

## THE LIFE OF SOLOMON: SOLOMON'S SIN

### SESSION #22: Proverbs 5:1-23

#### TEXT:

v. 1 My son, pay attention to my wisdom, listen well to my words of insight,  
v. 2 that you may maintain discretion and your lips may preserve knowledge.  
v. 3 For the lips of an adulteress drip honey, and her speech is smoother than oil;  
v. 4 but in the end she is bitter as gall, sharp as a double-edged sword.  
v. 5 Her feet go down to death; her steps lead straight to the grave.  
v. 6 She gives no thought to the way of life; her paths are crooked, but she knows it not.  
v. 7 Now then, my sons, listen to me; do not turn aside from what I say.  
v. 8 Keep to a path far from her, do not go near the door of her house,  
v. 9 lest you give your best strength to others and your years to one who is cruel,  
v.10 lest strangers feast on your wealth and your toil enrich another man's house.  
v.11 At the end of your life you will groan, when your flesh and body are spent.  
v.12 You will say, "How I hated discipline! How my heart spurned correction!  
v.13 I would not obey my teachers or listen to my instructors.  
v.14 I have come to the brink of utter ruin in the midst of the whole assembly."  
v.15 Drink water from your own cistern, running water from your own well.  
v.16 Should your springs overflow in the streets, your streams of water in the public squares?  
v.17 Let them be yours alone, never to be shared with strangers.  
v.18 May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth.  
v.19 A loving doe, a graceful deer—may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be captivated by her love.  
v.20 Why be captivated, my son, by an adulteress? Why embrace the bosom of another man's wife?  
v.21 For a man's ways are in full view of the Lord, and he examines all his paths.

v.22 The evil deeds of a wicked man ensnare him; the cords of his sin hold him fast.

v.23 He will die for lack of discipline, led astray by his own great folly.

## INTRODUCTION:

While driving west this summer, I listened to a Classic Cowboy Music Network for a period of time and picked up some new:

### COUNTRY MUSIC ONE-LINERS

1. LORD, I HOPE THIS DAY IS GOOD. I'M FEELIN' EMPTY AND MISUNDERSTOOD.
2. I GOT WANDERIN' EYES BUT MY HEART ALWAYS STAYS HERE AT HOME.
3. YOU TOOK A FINE TIME TO LEAVE TO LEAVE ME LUCILLE, WITH FOUR HUNGRY CHILDREN AND A CROP IN THE FIELD.
4. TONIGHT I'M SITTIN' ALONE PICKIN' UP BONES.
5. IT'S GONNA TAKE A LOT OF RIVER TO WASH THESE BLUES AWAY.
6. WAKE ME UP EARLY, BE GOOD TO MY DOG, AND TEACH MY CHILDREN TO PRAY.
7. WHEN I DIE I MAY NOT GO TO HEAVEN, I DON'T KNOW IF THEY LET COWBOYS IN. IF THEY DON'T LET ME GO TO TEXAS, 'CAUSE TEXAS IS AS CLOSE AS I'VE BEEN.

(Cow Pies & Candle Lights by G. T. Burton)

### QUOTABLE NOTABLE

Randy Jones and Bugger Red  
Met old man Clifton Brown,  
Who usually wore bib overalls  
Every time he came to town.  
But Brown looked mighty different,  
Wearing a brand new suit,  
A silken shirt and pinky ring;  
That ol' Clifton was a beaut'.

Red asked if he was preachin'  
But Brown just shook his head,  
His wife told him to see the doc;  
Said that his amour had fled.  
"The saw-bones looked me over,  
From liver to my heart,  
He just sez I am impo'nt  
So's I thought I'd look the part".

p. 38

### THE OPHTHALMOLOGIST

Randy Jones and Bugger Red,  
Watchin' "Cross Eyed" Billy Burt,  
Tryin' to thread a little needle  
So that he could mend his shirt.  
Bugger said: "Just look at him,  
Ain't neither eye can track,  
I'll bet that every time he cries  
The tears roll down his back".

"You're surely right", said Randy,  
"An I've known him twenty years,  
The big boys used to make him cry  
So's we could watch the tears.  
Some doctor's worked a lot with him,  
Wont relate enough to weary ya',  
They turned up something kind'a strange.  
That's how they found bac-teria".

p. 62

Cal Thomas wrote a wonderful piece that was in the Tyler paper. He tells of his childhood growing up with Roy Rogers and Dale Evans being his heroes. I have that in common with Cal Thomas. He says in his article:

### **Enjoying Lunch Of Lifetime With Roy And Dale**

After many stories and questions were answered, we prepared to leave. I asked if they would mind posing for a picture with us. Both got out of their wheelchairs and a photograph I will treasure more than those with presidents I have known is the one of the four of us with our arms around each other.

At the end of one of his shows, Roy removed his hat, bowed his head and invited viewers to join him in "A Cowboy's Prayer." He said, "Oh Lord, I reckon I'm not much by myself. I fail to do a lot of things I ought to do. But Lord, when trails are steep and passes high, help me to ride it straight the whole way through. And when in the falling dusk I get the final call, I do not care how many flowers they send. Above all else, the happiest trail will be for you to say to me, 'That's right, my friend.' Amen."

Roy has now joined his children, Robin, Debbie and Sandy at the end of his final and happiest trail of all. Happy trails, Roy, 'til we meet again.

(Roy Rogers quoted by *Los Angeles Times Syndicate*)

In our study of the LIFE OF KING SOLOMON, we are fast coming on the CONCLUSION OF HIS LIFE AND REIGN as king over the nation Israel.

In our last episode we were saddened by the fact that Solomon had refused to respond to the Lord's admonitions not to be involved with foreign women for the potential of turning his heart away from the Lord would be very great.

This has happened! Solomon has built some high places for several of the gods and goddesses of his seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines.

In this particular episode I felt we needed to go back to the BOOK OF PROVERBS and there see some of the things that Solomon has written. Perhaps these words that are going to be studied today in Proverbs 5 come from personal experience. Perhaps they are messages given by his father David and now he is passing these same instructions on to Rehoboam. I do not know, but the advice is very pungent and pointed and is much needed in the day in which we live.

Satan is having a hay-day in the realm of the sexual.

David McCasland has written a wonderful book called:

(Pinstripe Parables: Searching Stories About Things That Matter Most to a Man by David C. McCasland)

## MIDLIFE CRISIS

Audio Journal. Taperecorded tidbits; talking to myself. For my ears only.

### Wednesday—March 9

Resolved: Do things differently this year. I've earned it after all my time on active duty. It's time for me to start enjoying life. Besides, I'm not actually retiring from military leadership—just changing hats. From field commander to commander-in-chief.

War is a young man's game. Let some of those young turks get shot at. Gives them a new perspective on life. I've had all the battlefield insight I need.

As I told the VFW Convention earlier this week, "Victory abroad depends on stability at home. Veterans deserve good jobs." They loved it. Gave me a standing ovation. I'll take care of the government at home this time. Let someone else take care of the war.

Rank has its privileges, and so does political office. People expect me to enjoy my perks. I'd be a fool not to.

### Friday—March 18

Beautiful evening tonight. City lights twinkle down below. Just back from a walk around the penthouse enjoying the cool air and the view. Speaking of the view, it was a bit careless of my new neighbor not to draw her curtains. Where has *she* been all my life? Unborn for much of it, I suppose. But is she a work of art! Can't I admire art?

What a paradox, this blend of opportunity and restraint. I spend my prime years gazing at stars from war zones, concerned for God and country, and find myself transfixed by her on this midlife night.

So, forget it. Forget her. Nose to the grindstone, shoulder to the wheel, ear to the ground. Duty, honor, self-discipline . . . hunger.

### Monday—March 21

Woke up Saturday, Sunday, and today thinking about her. Finally told Carlton to find out who she is. It's nice to have one discreet aide who won't go running to the press to sell the latest gossip about me.

**Tuesday—March 22, 11:00 A.M.**

Didn't sleep well again last night—thinking about *her*. A full agenda of decisions to make and here I sit, consumed with only one. A lifetime of holding back and asking, "How could I?" is suddenly swallowed by an overwhelming, "Why shouldn't I?"

**Wednesday—March 23, 10:00 P.M.**

Good old Carlton works quickly. When his report arrived early this afternoon I promptly canceled my meeting with the treasury secretary and devoured every page and every photo of her.

So she's married—to Captain Alan Miller, one of my battalion commanders who's away becoming a military hero. He may even become a dead one. She could be lonely with him away.

Get a grip! I can't think this way. But why is the whole idea of right and wrong being overruled by a sense of urgent need, desire, and . . . yes, maybe there is something I have to prove to myself. . . .

Just phoned Carlton and told him to invite her to a dinner on Saturday evening. "The honor of your presence is requested . . ." I don't think she'll refuse. We won't tell her it's a table for two until after she arrives.

**Thursday—April 14**

Three weeks since our first evening together. Another note from her today. We're starting to carry on quite a little correspondence—besides all the other carrying on. I love the fragrance of the paper, the fragrance of her words, the fragrance of her.

**Friday—April 29**

"Pregnant!" Her note this morning is only one word. Oh, God, what do I do now? I've got to think, be calm. Get a hold of myself. I held the note over a match and the word disappeared in the flame. If only the problem would go away as easily as her note. I won't panic. I'm in charge. I'll make a decision.

**Sunday—May 1**

Don't know why I didn't think of it immediately. Carlton sent the message this morning. We'll bring her husband back here as a courier of classified information. He'll bring the battle reports, brief me directly, and have a night at home before he returns to the front. That should take care of the problem.



**Tuesday—May 3, 11:00 P.M.**

Captain Miller arrived on schedule today, and we had a cordial meeting. His formal report and my usual military chit-chat. "We're all very proud of you. Keep up the good work." Right now he should be at home with his wife, solving my problem.

**Wednesday—May 4, Midnight**

Why isn't anything simply anymore? Miller spent the night at the BOQ last night—some gung-ho nonsense about not feeling right about going home while his men were in the field in battle. I can't believe it!

So, I had him join me for dinner tonight. He sat in the very chair she occupied for the first time a few weeks ago. Courtesy demanded that he empty his glass each time I filled it. He staggered out of here half an hour ago—undoubtedly on his way home to the little woman, I hope.

**Thursday—May 5, 9:00 P.M.**

Got to get some sleep tonight. This Miller thing has gone on too long. With a little luck it should be settled soon. The man is amazing. Last night he was drunk as a skunk and still slept at the BOQ instead of going home.

Today at noon I sent him back to the field with a written message to be personally delivered by Colonel Phillips, battalion commander. I know Miller won't read it. Anyone who spends two nights at the BOQ instead of going home to his wife wouldn't think of stealing a glance at a message to a superior officer. It's a short message, but it should do the job.

Basically, I ordered Colonel Phillips to put Miller where it's hot, then withdraw his support. Everyone will follow orders without asking questions. A few heroes will die and the army will win the battle because of their sacrifice. We'll give Captain Miller a posthumous award for valor.

**Wednesday—May 11**

Today's intelligence summary reported the death in combat of Captain Alan Miller. He was a brave man. Naive, but brave.

**Saturday—July 9**

Almost four months since this whole affair began. Today we had a quiet wedding and she was a beautiful bride—my bride. Some think the marriage was a bit sudden after her widowhood, but people always talk. Soon they'll come to see me as the good guy, stepping in to support and raise Miller's unborn child.

In a few months, the dust will settle, people will forget all about it, and we can get on with our lives. Give it a few years and no one will know or care what really happened.

My tracks are covered. My conscience is clear.

pp. 71-75

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown describe these verses by saying:

Vss. 1-23. A warning against the seductive arts of wicked women, enforced by considering the advantages of chastity, and the miserable end of the wicked.

p. 462

Kidner titles this chapter:

**5:1-23. Wisdom about marriage**

The chapter first uncovers the corruption under the surface-charm of the seductress (1-6), then warns of the price of infidelity (7-14), and finally enlarges on the lasting delight of a faithful marriage, over against its pathetic alternative (15-23).

p. 69

Kenneth Aitken says:

This chapter enlarges on the theme of the seductress introduced in 2:16-19. The theme is also developed at length in 6:24-35 and 7:1-27. The space given to it and the vigour with which the destructive powers of the seductress are portrayed leave us in no doubt that the sage saw in her the greatest hazard lying in the path of young men.

pp. 60-61

Wiersbe says:

In a world that has commercialized sex and turned adultery into entertainment, this warning is desperately needed. Few people believe that there are tragic consequences to sexual sin, but Solomon names some of them.

*Sexual immorality is like walking a path that leads to death (Prov. 2:16-22) and hell (Prov. 5:5); like deliberately burning and wounding yourself (Prov. 6:20-35); like being slaughtered as an animal (Prov. 7:6-27); like closing your eyes and falling into a pit (Prov. 22:14; 23:26-28). Ponder Hebrews 13:4.*

p. 415

Hebrews 13:4

Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

Alden says:

Another possible reason for the serious warning might have been the author's own preoccupation with this vice; a kind of warning from experience. Solomon's problems all started by marrying women he shouldn't have. First Kings 11:1-11 chronicles the sad story of a king who married Pharaoh's daughter yet eventually lost his kingdom.  
p. 49

Garrett says:

The Bible does not hide from or obscure the power of the temptation to illicit sex. In language that is refreshingly clear and direct without itself indulging in titillation, the text warns the reader of the debacle that awaits him should he succumb in this area and at the same time promises profound sexual joy to those whose hearts are chaste and loving. If the church is to do its duty, it must be no less clear in its teachings. To assume that nice, Christian young people do not struggle in these areas or to speak only in whispers and innuendo on the grounds that they are inappropriate for the Christian pulpit is no less than gross neglect of duty on the church's part. Whether one is dealing with the ritual prostitution of a fertility cult, the ordinary prostitute on the street (or in a magazine), or the simple lure of extramarital sex, the temptations and dangers are the same.  
p. 90

Bridges tells us:

PONDER this chapter—ye that know not the poison and corruption of fleshly lusts. Perhaps painful experience (1 Kings, xi. 1-8. Eccles. vii. 26) had given the wise man *wisdom and understanding*. Therefore *attend to it* with fear and trembling. Man's own strength, the restraint of education or self-discipline, is powerless, as the green withs to bind the giant. (Judg. xvi.9.) Engrafted wisdom is the only effectual safeguard. This heavenly influence teaches us, both to *regard discretion* for the covering of our souls, and to *keep knowledge* for the warning of our fellow-sinners.

p. 56

Lange says:

As the three main divisions of the discourse are of not quite equal length, we may with HITZIG distinguish the introductory paragraph, vers. 1-6; the central and chief didactic section, vers. 7-20; which again falls into two divisions, vers. 7-14 and 15-20; and the epilogue, vers. 21-23.

p. 77

Parker says:

Man and woman were made for each other, yet what ruin is wrought by the false relations into which they are thrown. All the other evils of society are insignificant compared with the perdition created by illicit intercourse.

p. 59

(Holy Humor: Inspirational Wit and Cartoons by Cal and Rose Samra)

A woman was married to a miserly man. She had to fight for everything she got. One day, she told him she was going window shopping. He said, "Look, but don't buy."

A few hours later, she came home with a new dress. "What is this?" her husband fumed. "I thought I told you look but not buy."

"Well," she explained, "I saw this lovely dress and thought I'd try it on, and when I did the devil said, 'It sure looks good on you.'"

"Right then you should have told him, 'Get thee behind me, Satan,'" her husband exclaimed.

"I did," she answered, "but when he got behind me he said, 'It sure looks good from the back, too.'"

—Rev. Bernard Brunsting  
*Funny Things Happen*

p. 152

Eugene H. Peterson in his paraphrase of the book of Proverbs titles verses 1-14 as:

NOTHING BUT SIN AND BONES

p. 20

v. 1 My son, pay attention to my wisdom, listen well to my words of insight,

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

This chapter, like other portions in Proverbs, begins with the exhortation that the **son pay attention** and **listen . . .** to his father's **words . . .**

p. 914

In verse 1 we have TWO COMMANDS.

COMMAND #1:

"PAY ATTENTION TO MY WISDOM."

COMMAND #2:

"LISTEN WELL TO MY WORDS OF INSIGHT."

Peterson paraphrases verse 1:

Dear friend, pay close attention to this,  
my wisdom; listen very closely to the way I see it.

p. 20

Phillips says:

With almost monotonous regularity Solomon pleaded with his son to pay attention. Perhaps David had pleaded with Solomon to pay attention. If David was the first to make the plea, he failed to make his point with Solomon; the plea is followed by a warning against falling into the clutches of the wrong kind of woman, and Solomon made shipwreck of his life on this perilous shore. If Solomon was talking to Rehoboam, that silly young man should receive a measure of our sympathy. He could have said to his father, "Physician, heal thyself." Or he could have said, "What you are speaks so loudly I cannot hear a word you say."

Solomon's palace was a pandemonium of jealousy, intrigue, and lust, thanks to his utter inability to control his insatiable desires. Rehoboam grew up in that environment. His father had an enormous harem, so we can at least understand why Rehoboam turned a deaf ear when Solomon preached about sexual restraint. Even though Solomon did not follow his own instructions, what he had to say was divinely inspired. We must heed it as the highest wisdom.

p. 126

v. 2 that you may maintain discretion and your lips may preserve knowledge.

In verse 2 you have the PURPOSE for the TWO COMMANDS in verse 1:

The TWO COMMANDS:

1. "pay attention to my wisdom" and
2. "listen well to my words of insight."

Now the PURPOSE for those commands in these TWO STATEMENTS:

1. "THAT YOU MAY MAINTAIN DISCRETION" and
2. "YOUR LIPS MAY PRESERVE KNOWLEDGE."

Peterson in his message says:

Then you'll acquire a taste for good sense;  
what I tell you will keep you out of trouble.

p. 20



v. 3 For the lips of an adulteress drip honey, and her speech is smoother than oil;

Now Solomon states the REASON for his previous commands. There are TWO REASONS given here in verse 3:

1. "FOR THE LIPS OF AN ADULTERESS DRIP HONEY" and
2. "HER SPEECH IS SMOOTHER THAN OIL."

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Her deceptive, seductive words are persuasive, sweet like **honey**, the sweetest substance in ancient Israel, and **smoother than . . . olive oil**, the smoothest substance in ancient Israel.  
pp. 914-15

Phillips says:

In the foul Canaanite religion, idol worship was consummated by having sexual relations with one of the priests or priestesses. *Zur*, the word used in Proverbs 5:3, refers to a Hebrew woman who has become an apostate and has sold herself to the immoralities of one of the pagan cults. She is a professional harlot.

The wanton woman baits her trap with honeyed words. She is well versed in what to say to seduce careless men. She knows how to inflame the passions of those who stop to listen to what she says. She is an old hand at enticement. She knows which words to use in her approach, how to respond to the reply, how to make the next conversational move. She has no trouble sizing up each prospective client. She knows how to choose the words that will lead him on.

p. 127

Garrett says:

The "adulteress" of v. 3 is literally the "other woman," that is, someone other than the man's wife. The verse does not deny that the other woman is indeed tempting, but the temptation is not all sexual. The honey lips and smooth mouth of the other woman refer more to her flattery than her sexual availability. The man is drawn to her because she inflates his ego with hollow praise in ways his own wife will not.  
p. 91

Lawson says:

She talks of nothing but love, and pleasure, and perpetual delights. To hear her, one would suppose that she possessed the most generous and disinterested spirit. Her tongue is taught by him who betrayed Eve to paint the vilest sin with the most beautiful colours, and to conceal all its deformity and danger; . . .  
p. 97

### Adultery

Returning from Sunday School one day, where the Ten Commandments had been the topic, our young son asked his father, "Daddy, what does it mean when it says, 'Thou shalt not commit agriculture'?"

There was hardly a beat between the question and my husband's smooth reply: "Son, that just means that you're not supposed to plow the other man's field," an answer satisfactory to both of them.

—*Reader's Digest*, July 1979, p. 87

(From Parson's Bible Illustrator 1.0)

Son: How do they catch lunatics, Dad?

Dad: With lipstick, beautiful dresses and pretty smiles.

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

## HOW TO BE FREE

The greatly loved Bible teacher Henrietta Mears knew the secret of true freedom, and she wanted her students to know it too. With young people in mind, she said, "A bird is free in the air. Place a bird in the water and he has lost his liberty. A fish is free in the water, but leave him on the sand and he perishes. He is out of his realm. So, young people, the Christian is free when he does the will of God and is obedient to God's command. This is as natural a realm for God's child as the water is for the fish, or the air for the bird."

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

The old cowboy had it right when he said:

(Cowboy Slang: Colorful Cowboy Sayings! by Edgar R. "Frosty" Potter)

- She'd strayed off the main trail before her soul was full-grown.
  - Those fast city gals shore buggered up all of the home heifers.
- p. 78

(The Weight of Your Words: Measuring the Impact of What You Say by Joseph M. Stowell)

Oliver Wendell Holmes expressed it well: "Sin has many tools, but a lie is the handle that fits them all."

p. 34

v. 4 but in the end she is bitter as gall, sharp as a double-edged sword.

The word "BUT" forms the CONTRAST to verse 3.

At the beginning, her "lips . . . drip honey, and her speech is smoother than oil; BUT IN THE END" there are TWO THINGS true of her. She is:

1. "BITTER AS GALL" and
2. "SHARP AS A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD."

Peterson paraphrases verse 4 very graphically:

But it won't be long before she's gravel in your mouth,  
a pain in your gut, a wound in your heart.

p. 20

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

. . . what seems attractive at first becomes **bitter** and **sharp** later.  
Involvement in adultery is like tasting **gall**, the bitterest substance known  
(from a plant), or like being cut by **a double-edged sword**. The adulteress  
leads men **to death** . . .

p. 915

Lange says:

. . . literally "her last is bitter" (comp. xxiii. 32), *i.e.*, that which finally reveals  
itself as her true nature, and as the ruinous consequence of intercourse with  
her.—**As wormwood**

p. 77

Aitken says:

So the seductress holds out promise of pleasure and enjoyment more than enough to entice and captivate hot blooded young men. The reality, however, is something quite different. There is an old saying, "Honey is sweet, but the bee stings"; and this lady has a sting in her tail.  
p. 62

Patrick & Lowth say:

But the beginning of this love is not so sweet, as the conclusion is bitter: and therefore think of both together, and believe what I now tell thee, without making a trial; that after a short pleasure follows long pain, by impairing men's health, strength, estates, and credit; which they cannot reflect upon without trouble and vexation, and (if she do not quite destroy their reason) be filled with remorse of conscience, and anguish of spirit: for, like a sword that cuts on both sides, she wounds both soul and body.  
p. 15

Bridges says (revised by George F. Santa):

The extreme possibility of the temptation calls our *attention*. The deceived victim only tastes, or expects to taste, *the honey*: only hears the *slick smoothness* of the charmer's voice. But the beginning is never so sweet as the end is *bitter*.  
p. 69

(Inspiring Quotations compiled by Albert M. Wells, Jr.)

Modern man speaks of intercourse as "having sex." However, the Scriptures never speak this way. In Biblical language a man "knows" his wife. It is not an act; it is a relationship.

—Paul Bubna

p. 185

The truth is that wherever a man lies with a woman, there, whether they like it or not, a transcendental relation is set up between them which must be eternally enjoyed or eternally endured.

—C. S. Lewis

pp. 185-6

There is no such thing as casual sex, no matter how casual people are about it. . . . After intercourse, a couples' relationship is somehow not what it was before.

—Lewis Smedes

p. 186

When you have finished committing sin, sin is not finished with you. The first cost is high, but it is only the down payment. You keep paying in your conscience, in your body, in the suffering you produce for your family, your friends, and your community. And finally, you will have to pay in hell.

—Ruth Copeland

p. 187

Whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of conscience, obscures your sense of God, takes the relish off spiritual things, this is sin to you.

—Susanna Wesley

p. 188

The reason the way of the transgressor is hard is because it's so crowded.

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

Hilde Houlding, coordinator of the Calgary Family Service Bureau's counseling division, describes an affair in this way:

An affair is often an attempt to find a little bit of paradise on the side, pursuing the belief that if one just finds the right sexual partner there will be instant happiness and everything will fall into place. An affair is often able to fulfill this myth until it itself becomes a relationship that has to be worked at and looked at in a long-term light.

Seen in this way "paradise" soon becomes a prison.

(From Parson's Bible Illustrator 1.0)

v. 5 Her feet go down to death; her steps lead straight to the grave.

TWO THINGS are said here in verse 5, even as two things were said in verse 4.

In verse 4, "but in the end she is":

1. "bitter as gall" and
2. "sharp as a double-edged sword."

Now in verse 5:

1. "HER FEET GO DOWN TO DEATH" and
2. "HER STEPS LEAD STRAIGHT TO THE GRAVE."

Lawson says:

She is on the highway to eternal ruin, and thither she is carrying those that listen to her bewitching voice. Her house is in the suburbs of the place of destruction, and her steps take hold of hell.

p. 98

Delitzsch says:

Her steps hold fast to Hades is equivalent to, they strive after Hades and go straight to it; similar to this is the Arab. expression, . . . this way leads straight forward to the town . . .

p. 120



### Too Many Wives

It was about nine o'clock at night. A man dashed into the doctor's office in a highly nervous condition and explained to the doctor that he had been in a very bad state all day. The doctor, in his best professional manner, asked if anything had happened to shock or upset his nerves. "No," the man answered, "unless it was a letter I received this morning." He showed the doctor a letter which stated in part, "If you don't stop running around with my wife, I'm going to blow your head off." The doctor answered, "Well, that's a comparatively simple matter. Why don't you just stop it?" The patient's face fell as he said, "But, Doctor, the fool forgot to sign his name!"

(From Parson's Bible Illustrator 1.0)

v. 6 She gives no thought to the way of life; her paths are crooked, but she knows it not.

Here there are TWO STATEMENTS made and then a CONTRAST.

STATEMENT #1:

"SHE GIVES NO THOUGHT TO THE WAY OF LIFE."

STATEMENT #2:

"HER PATHS ARE CROOKED."

By CONTRAST:

"BUT SHE KNOWS IT NOT."

The New Living Translation says:

She staggers down a crooked trail and doesn't even realize where it leads.

Eugene H. Peterson paraphrases verse 6:

She hasn't a clue about Real Life,  
about who she is or where she's going.

p. 20

Proverbs 14:12

There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Her sin makes her unaware that her ways **are crooked** (lit., "staggering or unstable"), in contrast with the "straight paths" of 4:11.  
p. 915

Proverbs 4:11

I guide you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths.

Proverbs 4:18

The path of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn, shining ever brighter till the full light of day.

Matthew 7:13, 14

"Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it.

Lawson says:

She can form her mode of behaviour into a hundred different shapes, to entangle the heart of the lover. She spreads a thousand snares, and if you escape one of them, you will find yourself held fast by another. She knows well how to suit her words and behaviour to your present humour, to lull conscience asleep, and to spread before your eyes such a mist, as shall prevent you from being able to descry the paths of life. If you ever think of the danger of your course, and feel the necessity of changing it, she will urge you to spend a little time longer in the pleasures of sin. If her solicitations prevail, if you linger within the precincts of guilt, your resolutions are weakened, and your passions gain new strength. What is the awful result? The devil obtains more influence; conscience, forcibly repressed, ceases to reclaim with so loud a voice; God gives you up to the lusts of your own heart, and leaves you to chuse your own delusions.  
pp. 98-99

Bridges says (revised by Santa):

She winds herself in a thousand *unstable ways*, to meet the different frames of mind and circumstances; she works upon every weakness; seizes every unguarded moment—all with one deeply hidden object—to keep you from *seriously considering the path of life*. The restraints of conscience must be put aside. No time should be allowed for reflections. The intrusion of one serious thought might break the spell, and open the way of escape.  
p. 69

Patrick & Lowth say:

For though thou mayest think to make a retreat in time, thou wilt be deceived: she having more ways than thou canst ever know (winding and turning herself into a thousand shapes), to keep thee from so much as deliberating about thy return to a virtuous course of life.  
p. 16

Kidner says:

The general sense is that her ways are *shifty and slippery* (Moffatt), in order to keep serious thought at bay.  
p. 69

Garrett says:

On the other hand, the verse can be translated without changing the Hebrew as, "In order that you not pay attention to the path of life; her ways wander (from it), but you will not know it." Taken in this way, the point of v. 6 is not that the woman is a lost and wayward soul (however true that might be). In other words, she is not made an object of pity. To the contrary, she is an agent of temptation who deliberately contrives to draw her prey off the path of life (cf. 2:19) and down to destruction.  
p. 91

Matthew Henry says:

And what does she aim at with all this art and management? Nothing but to keep them from *pondering the path of life*, for she knows that, if they once come to do that, she shall certainly lose them. Those are *ignorant of Satan's devices* who do not understand that the great thing he drives at in all his temptations is to keep them from choosing the path of life, to prevent them from being religious.  
p. 742

v. 7 Now then, my sons, listen to me; do not turn aside from what I say.

Here in verse 7 we have a POSITIVE and a NEGATIVE COMMAND.  
"NOW THEN, MY SONS":

POSITIVE COMMAND—"LISTEN TO ME"

NEGATIVE COMMAND—"DO NOT TURN ASIDE FROM WHAT I SAY."

Peterson paraphrases verse 7 as follows:

So, my friend, listen closely;  
don't treat my words casually.  
p. 21

Garrett says:

The passage uses general language to make the point that adultery leads to personal degeneration and financial depletion. The man who indulges himself will pay the price a hundred times over.  
p. 92

v. 8 Keep to a path far from her, do not go near the door of her house,

Here in verse 8 we have a POSITIVE and NEGATIVE COMMAND once again:

POSITIVE COMMAND—"KEEP TO A PATH FAR FROM HER"

NEGATIVE COMMAND—"DO NOT GO NEAR THE DOOR OF HER HOUSE."

If you took verses 7 & 8 together you have TWO POSITIVE and TWO NEGATIVE COMMANDS.

First of all, the POSITIVE COMMANDS:

"listen to me" and

"KEEP TO A PATH FAR FROM HER."

The NEGATIVE COMMANDS:

"do not turn aside from what I say" and

"DO NOT GO NEAR THE DOOR OF HER HOUSE."

Peterson paraphrases verse 8:

Keep your distance from such a woman;  
absolutely stay out of her neighborhood.

p. 21

Alden says:

To put ourselves in the place of sin, then to ask God to deliver us from temptation is presumptuous as well as foolish. A regular diet of pornography will eventually lead anyone to indulge in illicit sex.

p. 50

Lawson says:

Dare you then promise yourself that the fire of licentious passion shall not be kindled, and blown up into a flame that you cannot quench. The devil will tempt you enough without your own help. To tempt is his business. As you love your life and your own soul, give him no assistance in the work of destruction.

p. 100

Bridges says (revised by Santa):

*To throw ourselves into the way of temptation is to throw ourselves out of God's protection.*

p. 69

Educate your children to self-control, to the habit of holding passion and prejudice and evil tendencies subject to an upright and reasoning will, and you have done much to abolish misery from their future lives and crimes from society.

Daniel Webster

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

As the crowded elevator descended, Mrs. Wilson became increasingly furious with her husband, who was delighted to be pressed against a gorgeous blond.

As the elevator stopped at the main floor, the blonde suddenly whirled, slapped Mr. Wilson and said, "That will teach you to pinch!"

Bewildered, Mr. Wilson was halfway to the parking lot with his wife when he choked, "I—I—didn't pinch that girl." "Of course you didn't," said his wife, consolingly. "I did."

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

(Faith Under Fire: Standing Strong When Satan Attacks by Steven J. Lawson)

The final verse of Christ's temptation concludes with a most revealing statement.

And when the devil had finished every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time (Luke 4:13).

"An opportune time" means a moment in which the conditions are most favorable for Satan to attack. In war terminology, we might call it a "danger zone" in which the enemy will choose to ambush us. Paul called it "the evil day" (Ephesians 6:13)—a specific time in which Satan determines that the circumstances are right for his temptations to succeed.

We can conclude that if there are *opportune* times, then there must be *inopportune* times. Times when the Devil *advances*—and times when he *retreats*. Times when he *invades*—and times when he *departs*. That much is clear.

p. 192

When is Satan most likely to attack us? When does he most consider the advantage to be his? When does he reason that he can most strategically gain the upper hand?

- After a spiritual victory.
- When you are all alone.
- When you are physically tired.
- When you are having to wait on God.
- When you are in God's house.
- Before you start something great for God.

For our Lord Jesus Christ, all six of these danger points came together at once. What a danger zone. Instantly His faith came under fire.

p. 203



(The Christian in Complete Armour by William Gurnall)

As a Christian soldier you must always stand in a defensive posture with your armor on, ready to defend the treasure God has given you to keep, and to repel Satan's assaults. But do not step outside the line of your calling which God has drawn about you. Let Satan be the assailant and come if he will to tempt you; but do not go out and tempt him to do it.  
(November 11)

Genesis 39:11, 12

One day he went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the household servants was inside. She caught him by his cloak and said, "Come to bed with me!" But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house.

A beautiful blond senior shares: "When we date, we start giving gifts, like flowers or candy. When a couple becomes engaged, they give special things—a diamond and very personal things. The most personal gift that I can ever give is myself. I have nothing more precious to give. When I marry, I want to give my husband the best that I have—my whole self as completely as I can."

—Dr. Richard B. Wilke

(From Parson's Bible Illustrator 1.0)

I think what Solomon is trying to tell us here is that it is necessary for us to take steps to avoid this kind of a situation rather than to feel that we will be able to handle it when it does arise.

1 Timothy 6:11

But flee from these things, you man of God; and pursue after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness.

v. 9 lest you give your best strength to others and your years to one who is cruel,

There are TWO CONSEQUENCES in verse 9:

1. "LEST YOU GIVE YOUR BEST STRENGTH TO OTHERS" and
2. "LEST YOU GIVE . . . YOUR YEARS TO ONE WHO IS CRUEL."

Peterson paraphrases verse 9:

You don't want to squander your wonderful life,  
to waste your precious life among the hardhearted.

p. 21

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Failure to keep away from the adulteress can result in many losses: loss of **strength** (which may mean losing one's health, self-respect, or both), loss of a long life (v. 9), loss of money . . .

p. 915

Patrick & Lowth say:

Lest thou forfeit all the reputation, which perhaps thou hast got by worthy actions, and grow contemptible among thy friends and acquaintance; who see thee prefer the company of harlots, and their base attendants, before that of the most virtuous persons: and thereby thou lose, not only thy fame, but sacrifice the flower of thine age, and thy precious time, to one that doth not love thee a jot; but could see thee perish without any pity.

p. 16

Delitzsch commenting on the "ONE WHO IS CRUEL" says:

. . . they are the people who stand far aloof from this their sacrifice, and among them are barbarous, rude, inexorably cruel monsters (*Unmenschen*) . . . who rest not till their victim is laid prostrate on the ground and ruined both bodily and financially.  
p. 124

I was wondering if the "ONE WHO IS CRUEL" might not be SATAN himself.

### 2 Timothy 2:26

and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.

### 1 Corinthians 5:5

I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

### 2 Corinthians 2:11

in order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes.

### 2 Corinthians 11:3

But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

v.10 lest strangers feast on your wealth and your toil enrich another man's house.

This verse reminds me of:

Ecclesiastes 2:21

For a man may do his work with wisdom, knowledge and skill, and then he must leave all he owns to someone who has not worked for it. This too is meaningless and a great misfortune.

Let us be reminded once more of:

Hebrews 13:4

Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary answers the statement "LEST STRANGERS FEAST ON YOUR WEALTH" by the fact that the one participating in this kind of activity must:

. . . pay the adulteress, possibly pay her husband, and also child support . . . p. 915 (paraphrased)

This is hardly scratching the surface when you think of the exorbitant cost of cards and gifts and hotel and motel and telephone bills and on and on the list goes to exotic trips with airfare and all the other things that are involved. There is a high price to pay for sin!

v.11 At the end of your life you will groan, when your flesh and body are spent.

This verse reminds me of:

Ecclesiastes 12:5

when men are afraid of heights and of dangers in the streets; when the almond tree blossoms and the grasshopper drags himself along and desire no longer is stirred. Then man goes to his eternal home and mourners go about the streets.

Peterson paraphrases this verse:

You don't want to end your life full of regrets,  
nothing but sin and bones,  
p. 21

Psalms 32:3, 4

When I kept silent,  
my bones wasted away  
through my groaning all day long.  
For day and night  
your hand was heavy upon me;  
my strength was sapped  
as in the heat of summer.

Alden says:

Verse 11 is explicit about one effect of adultery; illicit sexual activity brings on venereal disease which often proves excruciatingly fatal.

Eventually the man who succumbs to lust is reduced to poverty, disgrace, and disease. It is too late, however, for regrets. He can only utter a long litany of "if onlys": if only I had listened to my father; if only I hadn't gone my own way; if only I had taken others' advice; if only I could have known an hour of pleasure would result in a lifetime of regret.

p. 51

## SAY WHAT?

Three retirees, each with a hearing loss, were taking a walk one fine March day. One remarked to the other, "Windy, ain't it?"

"No," the second man replied, "It's Thursday."

And the third man chimed in, "So am I, let's have a Coke."

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

(The Things that Matter Most by Cal Thomas)

Frank Capra, director of some of the finest films ever made, walked away from the movie business at age sixty-four in the 1960s. He refused to adjust to the new order. In his 1971 autobiography, Capra wrote: "The winds of change blew through the dream factories. . . . The hedonists, the homosexuals, the hemophilic bleeding hearts, the God-haters, the quick-buck artists who substituted shock for talent, all cried, 'Shake 'em! Rattle 'em! God is dead. Long live Pleasure! Nudity? Yeah! Wife-swapping? Yeah! Liberate the world from prudery. Emancipate our films from morality!'"

p. 9

(Living Beyond the Limits by Franklin Graham)

I remember back in 1974, my father was holding a congress on evangelism in Lausanne, Switzerland. One evening as he was preaching in the Lausanne Stadium he told about receiving three parking tickets while in Switzerland. Apparently each time he parked, the meter ran out by just a few minutes. He had to pay a fine for each ticket because he violated the law. He didn't mean to let the meter run out, but that did not excuse the fact that his time had expired. I'll never forget him saying, "We don't get away with breaking the law in Switzerland—neither do we get away with breaking God's law."

p. 78

v.12 You will say, "How I hated discipline! How my heart spurned correction!"

Verses 12, 13, and 14 will serve as the BOTTOM LINE to the kind of a lifestyle that has been described in the previous verses.

There are TWO THINGS that "YOU WILL SAY" here in verse 12:

1. "HOW I HATED DISCIPLINE!"
2. "HOW MY HEART SPURNED CORRECTION!"

#### Proverbs 25:28

Like a city whose walls are broken down is a man who lacks self-control.

#### Proverbs 14:12

There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.

Delitzsch says of verses 12, 13, and 14:

The poet now tells those whom he warns to hear how the voluptuary, looking back on his life-course, passes sentence against himself.  
p. 125

Patrick & Lowth say:

Saying, How stupidly foolish have I been, in not considering all this sooner; how senselessly bent upon my own ruin. I am amazed to think how I hated the cautions that were given me to avoid her company; and inwardly despised (how civilly however in outward show I received them) the just reproofs I had afterward for going to her.  
p. 16

J. Vernon McGee says:

Remember that God is not mocked. What you sow is what you shall reap. God describes here what will be the end result of such a life. I believe that our society is already reaping what it has been sowing. The gross immorality in our land stems from the lack of instruction in the Word of God.  
p. 22

v.13 I would not obey my teachers or listen to my instructors.

Here SOLOMON CONFESSES that he:

"hated discipline" and "spurned correction" [instruction].

Now he has gone even further. He spells out the fact that he:

"WOULD NOT OBEY" and he would not "LISTEN."

Peterson paraphrases verse 13:

Why didn't I listen to my mentors,  
or take my teachers seriously?

p. 21

(I Hope God's Promises come to Pass Before My Body Parts Go South! by  
Cathy Lechner)

She stared at me, totally unmoved, and answered, "Surely, Mom, you are *not* thinking about obeying God! Please, Mother."

"Well, I don't want to get leprosy or have a leg fall off or get sucked up by a great fish while I'm showering," I lamented.  
p. 5



(I Hope God's Promises come to Pass Before My Body Parts Go South! by  
Cathy Lechner)

I can just imagine Moses with his hands on his hips, screaming at Reuben and Gad, saying, "Shall your brethren go to war while you sit here on your blessed assurance?"

p. 40

v.14 I have come to the brink of utter ruin in the midst of the whole assembly."

Peterson paraphrases this verse:

My life is ruined!

I haven't one blessed thing to show for my life!"

p. 21

I think it would be good for us to just reflect on this BOTTOM LINE and use Peterson's paraphrase for the impact of verses 12, 13, and 14:

Saying, "Oh, why didn't I do what they told me?

Why did I reject a disciplined life?

Why didn't I listen to my mentors,

or take my teachers seriously?

My life is ruined!

I haven't one blessed thing to show for my life!"

p. 21

Ironside says:

To learn by painful experience, if the word of God is not bowed to, is a bitter and solemn thing. God is not mocked; what is sown must be reaped. The unsteady hand, the confused brain, the bleared eye, premature age and weakened powers; with days and nights of folly to look back on with regret that can never be banished from the memory: such are a few of the results of failing to heed the advice of wisdom in the natural world.

p. 58

(The Seeking Heart: Volume 4: The Library of Spiritual Classics by Fenelon)

You ask for comfort, but you do not see that you have been led to the edge of the fountain and refuse to drink. Peace and comfort are to be found only in simple obedience. Be obedient without a lot of talk about how obedient you are. You will soon find rivers of living water flowing within you. If you believe much, you will receive much. If you believe nothing, you will receive nothing, and continue to listen only to the stories your empty imagination tells you.

p. 35

v.15 Drink water from your own cistern, running water from your own well.

It is good to notice that the "CISTERN" and the "WELL" are in the SINGULAR. God is meant for each of us in His divine plan to have:

ONE WOMAN for ONE MAN.

Song of Solomon 4:15

You are a garden fountain, a well of flowing water streaming down from Lebanon.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary, in commenting on verses 15-18, says:

The rewards of chastity are a further encouragement to moral purity. . . control water, keeping it from being dissipated **in the streets**. Similarly marital love with one's **wife** (v. 18) is pictured as enjoying one's cistern or fountain (cf. Song 4:12, 15). Sexual desires should be controlled and channeled in one's marriage, not wasted as described in Proverbs 5:7-14.

p. 915

Harry Ironside says:

Sanctified wedded love, in contrast to the loose and godless ways of what has been presented, we now have brought before us.

p. 59

Peterson in his paraphrase of verse 15 says:

Do you know the saying, "Drink from your own  
rain barrel,  
draw water from your own spring-fed well"?

p. 21

Bridges says (revised by Santa):

A desire for forbidding joys springs from dissatisfaction with blessings  
we already have. When we don't find contentment at home—*drinking out of  
our own cistern*—out we go—vainly searching for happiness elsewhere.

p. 70

Delitzsch says:

The commendation of true conjugal love in the form of an invitation to a  
participation in it, is now presented along with the warning against non-  
conjugal intercourse, heightened by a reference to its evil consequences.

p. 127

Aitken says:

While the previous section had most in mind young unmarried men, this one  
is addressed to the married man, and advises him that the best antidote  
against the destructive wiles of the seductress is to remain in love with his  
wife and to keep alight the flame of romance in his marriage.

p. 65

Matthew Henry says:

Solomon, having shown the great evil that there is in adultery and fornication, prescribes remedies against them.  
p. 742

(Shade of His Hand by Oswald Chambers)

Lust applies not only to the bestial side of things; lust means literally—"I must have it at once, and I don't care what the consequences are." It may be a low, animal lust, or it may be a mental lust, or a moral or spiritual lust; but it is a characteristic that does not belong to the life hid with Christ in God. Love is the opposite; love can wait endlessly.  
p. 89

The old cowboy has it right:

(Don't Whiz on a 'Lectric Fence: Grandpa's Country Wisdom by Roy English)

You don't miss the water till you get an Alka Seltzer hung in your throat.  
p. 126

(Courage for the Chicken Hearted: Humorous & Inspiring Stories for  
Confident Living by Becky Freeman, Susan Duke, Rebecca Barlow  
Jordan, Gracie Malone & Fran Caffey Sandin)

Gradually, I discovered we had some major differences. He sorted; I tossed. He cleaned; I swiped. He filed; I piled. He cut; I ripped. He folded; I stuffed. He discarded; I hoarded. He planned; I schemed. The hall closet served as an organized catchall battleground for our differences.  
p. 16

(The Book of Wisdom by Multnomah Books)

There is no more lovely, friendly and charming relationship, communion or company than a good marriage.

Martin Luther  
*Table Talk*

p. 187

v.16 Should your springs overflow in the streets, your streams of water in the public squares?

Peterson paraphrases verse 16 by saying:

It's true. Otherwise, you may one day come home  
and find your barrel empty and your well polluted.

p. 21

Garrett says:

The best interpretation is that "springs" and "streams of water" refer to the husband's sexual affections as the "cistern" refers to the affections of his wife. The man should not take his love and desire to anyone else by going out into the street. The analogy implies that husband and wife fill and refresh each other, the one like a flowing stream and the other like a peaceful well.

p. 93

Alden says:

The motif of "water" and "springs" continues in verse 16. The semitic image here is someone who throws water from his wells into the street, a foolish and wasteful gesture. In the east water is so scarce that this picture of waste is even more meaningful, illustrating the activity of an oversexed male who fathers children all over town. When they are born he doesn't even acknowledge them; they in turn do not know him as father.

p. 52

v.17 Let them be yours alone, never to be shared with strangers.

The Peterson paraphrase says:

Your spring water is for you and you only,  
not to be passed around among strangers.

p. 21

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Some commentators say the word **them** (v. 17) refers to children; others say it continues the metaphor of streams picturing one's sexual desires. As a person would not get water from his neighbor's cistern because he had his own (2 Kings 18:31), so a man should have his physical needs met by his own wife, not someone else's.

p. 915

In verse 17 we again have a POSITIVE and a NEGATIVE:

POSITIVELY—"LET THEM BE YOURS ALONE" and

NEGATIVELY—"NEVER TO BE SHARED WITH STRANGERS."

Bridges says (revised by Santa):

Remember, whatever upsets your marriage relationship, opens the door to temptation waiting nearby. Tender, well-ordered, domestic affection is the best defense against wandering desires of unlawful passion. Yes—it's set apart by the Word of God, itself, to the high purpose of symbolizing the great mystery—loving and cherishing our own flesh, even as the Lord the church.

p. 71

(God's Little Devotional Book for Couples by Honor Books)

p. 202

Making marriage  
work is like  
operating a farm.  
You have to start  
all over again  
each morning.

p. 214

The difference  
between smooth  
sailing and  
shipwreck in  
marriage lies in  
what you as a couple  
are doing about  
the rough weather.

p. 222

You can never be  
happily married to  
another until  
you get a divorce  
from yourself.  
Successful marriage  
demands a certain  
death to self.

(The Book of Wisdom by Multnomah Books)

For a good wife contains so many persons in herself. What was H. not to me? She was my daughter and my mother, my pupil and my teacher, my subject and my sovereign; and always, holding all these in solution, my trusty comrade, friend, shipmate, fellow-soldier.

C. S. Lewis  
*A Grief Observed*

p. 188

Marriage involves big compromises all the time. International-level compromises. You're the U.S.A., he's the USSR, and you're talking nuclear warheads.

Bette Midler  
Quoted in *Parade Magazine*, February 5, 1989

p. 197

A man reserves his true and deepest love not for the species of woman in whose company he finds himself electrified and enkindled, but for that one in whose company he may feel tenderly drowsy.

George Jean Nathan  
*The Theatre Book of the Year*

p. 204



v.18 May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth.

What a different story we would be writing of Solomon's later years if he had stayed faithful to the little Lebanese sweetheart that the Song of Solomon talks about—his marriage to this young woman who worked in the leased vineyards in the north.

Kidner says:

The language is frankly erotic, delighting in the imagery to be found in the Song of Solomon (*cf.* Ct. 4:5, 12, 15). Such an emphasis is rather rare in Scripture, simply because nature already provides it, and therefore the complementary aspects of marriage need to be stressed. But it is highly important to see sexual delight in marriage as God-given; and history confirms that when marriage is viewed chiefly as a business arrangement, not only is God's bounty misunderstood, but human passion seeks (*cf.* verse 20) other outlets.

p. 71

(More Holy Humor by Carl and Rose Samra)

A pastor received the following thank-you note from a newlywed in his congregation: "Dear Pastor: I want to thank you for performing our marriage ceremony. It was beautiful the way you brought my happiness to a conclusion."

— *Pastor Dennis R. Fakes, Lindsborg, Kansas*

p. 102

The preacher says, "Let no man put asunder," and two-thirds of the married world is asunder in less than three months.

— *Will Rogers*

p. 104

(God's Little Devotional Book for Dads by Honor Books, Inc.)

Before marriage, a  
man will lie awake all  
night thinking about  
something you said;  
after marriage,  
he'll fall asleep before  
you finish saying it.

p. 294

### MARITAL COUNSEL

"Let the wife make her husband glad to come home, and let him make her sorry to see him leave."

—Martin Luther  
(quoted in Leadership, Fall 1992)

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

## HAPPILY MARRIED

"Fidelity was a 'given' for 100 couples interviewed about the secret to their happiness.

What does it take for a husband and wife to hold a relationship together through the tough times? Carole Mayhall lists eight key ingredients.

- Faith. A common commitment to God is foundational. One pastor put it this way, "God is the glue that holds two people together."
- Friendship. Happily married couples play and laugh together and enjoy each other. According to one survey, "love and affection" is the number one desire most women had for their marriage. The thing men want most is "companionship." As friends, couples should build each other up. Be the president of your spouse's fan club.
- Communication. Couples who value their marriage work at getting beyond superficial talk. Their goal is to be able to openly share hurts, joys, doubts, and dreams without any fear of rejection. This means each must accept the other's differences. Thoughts and feelings must flow freely for there to be true intimacy.
- Conflict resolution. How a couple deals with disagreements and anger is one measure of their marital happiness. The relationship is strengthened when neither partner tries to "win" the argument, but both work together toward a mutually satisfying solution. They refuse to hold a grudge and are mature enough to tolerate differences of opinion on minor issues.
- Fidelity. One author who interviewed 100 happily married couples found that they considered faithfulness to their spouse the "of course" of marriage—an essential foundation, not just a desirable option.
- Freedom. Change is inevitable in individuals and in relationships. Happy couples expect it and welcome it rather than resisting it.
- Romance. Sex is only one part of it. Romance also involves holding hands, touching, just spending time together. Every couple should budget the time and the money for regular dates and get-aways.
- Supportiveness. Marriage is a team sport, not a contest. When one partner is down, the other offers support. They work at blending their lives into the "one flesh" relationship the Bible describes.

"Happily married" by Carole Mayhall. *Today's Christian Woman*, Jan/Feb 1993. Pages 28-30.

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

The ole' cowboys can really say it well in poetry and meaty statements.  
Here's just a few to hear them speak to the issue of marriage:

(Coyote Cowboy Poetry by Baxter Black)

### THE SILENT PARTNER

Her name's on the note at the PCA, boys,  
Though she might have questioned the loan  
She signed her John henry 'neath yours on the line  
And she will 'til the kids are all grown.

Nobody's counted the pickups she's pulled  
Or measured the miles she's put on the rake  
Kept track of the pancakes or lunches she's packed  
Or the number of times she lay there awake

Praying her prayers for the man in her bed.  
God only knows, 'cause He's keepin' track.  
She buildin' up interest somewhere down the line  
To use in a trade on your first cardiac.

She puts up with cows she knows you should cull  
Scourin' calves on the livin' room floor,  
Tracks in the bathroom and mud on the sheets,  
Flies in the kitchen from broken screen doors.

She patiently listens to stories you tell  
Recounting the skill of your blue heeler mate.  
She wishes, herself, if that dog was so smart  
You could teach that pot licker to open a gate!

She offers opinions that seldom sink in  
'Til time, oft' as not, proves she was right.  
But it's damn hard to figger how she could'a known?  
You're not the only one who worries at night.

She's old as the mountain and young as the spring  
Timeless in labor and wisdom and love.  
Of all of God's creatures that man gets to share  
The wife of a cowman was sent from above.

So lay there tonight when you go to bed.  
 Remember your partner, she's tried and she's true.  
 You're lucky, my man, to have such a friend  
 Take care of er, 'cause she takes care of you.  
 p. 56

(Cow Pies & Candle Lights by G. T. Burton)

### YESTERDAY

Yesterday is dead and gone,  
 I cannot call it back.  
 I haven't reached tomorrow yet,  
 it's still upon the rack.  
 Today's the only day I have,  
 and time will not delay;  
 I'll love you for a million years,  
 and all of that today.  
 p. 30

(Don't Squat With Yer Spurs On! II by Texas Bix Bender)

A few sweet words and a little bit of kindness can coax the  
 hottest iron outta the fire.  
 p. 42

(Savvy Sayin's: Lean & Meaty One-Liners by Ken Alstad)

You kin never trust women when courtin' 'em. They might believe you.  
p. 92

For better or for worse means for good.  
p. 96

An optimist is a man who, when she says, "I'm tellin you no for the last time,"  
he says, "I knew you'd weaken in time."  
p. 106

Some men's wives are angels. The others are still alive.  
p. 106

Some men never reach a marriageable age.  
p. 120

(Don't Squat With Yer Spurs On!: A Cowboy's Guide to Life by Texas Bix  
Bender)

A woman's heart is  
like a campfire.  
If you don't tend to it regular,  
you'll soon lose it.  
p. 40

There's two theories  
to arguin' with  
a woman.  
Neither one works.  
p. 56

(Inspiring Quotations compiled by Albert M. Wells, Jr.)

A good marriage is the union of two forgivers.

—**Ruth Bell Graham**

In marriage you never arrive, you are always on the road.

—**Patricia Gundry**

Living together without any sense of permanency or legality is no more like marriage than taking a warm shower is like shooting a rapids in you underwear.

—**Sydney Harris**

p. 124

Let the wife make the husband glad to come home, and let him make her sorry to see him leave.

—**Martin Luther**

Marriage may be described as the ultimate form of friendship achievable between sexually attracted persons.

—**Daniel C. Maguire**

Getting married is the main point in life at which one says, "I have chosen; from now on my aim will be, not to search for someone who will please me, but to please the one I have chosen."

—**Andre Maurois**

p. 125

Marriage is not a vacation or a picnic. Rather, marriage is a career that demands the very best of both partners. Marriage is a testing-ground for one's integrity, courage and character.

—**J. Allen Petersen**

p. 125

(A Man to Match the Mountain: Overcoming the Obstacles of Life by David Roper)

As George MacDonald says, "*Woman* ought to be the dearest word to every man, next to God."  
p. 191

(A 4th Course of Chicken Soup for the Soul: 101 More Stories to Open the Heart and Rekindle the Spirit by Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, Hanoch McCarty, & Meladee McCarty)

### **The Small Gift**

Reverend Chalfant tells of a couple who were celebrating their golden wedding anniversary. The husband was asked what the secret was to his successful marriage. As the elderly are wont to do, the old gentleman answered with a story.

His wife, Sarah, was the only girl he ever dated. He grew up in an orphanage and worked hard for everything he had. He never had time to date until Sarah swept him off his feet. Before he knew it she had managed to get him to ask her to marry him.

After they had said their vows on their wedding day, Sarah's father took the new groom aside and handed him a small gift. He said, "Within this gift is all you really need to know to have a happy marriage." The nervous young man fumbled with the paper and ribbon until he got the package unwrapped.

Within the box lay a large gold watch. With great care he picked it up. Upon close examination he saw etched across the face of the watch a prudent reminder he would see whenever he checked the time of day . . . words that, if heeded, held the secret to a successful marriage. They were, "Say something nice to Sarah."

*Morris Chalfant*

*Retold by Marilyn K. McAuley*

pp. 312-13



(God's Little Devotional Book for Couples by Honor Books)

During the course of their twenty-four years of marriage, Tom accumulated a fortune in the natural gas business. But then, in a twenty-four-month period, he saw the fruit of his labors slip away to creditors and foreclosures. Things became so desperate at one point that in order to make the monthly payment on his house, he had to sell his wife Tina's engagement ring. Finally, Tom was forced out of the oil business altogether. He and Tina lost everything they had.

When things looked the worst, Tom landed a promising job in another industry and slowly he began to come out of his personal and professional slump. Nearly two years later, while out to dinner, Tina saw in her husband signs of Tom's old exuberance. When he took his wife's hand in his own and said, "Tina, you are like this diamond — beautiful, exquisite, precious," she thought her heart would burst. "But where did you get the money?" she asked as he put the ring on her finger.

"You haven't known it," Tom confessed, "but for two years I've been giving plasma once a week. I saved all the money I was paid, and last week I sold my hunting gear. The only hunting I want to do from now on is hunt for ways to love you more. You *are* my life."

p. 23

v. 19 A loving doe, a graceful deer—may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be captivated by her love.

When you put verses 18 and 19 together you have a great wedding toast with FOUR MAIN POINTS:

1. "May your fountain be blessed,"
2. "may you rejoice in the wife of your youth,"
3. "MAY HER BREASTS SATISFY YOU ALWAYS," and
4. "MAY YOU EVER BE CAPTIVATED BY HER LOVE.

#### Song of Solomon 7:5

Your head crowns you like Mount Carmel. Your hair is like royal tapestry; the king is held captive by its tresses.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

The **breasts** of a man's wife are soft to the touch and **graceful** in appearance like a **deer** (cf. Song 4:5; 7:3). Therefore a husband should be **captivated** . . .  
p. 915

Kidner translates the word "CAPTIVATED" as follows:

*Be . . . ravished* (AV, RV) or *infatuated* (RSV) (19, 20) is the same word as the 'go astray' (AV, RV) or 'be lost' (RSV) of verse 23. As it can also describe the effects of strong drink (20:1; Is. 28:7) it might be rendered in verses 19 and 20 'be intoxicated'.  
p. 71

Wiersbe says:

Sex in marriage should be like drinking refreshing water from a clean fountain, while illicit sex is like drinking at a sewer (vv. 15-20). The Hebrew word translated "enraptured" in verse 19 means "intoxicated." When husband and wife love each other as God wants them to, the water turns into wine! (See John 2:1-11.)  
p. 416

Alden says:

An uncommon verse ("captivated") appears in 19c, 20a, and 23b. Its root meaning is to wander or stray, leading to the idea of being captured, captivated, or ravished. The latter meanings seem to fit out passage best; perhaps "captivate" would work in verses 19 and 20, but "capture" would go better in verse 23.  
p. 52

Garrett says:

Verse 19 brings out both the tender affection and the exuberant pleasure of love. She is a loving doe, and he will be drunken with satisfaction in the pleasure she gives.  
p. 94

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown say:

. . . **ravished**—lit., "intoxicated," i.e., fully satisfied.  
p. 462

Peterson paraphrases verse 19:

Lovely as an angel, beautiful as a rose—  
 don't ever quit taking delight in her body.  
 Never take her love for granted!

p. 22

A modern miracle would be a golden wedding anniversary in Hollywood.

<Unknown>

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

(God's Little Devotional Book for Couples by Honor Books)

There's no such thing as being able to put a marriage on "automatic pilot." You may be able to preset all the dials on your microwave oven, or preset your coffee pot to have coffee upon your arising . . . but you can't preset a relationship.

Neither is a marriage some type of rapid transit system with predictable stops along the way.

Each marriage moves in its own direction, and develops at its own pace, having its own set of obstacles.

A marriage involves a commitment, not a contract. A contract can be instantly completed, signed, sealed, and delivered. A commitment, on the other hand, is a lifetime adventure. It may begin within a few minutes, but you can never arrive at a full-blown, fully satisfying marriage quickly.

Keep in mind as you sail the high seas of your marriage that:

- storms *do* abate.
- if more than one hand is on the rudder or the tiller, they need to be moving in the same direction.
- sometimes the safest thing to do is to lower the sails and let the wind take you where it will.

p. 147

(God's Little Devotional Book for Couples by Honor Books)

The direction of your  
thought life can  
determine the course  
of your marriage.



*Keep thy heart with all diligence; for  
out of it are the issues of life.*

Proverbs 4:23 KJV

p. 30

(Unedited Notes by G. T. Burton)

### LONELY NIGHTS

I lie here in this empty bed  
as midnight brings the pain,  
and loneliness walks boldly in  
to spend the night again.

I listen for your footsteps  
in the creaking of the stair,  
and the moaning of this empty room  
shows the emptiness we share

I often touch your pillow  
as I stare into the night,  
and pray the hours run swiftly  
to bring the morning light.

I know this time will surely pass,  
and my broken spirit mend,  
one day you'll be here at my side,  
and these lonely nights will end.

v.20 Why be captivated, my son, by an adulteress? Why embrace the bosom of another man's wife?

Here in verse 20 we have TWO POINTED QUESTIONS to SUMMARIZE what Solomon has been saying:

1. "WHY BE CAPTIVATED, MY SON, BY AN ADULTERESS?"
2. "WHY EMBRACE THE BOSOM OF ANOTHER MAN'S WIFE?"

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says of the word "CAPTIVATED," which we had back in verse 19 and we will have again down in verse 23:

[The word] means "go astray," . . . but it may also suggest the idea of being captured) **by her love**, not the affections of an adulteress.  
p. 915

WHY NOT BE CAPTIVATED BY THE LOVE OF YOUR WIFE RATHER THAN "BE CAPTIVATED . . . BY AN ADULTERESS?"

Garrett says:

Verse 20 is linked chiastically to v. 19b, c. The man should not "stagger" from the affection of another woman, nor should he embrace her "bosom." The use of the catchword "stagger" also ties together the conclusion of the exhortation. A man will stagger in the pleasure his wife gives (v. 19). He can embrace the bosom of another woman and stagger (v. 20), but the terms of sensual pleasure are absent here; with the adulteress it is the staggering of confusion and weakness. Finally, the man who indulges in adultery will stagger to his own destruction (v. 23).  
p. 94

Peterson paraphrases verse 20:

Why would you trade enduring intimacies for  
cheap thrills with a whore?  
for dalliance with a promiscuous stranger?

p. 22

(Inspiring Quotations compiled by Albert M. Wells, Jr.)

For the past twenty years you and I have been fed all day long on good solid lies about sex.

—C. S. Lewis

p. 126

(No More Excuses: Be the Man God Made You to Be by Tony Evans)

### **THE CHARACTER OF SEXUAL SIN**

The ultimate issue in sexual sin is that immorality is an affront to a holy God. When David sinned, he broke God's holy commandments.

- He dishonored his family.  
"Honor your father and your mother." (Exodus 20:12)
- He killed Uriah.  
"You shall not murder." (Exodus 20:13)
- He committed adultery.  
"You shall not commit adultery." (Exodus 20:14)
- He stole Uriah's wife.  
"You shall not steal." (Exodus 20:15)
- He had to live a life of lies.  
"You shall not give false testimony." (Exodus 20:16)
- He lusted after that which belonged to his neighbor.  
"You shall not covet your neighbor's wife." (Exodus 20:17)

By my count, that's six of the Ten Commandments. David broke in this one act every Commandment dealing with how you are supposed to treat others. Even leaving off murder, you still wipe out five of the Commandments when you commit sexual sin. That's the whole second table of the Law. David did all of this, and yet God told him, "I gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if all this had been too little, I would have given you even more." (2 Samuel 12:8)  
pp. 60-61

(God's Little Devotional Book by Honor Books, Inc.)

After two years of marriage, Pete no longer saw his wife as interesting, fun, or attractive. In his mind, he regarded her as a sloppy housekeeper, overweight, and a woman with a faultfinding personality. He sought out a divorce attorney, who advised him: "Pete, if you really want to get even with your wife, start treating her like a queen! Do everything in your power to serve her, please her, and make her feel special. Then, after a couple of months of this royal treatment, pack your bags and leave. That way you'll disappoint her as much as she has disappointed you." Pete could hardly wait to enact the plan! He picked up a dozen roses on his way home, helped his wife with the dinner dishes, brought her breakfast in bed, and began complimenting her on her clothes, cooking, and housekeeping. He treated her to an out-of-town trip.

After three months, the attorney called and said, "Well, I have the divorce papers ready for you to sign. In a matter of minutes, you can be a happy bachelor."

"Are you crazy?" Pete said. "My wife has made so many changes. I wouldn't think of divorcing her now."

p. 273



v.21 For a man's ways are in full view of the Lord, and he examines all his paths.

Peterson paraphrases verse 21:

Mark well that GOD doesn't miss a move you make;  
he's aware of every step you take.

p. 22

The REASON you need to be faithful is stated here in verse 21:

"A MAN'S WAYS ARE IN FULL VIEW OF THE LORD, AND HE  
EXAMINES ALL HIS PATHS."

Jeremiah 17:10

"I the Lord search the heart and examine the mind, to reward a man  
according to his conduct, according to what his deeds deserve."

Hebrews 4:13

And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open  
and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

The dire consequences of adultery (vv. 7-14) should motivate a person to avoid it. But four even higher motivations are given in verses 21-23:  
(1) Since God sees **man's ways** . . . , adultery committed in secret is known by **the Lord**. (2) Also God **examines** man's conduct . . . Man cannot escape God's scrutinizing. (3) Sin ensnares . . . , and ties a person down like ropes (5:22). Though people like to talk about being "free" to sin as they wish, **sin** actually takes away freedom. (4) Being undisciplined (cf. v. 12) in one's moral life results in death (cf. vv. 5, 11). Such living is foolish because it leads one **astray** from God's standards. "Led astray" is from the same word *šagah* rendered "captivated" in verses 19-20. **Folly** appears 21 times in Proverbs. To yield to sexual lust is folly.

p. 915

Kidner says:

*Goings* (AV), or *paths* (RV, RSV) (21b), are lit. the (waggon-) tracks made by constant use; a better everyday term would be 'habits'.  
p. 71

Ironside says:

This fact is just what the soul needs to keep in mind, to realize the solemnity of being in this world for God. His eyes are on all our ways. Nothing escapes that holy gaze. All is naked and open before Him with whom we have to do. He weighs and ponders every thought and word and action. Nothing is too insignificant for His notice; nothing too great for His attention. At the judgment-seat of Christ He will make manifest His estimate of it all. In that day how many of us would give worlds, did we possess them, if we had only been more truly faithful in all our ways in this scene!  
pp. 60-61

Phillips says:

When I was a boy my parents hung a text on my bedroom wall. I cannot say that I always appreciated the plaque. It read, "Thou God seest me." It was supposed to convey a message of comfort as in Genesis 16:13. But the text conveyed a threat to me. The thought of that all-seeing eye spying on my youthful transgressions troubled my conscience. The text would haunt me even more today—looking back over things I have done that I ought not to have done and things I have not done that I ought to have done—if it were not for the fact that those things, some of which I confessed with bitter tears, are now under the blood.

God's eye sees all. We do not get away with transgressions. Sometimes retribution is delayed. Sometimes it comes swiftly. We would do well indeed to take that text into all the situations of life that involve sex.  
p. 133

Joseph Parker says:

These are the grand reasons why men should take heed to their ways. Will you allow God, yea, compel God, to look upon impurity? Should no respect be paid to the divine observer? He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity with the least degree of allowance or approbation; why, then, force it upon his attention, and smite him in the eyes as with a sharp weapon?  
pp. 63-64

The other day I heard a country song that was telling the story of the little child coloring in a book and all the child had to learn to do was to "KEEP IT BETWEEN THE LINES." The next scene is a child who is learning to drive with his father at his side and the important issues is just "KEEPING IT BETWEEN THE LINES."

I guess we could say that as God is looking down upon us, all we have to do is:

"KEEP IT BETWEEN THE LINES."

The LINES are:

His WORD and

His WILL for our lives.

(More Stories for the Heart: Over 100 Stories to Warm Your Heart compiled  
by Alice Gray)

*I'm not so concerned you have fallen  
but that you rise.*

*Abraham Lincoln*

p. 25

(Inspiring Quotations compiled by Albert M. Wells, Jr.)

Give us a pure heart that we may  
see Thee;  
A humble heart that we may hear  
Thee;  
A heart of love that we may serve  
Thee;  
A heart of faith that we may live  
Thee.

—Dag Hammarskjöld

p. 32

v.22 The evil deeds of a wicked man ensnare him; the cords of his sin hold him fast.

Just as we had a BOTTOM LINE STATEMENT back in verses 12, 13, and 14, so now we have the same situation here at the end of our passage.

Here in verse 22 it is:

"THE EVIL DEEDS . . . ENSNARE HIM; THE CORDS OF HIS SIN HOLD HIM FAST."

This TAKES US BACK to our previous study in 1 Kings 11:1-13 as Solomon held fast to these foreign women in love and continued to pursue their idolatrous worship.

Peterson paraphrases verse 22:

The shadow of your sin will overtake you;  
you'll find yourself stumbling all over yourself  
in the dark.

p. 22

J. Vernon McGee says:

God says that there is a day coming, a day of accountability, a day of retribution. A payday is on the way. Man thinks he is getting by with sin. God says that no one is getting by with a thing. Man's own iniquities shall take him, and he will be held with the cords of his sins.

p. 23

v.23 He will die for lack of discipline, led astray by his own great folly.

Back in verse 12:

"You will say, 'How I hated discipline! How my heart spurned correction!'"

Now verse 23 gives us the FRUITAGE of this kind of life:

"HE WILL DIE FOR LACK OF DISCIPLINE."

1 Corinthians 9:27

but I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified.

1 Thessalonians 4:3, 4

For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor,

Peterson in his paraphrase says of verse 23:

Death is the reward of an undisciplined life;  
your foolish decisions trap you in a dead end.

p. 22

"HE WILL DIE FOR LACK OF DISCIPLINE, LED ASTRAY BY HIS OWN GREAT FOLLY."

Isaiah 53:6

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

It would be good for us to think in terms of the BIBLICAL CHARACTERS who have encounters sexual temptations besides Solomon. We think of:

DAVID,

SAMSON, and

JOSEPH (just to mention three).

The CONTRAST between these Biblical characters is obvious and a great advertisement for sexual purity.

Phillips says:

The filthy man carries his vileness with him into a lost eternity. The lusts, passions, and cravings he cultivated and indulged on earth will remain with him forever. He will be consumed by a gnawing craving that he will be completely unable to satisfy.

p. 134

Aitken says:

If we follow the New English Bible in verse 23, this foolish man weaves more than the tangled web which traps him; he also weaves his funeral shroud: "he will perish for want of discipline, wrapped in the shroud of his boundless folly". The word "wrapped in the shroud" (RSV "lost") is the same word the RSV translates "infatuated" in verses 19 and 20, but which the New English Bible renders "wrapped". So it appears that the sage makes a play on this word as the key word to underline and drive home the lesson to be learned: wrap up well in the love of your wife (v. 19), and don't become wrapped up with loose women (v. 20), for that is as good as wrapping yourself in a funeral shroud (v. 23).

p. 66

Alden says:

The word "self-control" appears 42 times in this book and "folly" 40 times. Those who do not have self-control are those who live in folly; those who love folly lose self-control. Yielding to immoral sex means losing control of one's life. It is stupid and the way of a fool.  
p. 53

(God's Little Devotional Book for Leaders by Honor Books, Inc.)

**Do not persist in  
folly. It is not a  
badge of character to  
continue down the  
wrong road.**

n n n

*The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but he who heeds counsel is wise.*  
Proverbs 12:15 NKJV

For years, "The Wide World of Sports" television program had, as part of its opening sequence, a scene used to depict "the agony of defeat." The scene showed a skier heading down a ski jump in good form, and then for no apparent reason, tumbling head over heels off the side of the jump and bouncing off the supporting structure. The scene caused many viewers to groan in sympathy.

What viewers didn't know, however, was that this particular skier *chose* to fall rather than to finish the jump. He explained later, the jump surface had become slick with ice — much too fast for jumping. Midway down the ramp, he realized that he was picking up so much speed that if he completed the jump, he would very likely land beyond the sloped landing area and hit level ground, which may very well have been fatal. Although it looked messy and painful, by taking the alternative route, the skier actually suffered no more than a headache.

Changing directions in mid-course may sometimes be painful or difficult. Halting a project that seems headed for failure may be challenging and stressful, but that is sometimes the wisest decision to make now in order to succeed later!  
pp. 180-81



(Faith Under Fire: Standing Strong When Satan Attacks by Steven J. Lawson)

It will forever be known as the darkest day in American history. Every person alive on that day remembers where they were and what they were doing when they heard the tragic news.

Traffic stopped in the streets. Classrooms were interrupted. Downtown commerce came to a screeching halt. Restaurants grew silent. All eyes and ears were fixed on television sets or radios all across the country, hanging on every word of up-to-the-minute news reports.

That's because on November 22, 1963, the President of the United States stepped into the line of fire and was gunned down in a Dallas motorcade. Ignoring urgent requests from Secret Service agents, President John F. Kennedy had vehemently refused the protective bulletproof bubbletop that covered the presidential limousine.

Riding into Dealey Plaza that day, the presidential motorcade was forced to make an unfortunate sharp-left turn that slowed the car down to almost 3 miles per hour. This allowed a would-be assassin the perfect opportunity to place the President in the crosshairs of his telescopic sight.

The motorcade was caught in a defenseless position, bordered on three sides by tall buildings. The President of the United States was now dangerously exposed. Shots rang out, but the Secret Service agents mistook them for motorcycle backfires. The limousine driver hit the brakes, slowing the car even more and giving the assassin time to refire.

The next shot sent a fatal missile crashing into the head of John F. Kennedy. The motorcade raced away in a high-speed effort to make it to Parkland Hospital in time to spare JFK's life. But it was too late.

The President had been caught in the cross fire.

By his own request to remove the bulletproof bubbletop, President Kennedy unknowingly exposed himself to the line of fire that tragically caused his death.

My friend, Satan has you in his crosshairs. He's looking for "an opportune time" to pull the trigger and assassinate your faith. He's loaded his arsenal, and he's ready to fire. Don't ride into the Devil's ambush without your protective armor—God's armor! Be on the alert!

Know that yours is a *faith under fire*. But with Christ, the victory can be yours—today and forever!

pp. 204-5

To get the FULL IMPACT of this passage, I would like to take the TWO BOTTOM LINES that occur in the passage and hear them one more time and think them through:

Proverbs 5:12-14

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

Proverbs 5:22, 23

The evil deeds of a wicked man ensnare him; the cords of his sin hold him fast. He will die for lack of discipline, led astray by his own great folly.

## CONCLUSION:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: "The lips of a seductive woman are oh so sweet, her soft words are oh so smooth" (Proverbs 5:3 Peterson).

LESSON #2: "But it won't be long before she's gravel in your mouth, a pain in your gut, a wound in your heart" (Proverbs 5:4 Peterson).

LESSON #3: "She gives no thought to the way of life; her paths are crooked, but she knows it not" (Proverbs 5:6 NIV).

LESSON #4: Playing with sexual temptation is like playing with fire.

LESSON #5: Like Joseph, it is better to lose your coat and keep your character.

LESSON #6: "Keep your distance from such a woman; absolutely stay out of her neighborhood" (Proverbs 5:8 Peterson).

LESSON #7: Sexual sin affects us physically, emotionally, spiritually, and mentally.

LESSON #8: The testimony of this deviant lifestyle is "My life is ruined! I haven't one blessed thing to show for my life!" (Proverbs 5:14 Peterson).

LESSON #9: "May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth . . . may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be captivated by her love" (Proverbs 5:18, 19 NIV).

LESSON #10: One of the great deterrents of sin is to be aware of two facts: "a man's ways are in full view of the Lord, and he examines all his paths" (Proverbs 5:21 NIV).

LESSON #11: "The evil deeds of a wicked man ensnare him; the cords of his sin hold him fast" (Proverbs 5:22 NIV).

LESSON #12: Don't "die for lack of discipline, led astray by [your] own great folly" (Proverbs 5:23 NIV).

(Made Perfect in Weakness: The Amazing Things God Can Do With Failure  
by Gary J. Oliver)

It's a cliché that failure isn't a closed door but an opportunity. That's easy to say when everything is going great. But when you're in the middle of a whopper of a failure, when things have come crashing down around you, one of the statements you're *least* likely to make is, "Wow! Thank You, Lord, for this great opportunity. I can't believe how fortunate I am to be able to learn something like this at my age. Am I blessed or what?"  
p. 60

In my search for God's view of failure, I discovered six key principles: God knows we'll fail; He allows us to fail; He's with us when we fail, and if our failure involves sin He is ready to forgive; He sees beyond our failure; He understands the potential value of our failure; and He can use our failures for good.  
p. 67

(Fénelon: Meditations on the Heart of God by François Fénelon)

What a wonder! Earthly lovers carry their foolish passions to extremes of fervent love—yet we who claim to love you do so weakly and faintheartedly. No, no, dear God, worldly love must not be stronger than divine love. Show what you can do with a heart that is completely given over to you.

My heart is open to you; you know its innermost recesses. You know what your grace has the power to stir up in it. You are only waiting for me to consent and give you my free will. This I do most ardently, a thousand times over!

Take possession of everything in me. Show yourself to be God. Set me aflame; consume me. Weak and powerless creature that I am, all that I have to give you is my love. Increase it, Lord, and make it more worthy of you. Oh, if only I were capable of doing great things for you! Oh, if only I had much to sacrifice for you! But all that I am capable of is so little. From this moment on all I want to do is sigh after you, long for you, and die to myself so that I may love you more.  
pp. 87-88

Bridges raises the question (revised by Santa):

But isn't there a remedy for this deadly curse? Thanks be to God, cleansing is provided for the impure; "deliverance is proclaimed to the captive." Blessed Savior! cleanse the leper in Your precious springs. Perform Your mighty commission. Set the captive free.  
p. 72

Phillips says:

Sir Walter Raleigh, one of Britain's great sea captains in the days of Queen Elizabeth I, was a fearless adventurer. He was a great favorite of the queen, but was disliked by her successor James I. In the end the king condemned Sir Walter to death. The executioner, whose sympathy evidently was with the prisoner, had no joy in his task. Hoping to ease the sailor's last moments, the executioner told Sir Walter how to place his head on the block to ensure swift decapitation. The prisoner thanked him. "It matters little, friend," Sir Walter said, "whether or not the head is right so long as the heart is right."

The heart must be right if the life is to be right. The heart can be right only if it is cleansed by the precious blood of Christ and indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God. Even then the heart must be kept with all diligence. It needs to be protected with the breastplate of righteousness (Ephesians 6:14).  
p. 124