surprise when a fish bites a soft worm and feels a sharp hook! What a surprise when a mouse goes for the cheese and gets whammed on the neck with a fatal blow! The same is true for the man who falls for the wicked woman's trap. It appeared so **SWEET** and so **SMOOTH** (Proverbs 5:3) but it ended up so **BITTER** and so **SHARP** (Proverbs 5:4)!

This trap is described in Proverbs 22:14 and 23:27-28 (the whorish woman waits to catch her victims). The man is caught and trapped by his own sin (Proverbs 5:22). This same trap is described in James 1:13-15. Note especially verse 14--it was not **LOVE** that got the person trapped; it was **LUST**!

The Kill (the consequences)

The mouse ends up dead. This fish ends up on the fisherman's plate. The book of Proverbs has much to say about the terrible consequences of deviating from God's sexual standards. The strongest language is used. Consider the following:

Proverbs 2:18 (death)
Proverbs 2:19 (the way of no return)
Proverbs 5:5 (death and hell)
Proverbs 5:23 (death)
Proverbs 6:26 (brought to ruin)
Proverbs 6:29 (guilty)
Proverbs 6:32 (his own soul is destroyed)
Proverbs 9:18 (death and hell)

In addition to the strong language used in the above verses, the book of Proverbs tells us about other consequences. In Proverbs 2:19 we are told how damaging sexual sin can be. Many never recover from it. By God's grace some do recover, but even then there are scars that remain. Immorality results in a loss of time, money and reputation and it leaves the person with deep shame and regret (see Proverbs 5:9-11). Such a man is seen as a FOOL (Proverbs 5:23). He is burdened with great guilt (Proverbs 6:29). He becomes the object of wrathful revenge (Proverbs 6:34-35). His sin results in scars and wounds which will never be healed. The sin can be forgiven by the grace of God but often the damage that was done cannot be undone. Many times the lives of others are adversely affected as well.

Such consequences are to be expected. To those who deviate from God's sexual standards the Lord says, "I WILL JUDGE!" (Hebrews 13:4). This judgment is twofold:

1) **JUDGMENT IN ETERNITY.** What does 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 tell us about those whose lives are marked by fornication, adultery or homosexuality?

_____ Apart from the saving grace of God (1 Corinthians 6:11), there is no hope for these people in eternity. They must suffer the consequences of their sins FOREVER!

2) **JUDGMENT IN TIME.** Sometimes God allows wicked men and women to prosper and to get away with things in TIME. In ETERNITY this will be corrected (see Psalm 73:3 which speaks of TIME and Psalm 73:17 which speaks of ETERNITY). Yet, often even in this life people suffer the consequences of their sins. We have already mentioned some of these consequences: loss of money (money is the motivating force behind pornography and prostitution), loss of reputation, deep scars that remain, shame, regret, guilt and the possibility of receiving physical harm at the hands of a revengeful person (such as the woman's angry husband). In our day much is being said about the terrible diseases which are spread by means of the wrong kind of sexual contact (those who never deviate from God's path of purity rarely get such diseases). The few moments of sensual pleasure are certainly not worth all of the lasting consequences that result.

The Foolish Victim

In Proverbs 7:6-27 God gives us a bird's eye view of a foolish man who was trapped by a wicked woman (some of these verses have already been discussed in this chapter). Here God gives us an example NOT TO FOLLOW. We are to learn a lesson from this foolish man and it should serve as a warning to us.

It is sad when warnings are not heeded. People are informed repeatedly about how harmful cigarettes are to one's future health, and yet they still smoke. People are told of the serious health problems that large amounts of alcohol can cause to the body, and yet they still get drunk. The person may think, "These serious problems may happen to others, but they will never happen to me." What is wrong with this kind of thinking? The sexual dangers warned about here in Proverbs should not be taken lightly. Ignore these warnings at your own peril.

How Can A Person Keep From Getting Trapped?

1. **Don't LUST after a woman:** " _____ not after her _____ in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids" (Proverbs 6:25). The Lord Jesus said it this way: "whosoever _____ on a woman to _____ after her hath committed adultery with her already in his _____" (Matthew 5:28). God does not say, "DON'T LOOK!" but He does say, "DON'T LUST!" We need to learn to be able to look at people in a good and healthy way. We need to see people as persons, not as mere bodies. We need to look beyond the skin and learn to be concerned for the person who lives in the body. LUST sees a body; LOVE is concerned for a person.

2. **Avoid anything that could serve as a springboard to lust.**

"Thine eyes (the eyes of a drunkard) shall behold strange women" (Proverbs 23:33). This verse was studied in the previous chapter of notes dealing with "The Bottle and You." If there is anything that could tend to incite lust (alcohol, a certain magazine, a TV program, etc.) then I need to avoid it. LOVE needs to be cultivated, not LUST.

3. **Don't even get near the object of LUST.**

Keep your distance. "Remove thy way _____ from her, and come not _____ the door of her house" (Proverbs 5:8). If a man takes fire in his bosom, do you think his clothes will be burned (Proverbs 6:27)? _____ If a man goes upon hot coals, do you think his feet will be burned (Proverbs 6:28)? _____ In the same way, if a young man deliberately allows himself to be near and with the wrong kind of woman, then he will get caught in sin (Proverbs 6:29). Be not like the fool of Proverbs 7:7-8. Instead keep your distance (Proverbs 7:25).

4. **Refuse to go in the direction of LUST.**

Why? "That thou mayest walk in the way of good men, and keep the _____ of the righteous" (Proverbs 2:20). Joseph knew how to REFUSE the invitation of a wicked woman (Genesis 39:7-8). He knew how to firmly say "NO! NEVER!" He knew how to say "NO!" again and again (Genesis 39:10 "day by day").

5. **Remember how serious and how great sin is.**

Again Joseph is our example. Notice his words in Genesis 39:9--"How then can I do this _____ wickedness and sin _____." He feared God so much that he was afraid to sin! Most people do not see how terrible the sin is until AFTER they

fall into it! Joseph, because he believed God and feared God, saw how terrible the sin was BEFORE he fell into it, and this kept him from falling!

6. Remember that God sees all that we do.

"For the ways of man are before the _____ of the LORD and He pondereth _____ His goings" (Proverbs 5:21). Others may not see (Proverbs 7:19) and others may not even know that anything was done (see Proverbs 30:19-20, not a trace was left of what was done), but God sees all. Most people say that they believe that God knows all and sees all, but most people really do not believe this. "If the eye of a man or even a child is upon him, then a person will not do certain things that he might do if unseen. Yet the thought of an all-seeing God, even if it enters his mind inspires no alarm, conviction or restraint" (Charles Bridges in his commentary on Proverbs 5:20-23).

7. There is a time when one must run.

"F _____ also youthful _____" (2 Tim. 2:22). Again Joseph is our example (see Genesis 39:12 and compare 1 Corinthians 6:18). "FLEE" means to run away from. It is impossible for a person to engage in illicit sex while sprinting! But as you flee (run away) from the wrong things, make sure that you PURSUE (run to) that which is right--see 1 Timothy 6:11!

8. Look beyond our immediate "wants" and be sure to see where your lustful actions will take you.

Think about the consequences before you have to face the consequences. The "pleasure" of a moment is not worth the pain that will result. This is why Proverbs has so much to say about the consequences of deviating from the path of purity.

9. Choose Wisdom's Woman.

Proverbs chapter 9 presents two women and it also presents two identical invitations (verse 4 and verse 16) which come from these two very different women. Which woman will you choose? Which woman will be your Companion as you walk down life's road? Proverbs chapter one presents the tragedy of the person who refuses wisdom's call (see verses 20-33).

10. The heart is the key.

"Keep thy _____ with all diligence; for out of it are the _____ of _____" (Proverbs 4:23). LUST originates in the heart (Matthew 5:28). Sexual sins proceed from the heart of man (Mark 7:21-23). Joseph successfully overcame temptation. Why? Because he had a heart that was with God, and God was with him. Only when a person has a healthy LOVE-RELATIONSHIP with the Lord can a person learn to manifest LOVE towards others and to avoid sinful LUST. How is your heart? Is your heart right with God? If not, how can it be?

KEEP THYSELF PURE!

(1 TIMOTHY 5:22)

A CONTRAST

THE VOLUPTUOUS WOMAN	THE VIRTUOUS WOMAN
Described in the first 9 chapters of Proverbs	Described in Proverbs chapter 31
SHE IS LEWD (Proverbs 6:24; 2:17).	SHE IS LOYAL (Proverbs 31:11).
SHE IS A HOME BREAKER (Proverbs 7).	SHE IS A HOME MAKER (Proverbs 31).
SHE IS EASY TO FIND (Proverbs 7:10-12).	SHE IS HARD TO FIND (a rare gem) (Proverbs 31:10).
SHE IS CHEAP (Proverbs 30:20)	SHE IS PRECIOUS (Proverbs 31:10).
SHE HAS OUTER BEAUTY Surface attraction (Proverbs 6:25).	SHE HAS INNER BEAUTY Heart attraction (Proverbs 31:30; 1 Peter 3:4).
SHE WORKS WITH HER MOUTH (lively lips but no life) (Proverbs 21:9,19; 25:24 etc.).	SHE WORKS WITH HER HANDS (a lovely life producing loving words) (Proverbs 31, many verses).
SHE IS RELIGIOUS (Proverbs 7:14).	SHE IS RIGHT WITH GOD (Proverbs 31:30).
SHE IS OUTSIDE THE HOME (Proverbs 7:11-12).	SHE ABIDES IN THE HOME (Proverbs 31:27).
SHE DOES HER HUSBAND NOTHING BUT HARM (Proverbs 2:17).	SHE DOES HER HUSBAND GOOD (Proverbs 31:12).
SHE IS ON THE LOOSE AT NIGHT (Proverbs 7:9,18).	SHE IS RESTING AT NIGHT SO SHE CAN AWAKE EARLY (Proverbs 31:15).
SHE KILLS HER VICTIMS (Proverbs 7:23).	SHE BLESSES HER FAMILY (Proverbs 31:28).
SHE LIVES BY LUST (Proverbs 7:10).	SHE LIVES BY LOVE (Proverbs 31:20).

DANGEROUS SPARRING PARTNER



"ABSTAIN FROM FLESHLY LUSTS, WHICH WAR AGAINST THE SOUL"
— 1 PET. 2:11

JACK HANBY

"As a Man Thinketh within Himself, So Is He"

