

## **Wisdom for Temptations that can wreck a marriage.**

Proverbs 5

So let's review for a moment where we have been in this series on marriage. We heard from Genesis 2 how we were created to be suitable helpers for each other as men and women, husbands and wives. We were meant to be companions for each other and to complement each other with the gifts we have each been given.

We heard from 1 John 4 that we are called to love each other the way the God has loved us, daring to take the initiative and always being practical. Our love always means action.

This morning we are talking about temptations that can threaten our marriages. In particular there is one kind of temptation that can wreck everything.

We will hear it from the book of Proverbs. If you want to grow in wisdom, this is the book to read. If you want your children to grow up as wise and strong people who know how to avoid disastrous mistakes, this is the book to read. Read it with your family when you are sitting around the table after supper.

In chapter 5 God speaks through the voice of a father or mother talking to their son or sons: Maybe he is just married or planning to get married. Maybe they have just gathered the boys together for 'a talk'.

Let's listen:

So the chapter starts by saying “listen up, ”. “Pay attention now, this is important”. Put that ipod away, stop texting, put down your pencil and turn off the TV.”

This could save you from pain worse than death.

There is a kind of woman out there you need to know about. She’s a sweet talker, a smooth operator. She will flirt with you and make eyes at you and hang over your desk at work and make sure you see that her skirt is just nicely on the tight side. If you wind up sitting next to her on an airplane she might pretend that she can’t do up her seat belt, or she will lean across you more than is necessary.

She says exactly what you want to hear.

Especially when you are feeling miserable or maybe you and your wife are not getting along so well, she is all sympathy, all understanding, all compassion.

Of course she is because you’ve never left laundry on her floor, and she has only heard one side of the sad story you’ve got to tell. She only sees one side of the person you are. And you can be pretty smooth too. (‘still got it’)

But sons, you’ve got to know this: She does not give a rat’s behind for the kids who call you dad. She does not respect the woman who promised her life to you. She doesn’t care about the people who celebrated your wedding, your parents, grandparents and friends. She does not even truly care for you.

And, in time, you will see the real person you are talking to and it won’t be pretty.

You will hear a harsh voice in time. Her way is the way of death.

You need to know what to say to her, “No thanks!”

Here is what you do:

**“don’t even go there”.**

Don’t even go to the places that present a temptation to you.

Don’t even go to the places that will threaten your marriage. Don’t be a fool and think that you can play with fire a little bit or ‘have a little fun’ on the side.

So here is what I was wondering:

If Proverbs were written today, what might they also warn about?

If this ‘mom and dad’ were speaking to you today, what might they warn about?

Or, if you are a parent, grandparent or friend, what might you warn your friend, grandchild, or children to avoid?

There’s a space on your outline, take a moment to think about that and jot down the kinds of things you think Proverbs might address today if it were written today. Save the list and share it with your children later today, or with your family at lunch or supper, or at least one real person.

Here’s my list:

1. **It would be directed to both genders.** There are ‘adulterers’ out there, men who are sweet talking, smooth operators. Women need to be aware and awake and wise.
2. Warn us about behaving in provocative or inviting ways.
3. Certainly pornography, soft or hard core would be addressed

4. Phones, Movies, Internet videos, Advertising that uses sexual images  
TV shows that depend on skin. (Why will they never do a survivor North Pole?)
5. Chat rooms where you can get intimate with strangers
6. Books and novels that go into way more detail than is necessary
7. Sex outside of marriage
8. Friends who think any of the above is just good times.

### **How to deal with these temptations?**

**Pray, Break your train of thought, “Don’t be a fool”, Recruit someone you trust to hold you accountable/spouse!**

So why is this stuff such a big deal?

Proverbs 5 says it is such a big deal because this is an area that is so powerful that it can wreck our lives. We really need to be wise here.

Did you notice how Verses 9-14 sound so contemporary?

They sound like support payments. I met someone once who was making support payments to two different women with whom he had children, and now was living with a third with whom he also had a baby. He was working all the time and not getting any where.

Verses 9-14 could be read after every sad apology of every tearful politician who has to give the most dreaded news conference. Before this week, South Carolina governor Mark Sanford was being talked about as a potential

Republican nominee for the presidency of the United States in 2012. He may still be, but his unfaithfulness to his wife, his family became unfaithfulness to his entire state when he lied about where he was when he was really in Argentina.

Sexual unfaithfulness or promiscuity erodes our own ability to form a real bond with a real person and be fully known by that person. Promiscuity or other actions before marriage can mean that we bring a sense of shame or having stuff we really don't want our partners to know about into our marriage. That's hard on a marriage.

Within marriage, if we do something else for our own sexual gratification, the sexual energy that is such a necessary spark in our marriages is gone.

It is such a big deal because the hardest thing for our spouses to experience and to recover from is betrayal of trust. The deeper the trust, the more painful the betrayal.

It is such a big deal because our children count on us to be faithful to their other parent.

I hope you do not have the impression that the Bible or Proverbs are negative or fearful about marriage. It's actually the exact opposite. It is because God wants our marriages to be real and whole and good that the warnings are so strong and pointed.

So let's go to the positive part of this chapter.

Verse 15....

“Drink water from your own cistern”, “running water from your own well”.  
Before modern plumbing everyone depended on their own well, on their own small farm. The well, the cistern, the fountain meant survival and life.

Water refreshes us.

In Proverbs the well, the cistern, the stream and fountain are images to say in poetry what a great sexual relationship with the one person that we have committed our lives to can be like.

It is such a big deal because when sexual intimacy is shared with one person within the bonds of a relationship of committed, public faithfulness called marriage, it is life giving and refreshes the relationship.

It's energizing for your marriage.

Lifegiving.

Refreshing.

It is fun.

It is sacred.

It makes every other part of our marriage stronger and better.

It's not to be shared around with strangers. Of course not.

So these parents point their sons back to their wives and speak these wonderful, sensual words of blessing.

May you rejoice in the wife of your youth, may her body ever satisfy you, may you be ever captivated by her love.

May you ever rejoice in the husband of your youth. May his body ever satisfy you, may you be ever captivated by his love.

May you be the best selves that you can be for each other.

Take care of your body, because once you are married, it does not only belong to you.

Did you know that it says this in 1 Corinthians 7?

<sup>3</sup>The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. <sup>4</sup>The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. <sup>5</sup>Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

Get away together, dress up for each other. Be open with each other, honest with each other, spoil each other, delight in each other, be faithful to each other and be wise about the temptations. Ask for your spouse's help in dealing with those temptations. As spouses, be open with your husband or your wife when you sense danger to your marriage.

The chapter ends with two reminders. Nothing we do is hidden from the Lord. The Lord who loves us, who wants us to live in solid, lasting, refreshing marriages, the Lord God who gave his son Jesus for us. In him we find forgiveness for every kind of sin.

And forgiveness is what we will focus on in the next message in this series, on July 19.

May the Lord be gracious to you.

May the Lord be gracious to me. And all God's people said, Amen.

Pastor John Luth, Christian Reformed Church of St. Albert June 28, 2009