

## Proverbs 7 – Wisdom Exceeds Intention

Saying the right thing in a given situation is fairly easy. Yet, it is something else entirely to act in accordance with the things we say. Anyone can make a statement that sounds good and is approved by others, but we show the worth of our words when we back up our words with action that shows we truly mean what we say.

Another way to say this is that wisdom is not found in mere intellectual assent or even the very best of intentions; wisdom requires action. We may intend to follow Christ faithfully in the wisdom He gives, but unless we follow this intention with action and direction – our intention does us no good.

Many people resist God's wisdom entirely because of the gulf between wisdom and action. They struggle to reconcile the hypocrisy of words and action that do not match.

But the father in Proverbs 7 did not want the wisdom he gave his son to simply be "a good idea my dad shared one time." God's wisdom is far more than that. So the father implored his son to let the wisdom he received exceed intention. Regarding those wise instruction, the father used words like obey, treasure, keep and guard. (vv 1-2). He told him to tie them to his fingers, and write them on the tablet of his heart (v 3). Then to drive the point home even further, he told him the story of seduction (vv 6-27).

The father had seen with his own eyes the failure of good intentions when a young man gave into seduction. Because the young man did not obey, treasure, keep and guard God's wisdom, he paid the full price – his life. The father knew his own son, like all of us, would be deceived by and attracted to forbidden things in life. He could not emphasize wisdom for him - or us – enough. God's instructions are not merely good knowledge or intentions to possess; they are a life-giving treasure we must choose to live out daily.

### Warning Against the Adulterous Woman

I believe that the Bible teaches us to memorize scripture the way an ant gathers food in summer: because it is valuable and will be needed in the winter months. *"[The ant] prepares her food in the summer, and gathers her provision in the harvest"* (Proverbs 6:8). Memorizing scripture is not a discipline for its own sake. It is because the scriptures are a treasure and will be needed done to help you escape a sinful attitude and live a life that glorifies God.

*7 My son, keep my words and store up my commands within you. 2 Keep my commands and you will live; guard my teachings as the apple of your eye. 3 Bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart. 4 Say to wisdom, "You are my sister," and to insight, "You are my relative." 5 They will keep you from the adulterous woman, from the wayward woman with her seductive words.*

The point is that even as the pupil (the eye) is a symbol of something most precious thing, it is carefully protected. In the same way, we are to give constant attention and care to the Word of God. We are to guard these teachings because they give spiritual and moral sight.

It is necessary the apple of your eye, that most tender part of the body! With the same care preserve the Word of God. Let every word have its full weight. To explain it away or to lower its requirements breaks down their effectiveness and gives temptation an easy way in. As the pupil of the eye, the hole or the iris, through which the rays of light pass, and falling upon the retina, there represents every object in its natural color. Now the pupil of the eye being essentially necessary to sight, and easily injured, it is not only deeply entrenched in the skull, protected by the forehead and cheek bones, the eyebrows, eyelids, and eyelashes. It is placed so that it is protected by the hands. It is also contracted or dilated by the iris, without which excess light would cause instant blindness.

Let God's commands be available for constant use. Bind them on your fingers. In this way they will always be in sight and in front of you, so they can protect you and be ready whenever they are needed. So they can be used in a practical way, write them on the tablet of your heart. [Jeremiah 31:33](#) *"This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time," declares the Lord. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people."*

*<sup>4</sup> Say to wisdom, "You are my sister," and to insight, "You are my relative." <sup>5</sup> They will keep you from the adulterous woman, from the wayward woman with her seductive words.*

A sister is someone with whom you are in constant contact with because you value the relationship. John 8:1-11 When the woman who was caught in adultery was brought to Jesus, He bent his face to the ground and wrote on the dust. The woman found in Jesus the answer of her need.

In Him, was restored the vision of the sweet mother or of the angel sister of God. Women find strength in Jesus. Men find in Him the tender; thoughtful sympathy to which they can confidently, entrust themselves. 2 Corinthians 12:9 *<sup>9</sup> But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.* We are born for the infinity and Divine.

What guards one from an adulteress man or woman? Godly wisdom and understanding. Wisdom is the right use of knowledge or the ability to think and act utilizing knowledge. Wisdom is the ability to judge correctly and to follow the best course of action, based on knowledge. Note that it is not enough to have knowledge but it must

work itself out in wise living (wisdom). Wisdom is the exercise of sound judgment either in avoiding evils or attempting good.

### Falling into Temptation

Proverbs 7:6-9 describes a young man who falls into temptation after being enticed by a seductive woman. How can we be aware of potential pitfalls and avoid falling into temptation, whether it is in the area of relationships, substance abuse or other harmful behaviors?

*<sup>6</sup> At the window of my house I looked down through the lattice. <sup>7</sup> I saw among the simple, I noticed among the young men, a youth who had no sense. <sup>8</sup> He was going down the street near her corner, walking along in the direction of her house <sup>9</sup> at twilight, as the day was fading, as the dark of night set in.*

Solomon speaks as if he had witnessed the drama that He describes. A youth who lacks judgment is in the company of young people as simple as he is. He refuses to learn. To achieve moral and spiritual maturity, one must be encouraged to receive discretion and caution, to understand wisdom, and to constantly seek wisdom. Otherwise, he may drift into temptation and then sin. Apart from godly guidance, he is on the road to death (Pr 7:7; 22:3).

A naive person lacks worldly experience, worldly wisdom or informed judgment. Youth is a time of life when we have too much pride to be controlled by others, and too little wisdom to control ourselves. His first step toward her house is a mistake and as he comes closer, his way of escape, his window of opportunity decreases, so that his lust was well on its way to picturing and bringing forth sin. 1Co 10:13 <sup>13</sup> *No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.)*

### Avoiding Temptation

The story of Joseph in Genesis 39:1-23 illustrates this situation and the necessary action. Notice that in Ge 39:11 Joseph went into the house to do business. In Genesis 39, it reads...

*So [Potiphar] left everything he owned in Joseph's charge; and with him there he did not concern himself with anything except the food which he ate. Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance...Now it happened one day that he went into the house to do his work and none of the men of the household was there inside. <sup>12</sup> And [Potiphar's wife tried to seduce Joseph and] caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me!" And he left his garment in her hand and fled and went outside. (Ge 39:6,11,12). Joseph was not "looking for sin.*

**Rich Cathar** illustrates the nature of sin with "**The Five Chapter Book**"...

**Chapter One:** A man was walking down the street. He fell into a hole. He fumbled around in the darkness. After a long time, he made his way out of the hole.

**Chapter Two:** A man was walking down the same street. He pretended not to see the hole. He fell in. After a long time, he made his way out of the hole.

**Chapter Three:** A man was walking down the same street. He sees the hole. He falls in. He says it's not his fault. After a long time, he made his way out of the hole.

**Chapter Four:** A man walks down the same street. He sees the hole. He knows it's there. He tries to walk around it. He falls in. He knows it's his fault. He quickly gets out.

**Chapter Five:** A man takes another street.

#### Be Discerning about Life's Influences

How can we be discerning about the influences in our lives and seek out healthy relationships that encourage us to grow and make wise choices.

*<sup>10</sup> Then out came a woman to meet him, dressed like a prostitute and with crafty intent. <sup>11</sup> (She is unruly and defiant, her feet never stay at home; <sup>12</sup> now in the street, now in the squares, at every corner she lurks.)*

Crafty speaks of someone who is secretive or wily. This is an unbalanced contest between a simple young man, who lacks wisdom and truth, and a cunning woman, who knows her goal, but hides her true intentions. This woman likely watches at the window, ready to pounce on her young prey dressing in a manner attract men searching for her services (Ge 38:14).

What a vivid picture of the adulteress who is on prowl looking for someone to entice into sin. Compare with God's warning to Cain of "sin crouching at the door" like a wild animal in Genesis 4:5-7 *<sup>3</sup> In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord. <sup>4</sup> And Abel also brought an offering—fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering, <sup>5</sup> but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.*

*<sup>6</sup> Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? <sup>7</sup> If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it."*

## Being Aware of Deceptive Behavior

Proverbs 7:13-20 describes the seductive tactics of the woman, including flattery and the enticing promises of pleasure. How can we be aware of manipulative or deceptive behavior in others and avoid being drawn in by false promises or flattery?

*<sup>13</sup> She took hold of him and kissed him and with a brazen face she said: <sup>14</sup> "Today I fulfilled my vows, and I have food from my fellowship offering at home. <sup>15</sup> So I came out to meet you; I looked for you and have found you! <sup>16</sup> I have covered my bed with colored linens from Egypt. <sup>17</sup> I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes and cinnamon. <sup>18</sup> Come, let's drink deeply of love till morning; let's enjoy ourselves with love! <sup>19</sup> My husband is not at home; he has gone on a long journey. <sup>20</sup> He took his purse filled with money and will not be home till full moon."*

Notice that she seized him, kissed him, and convinced him that it was an opportune time for him to visit her. The scripture describes her audacity and bold disrespect (for God's law, for marriage, for her husband). Her face expressed the fact that she was shameless and brazen.

Apparently she had gone to the temple, given peace offering (Lev 7:11-21), and now had some of the meat at home. Having offered sacrifices, she had a good supply of meat on hand and urged her victim to share it with her, since it had to be eaten right away. She appeals to the naive young man's ego flattering him and making him think he is special to her.

**Come let us drink** - She is using a figure of speech that likens sexual relations to drinking from a fountain. Adultery is not true love, but mere physical gratification.

**My husband is not at home** - This is the assurance that his sin won't be found out, but that's naive because Scripture clearly teaches that nothing is hidden that will not be revealed. "One danger of secret sin is that a person cannot commit it without its being eventually betrayed into a public sin. (see Numbers 32:23)

## The Allure of Sin

Proverbs 7:21-23 speaks of the allure of sin and the need for discernment and self-control. How can we rely on the Holy Spirit for strength and guidance, to resist temptation and the lies of the enemy, and to live in the freedom and victory that Christ has won for me?

*<sup>21</sup> With persuasive words she led him astray; she seduced him with her smooth talk. <sup>22</sup> All at once he followed her like an ox going to the slaughter, like a deer stepping into a noose <sup>23</sup> till an arrow pierces his liver, like a bird darting into a snare, little knowing it will cost him his life.*

Sometimes temptation comes with sense of urgency, with a “hurry up and do it now” mentality. When something has to be done right away, it is rarely a good thing. Solomon reminds us later of a similar picture: *Like a city that is broken into and without walls Is a man who has no control over his spirit.* ([Pr 25:28](#)). Self-discipline, self-control preserves and keeps us from danger. 1 Corinthians 9 <sup>24</sup> *Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize.* <sup>25</sup> *Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.* <sup>26</sup> *Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air.* <sup>27</sup> *No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.*

### Commit to Living Godly Values

Proverbs 7:24-27 warns against the dangers of falling into temptation and urges us to hold fast to wisdom and understanding. How can we prioritize our pursuit of wisdom and make choices that reflect a commitment to living according to God's values?

<sup>24</sup> *Now then, my sons, listen to me; pay attention to what I say.* <sup>25</sup> *Do not let your heart turn to her ways or stray into her paths.* <sup>26</sup> *Many are the victims she has brought down; her slain are a mighty throng.*

This is a "life and death" issue. Hearing is vital. In warfare if we mishear or misinterpret or fail to obey the commander, we may pay for it with our lives. In spiritual battle for our souls the outcome is no different and even potentially worse ([1Pe 2:11](#) - <sup>11</sup> *Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul.* ([Mt 10:28](#) - <sup>28</sup> *Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.*

And Samuel said to disobedient King Saul, *"Has the LORD as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams.* ([1Sa 15:22](#)) Saul did not obey and it cost him everything - including his kingdom and eventually his life!

Do not take the first step, and do not think that you can stop yourself when you want to. Only a fool believes that they can "handle" the temptation. Just ONE LOOK is all it took for the fish to take the bait and be hooked and end up caught and dead. Just one look of a man after God's own heart ([Acts 13:22+](#)) is all it took to bring irreparable damage to David's family ([2 Sa 11:1-5](#)).

## Avoid Unnecessary Risk

Proverbs 7:27 warns that those who stray into temptation will “go down to the chambers of death.” How can you be mindful of the stakes involved in the choices you make and avoid taking unnecessary risks that could jeopardize your physical, emotional or spiritual health?

*<sup>27</sup> Her house is a highway to the grave, leading down to the chambers of death.*

Look at the footsteps of the strong men who have gone in “the house.” (Samson—David—Solomon). None of them came out whole. Let’s not be blinded. The eye of God sees a far deeper corruption than appears on the outside.