

4. Temptations – Part 2

October 18, 2009

How many of you have been tempted since last Sunday service ? Please don't raise your hands. Many, I believe. As I have said it before, there is no sin in temptation itself. It is nothing more than a tool satan uses to allure us into his trap. But there is a sin in our part when we go after the temptation like a bunch of dummies.

Temptation reminds me 'Wile E. Coyote' in the Roadrunner cartoon show on Saturday morning. Though Wile E. gets whacked, falls off the cliff, gets blown to pieces by his own explosives, or gets run over by a locomotive in the process of chasing after this uncatchable bird, he never gives up. In next scene, he prepares himself for another attempt to capture Roadrunner.

Temptation is like that. It does not acknowledge our vacation time or downtime. It is the least bit concerned about our education level, wealth, gender, race, age or even spiritual maturity. It seems that the more mature we are in the Lord, the more complicated and subtle temptation is for an obvious reason. Otherwise we would detect temptations right away.

As I've said last Sunday, from chapter 5 to chapter 7, the Lord God speaks to us through king Solomon about the danger of toying with sexual temptations. These three chapters are God's sex education which is by far better than the pathetic sex education our children get from public schools.

A. WARNING AND REGRET

Proverbs 5:1-14 My son, pay attention to my wisdom; Lend your ear to my understanding, 2 That you may preserve discretion, And your lips may keep knowledge. 3 For the lips of an immoral woman drip honey, And her mouth is smoother than oil; 4 But in the end she is bitter as wormwood, Sharp as a two-edged sword. 5 Her feet go down to death, Her steps lay hold of hell. 6 Lest you ponder her path of life-- Her ways are unstable; You do not know them. 7 Therefore hear me now, my children, And do not depart from the words of my mouth. 8 Remove your way far from her, And do not go near the door of her house, 9 Lest you give your honor to others, And your years to the cruel one; 10 Lest aliens be filled with your wealth, And your labors go to the house of a foreigner; 11 And you mourn at last, When your flesh and your body are consumed, 12 And say: "How I have hated instruction, And my heart despised correction! 13 I have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, Nor inclined my ear to those who instructed me! 14 I was on the verge of total ruin, In the midst of the assembly and congregation."

The Lord God spoke to Moses and his Israelites about sexual sin in His Ten Commandments:

Exodus 20:14 "You shall not commit adultery.

It declares that any sexual intimacy outside the bonds of marriage is wrong, even if "between consenting adults." God invented sex and gave to us to enjoy properly between husband and wife.

Satan methodically and cunningly uses liberal media, Hollywood, fashion world, liberal educational systems and government officials to spread this family destroying strategy – fornication, adultery, homosexuality and other awful things. From cereal

commercials on TV to teen movies on silver screen, to just about every single TV sitcom and reality show, to sex education for second grade in grammar school, they push for sleaziness, free sex and homosexuality as a normal life.

People say, "C'mon, this is the twenty-first century. What the Bible said many thousands of years ago does not apply in today's life. Get real." No, they should get real, the truth remains the truth no matter how many thousand years have passed. The Bible says they are evil, and there will not be a jury sitting at the White Throne Judgment, nor there will be any democratic voting system in heaven. Our God rules all the universe and He patiently waits for people to turn their hearts to Him. But His patience will not last forever.

Hollywood portrays sex outside of marriage, whether it is premarital sex or adultery, as romantic as it can be. They even make having sex is the process of getting to know each other intimately and there is no consequence. How far from the truth!

Do they ever show a teenage girl has a sex with a boy in the backseat of a car and next day she gets dumped since he got a notch on his carnal belt and she wonders what went wrong, then she realizes that she is pregnant? How about a wife commits an adultery with her office coworker and several month down the road she learns from her doctor that she got AIDS virus from her coworker and now even her husband has AIDS and she is pregnant with their baby and the baby girl will be born AIDS?

Get this, folks. Every single sin has a consequence without an exception.

B. FOR MARRIAGE ONLY

Proverbs 5:15-23 Drink water from your own cistern, And running water from your own well. 16 Should your fountains be dispersed abroad, Streams of water in the streets? 17 Let them be only your own, And not for strangers with you. 18 Let your fountain be blessed, And rejoice with the wife of your youth. 19 As a loving deer and a graceful doe, Let her breasts satisfy you at all times; And always be enraptured with her love. 20 For why should you, my son, be enraptured by an immoral woman, And be embraced in the arms of a seductress? 21 For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, And He ponders all his paths. 22 His own iniquities entrap the wicked man, And he is caught in the cords of his sin. 23 He shall die for lack of instruction, And in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.

Sex within marriage is a beautiful river that brings life and refreshment, but sex outside marriage is a sewer that defiles everything it touches. I am sure that y'all have heard about the myth of the greener grass of the other side of the fence. Yes, it is greener because it is located next to a cesspool.

Hebrews 13:4 Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

Freedom of choice is one of the privileges God has given to the human race, but He instructs us and urges us to use that freedom wisely. One of the deceitful things about sin is that it promises freedom but it only brings slavery. It's impossible to sin without becoming a slave to that sin.

John 8:34 Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.

The bonds of sin get stronger the more we sin, yet sin deceives us into thinking that we're free and can quit sinning whenever we please. As the invisible chains of habit are forged, we discover to our horror that we don't have the strength to break them. Millions of people in our world today are in one kind of bondage or another and are seeking for deliverance, but the only One who can set them free is Jesus Christ.

John 8:36 Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

I asked you to underline 'the wife of your youth' in v18. Many silly men think, I hope none of you men in this room, that their wives are too old for them now, so they start to look someone much younger to replace them. For those dumb guys, I have a question, "Have you ever looked at yourself in a mirror lately? You, too, have a wrinkled face whether you want to admit or not." All the ladies say, "Amen!"

C. PLAYING WITH FIRE

Proverbs 6:24-29 To keep you from the evil woman, From the flattering tongue of a seductress. 25 Do not lust after her beauty in your heart, Nor let her allure you with her eyelids. 26 For by means of a harlot A man is reduced to a crust of bread; And an adulteress will prey upon his precious life. 27 Can a man take fire to his bosom, And his clothes not be burned? 28 Can one walk on hot coals, And his feet not be seared? 29 So is he who goes in to his neighbor's wife; Whoever touches her shall not be innocent.

Proverbs 6:32-35 Whoever commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding; He who does so destroys his own soul. 33 Wounds and dishonor he will get, And his reproach will not be wiped away. 34 For jealousy is a husband's fury; Therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance. 35 He will accept no recompense, Nor will he be appeased though you give many gifts.

Do you remember the time when you thought you were invincible and knew all things and could do all things? Some of you might still think that way. You do not know everything, can not do all things and you are not invincible, because you ain't God.

Many people have thought that way and did whatever their carnal desires drove them. That is why we have such a high rate of sexually transmitted diseases, as known as STDs, among young people. According to Focus on the Family, approximately 18.9 million new cases of STDs occur each year, of which 9.1 million (48%) are among persons aged 15-24. In 2000, three incurable STDs accounted for 88% of all new cases in this age group. You can count on it being much higher now.

If you are married and you are flirting or committing a full blown adultery with someone, please stop and think. What about the trust from your spouse? What about the hurts you might bring to your children? What about your reputation? That is what v32 is talking about – lacking understanding. When I said last Sunday that sin makes us stupid, it is so true.

Remember that God is not mocked. Whatever we sow is what we will reap.

D. THE WAY TO HELL

Proverbs 7:6-27 For at the window of my house I looked through my lattice, 7 And saw among the simple, I perceived among the youths, A young man devoid of understanding, 8 Passing along the street near her corner; And he took the path to her house 9 In the twilight, in the evening, In the black and dark night. 10 And there a woman met him, With the attire of a harlot, and a crafty heart. 11 She was loud and rebellious, Her feet would not stay at

home. 12 At times she was outside, at times in the open square, Lurking at every corner. 13 So she caught him and kissed him; With an impudent face she said to him: 14 "I have peace offerings with me; Today I have paid my vows. 15 So I came out to meet you, Diligently to seek your face, And I have found you. 16 I have spread my bed with tapestry, Colored coverings of Egyptian linen. 17 I have perfumed my bed With myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. 18 Come, let us take our fill of love until morning; Let us delight ourselves with love. 19 For my husband is not at home; He has gone on a long journey; 20 He has taken a bag of money with him, And will come home on the appointed day." 21 With her enticing speech she caused him to yield, With her flattering lips she seduced him. 22 Immediately he went after her, as an ox goes to the slaughter, Or as a fool to the correction of the stocks, 23 Till an arrow struck his liver. As a bird hastens to the snare, He did not know it would cost his life. 24 Now therefore, listen to me, my children; Pay attention to the words of my mouth: 25 Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways, Do not stray into her paths; 26 For she has cast down many wounded, And all who were slain by her were strong men. 27 Her house is the way to hell, Descending to the chambers of death.

We get the impression that this young man is either terribly dumb or very proud, convinced that he can play with sin and get away with it. But he's only tempting himself and heading for trouble. To begin with, he's out at night, and he's deliberately walking near the place of temptation and danger while this woman's husband is away.

Proverbs 9:17 Stolen water is sweet, And bread eaten in secret is pleasant.

During almost twenty years of ministry, I've listened to many sad stories from people who have indulged in sexual sin and suffered greatly. In almost every instance, the people deliberately put themselves into the place of temptation and danger.

Job 31:1 I have made a covenant with my eyes; Why then should I look upon a young woman?

Unlike Job, they didn't make a covenant with their eyes not to look lustfully at young women, nor did they follow the example of Joseph and flee from temptation. We are the only ones who can make ourselves to be tempted, not satan, certainly not God.

Now I need to talk to you ladies. Hear me well, please. Nowadays, the fashion world makes ladies' and young ladies' clothing to show more of their bodies – too tight, too short, too low and too high.

1 Timothy 2:9-10 in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, 10 but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works.

When you buy clothing next time, when you put it on in front of your mirror, ask yourself, "Is my clothing going to cause a stumble to my brothers in Christ? Or do I give any impression that I want to show my body to men?" I know, I know you may protest, "Hey preacher, some men would lust after a tree trunk if you put a woman's skirt around." Well, that may not be far from the truth. Ask yourself this final question before you get dressed, "Would I wear this if Jesus Christ my Lord is looking at me?" I can just picture many of you ladies are going to wear gunny sacks on next Sunday.

Now I need to talk to those who already have violated the sacred marital covenant between you and your spouse. Even if this doesn't apply to you, please pay attention.

Is there any possibility for your future as husband and wife? Can your marriage survive? Yes, as long as the offender is truly repenting and the one who was violated is willing to forgive and move on with God's mercy and strength.

To the one who was hurt, each time anger and hurt from the betrayal come to your mind, you can ask the Lord to help you forgive your spouse. Does he or she deserve your forgiveness? Probably not, nor do you deserve the forgiveness from God, but He has forgiven your sins. I've never said it is easy. It would be hard to think about holding your spouse's hand or embrace or kiss now, but the Lord will heal it and even make it better, if you let Him.

To the one who violated the marriage covenant, please listen. No matter what kind of situation you had, you made a decision to break that sacred marriage vow you've made in the presence of God and your spouse and many witnesses. Please do not make any, I mean, any excuse. There is absolutely no room for an excuse or haughty heart, because you are the offender. First, you need to return to the Lord and His Word with a truly repented heart. Second, you need to be transparent to your spouse for everything you do. You can not demand trust or respect from your spouse, because you broke them. You need to earn it back and it will take a long time.

With the encouragement and power from the Lord, you two can build the marriage back up and even better. Who knows, the Lord might use your marriage to minister to others who will go through the same difficult situation in future.

E. APPLICATIONS

1) Do not think that you can handle temptations, because you can not.

Matthew 26:41 Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

2) When you face a temptation, call out the name of Jesus and run to Him.

Proverbs 18:10 The name of the Lord is a strong tower; The righteous run to it and are safe.