



"REASONS TO REJOICE"

"Your Words were found and I ate them, and Your Word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." Jeremiah 15:16

PROVERBS LESSON 5

In chapter six, Solomon warned his son against the sin of adultery. Now in chapter seven, he illustrates the immoral woman's ways and the consequences of being involved with her. Although he's repeating this topic, he gives even more detail and explains the craftiness of her ways. It's interesting that almost one third of the first nine chapters of Proverbs is on the subject of sex. Immorality was a sin that was a constant struggle for the youth at that time, and still is today. Sin is deceitful... it creeps up on us when we aren't looking. That truth should keep us on guard and watchful! We can't avoid being tempted, but we sure can avoid tempting ourselves! We do have the power to make wise choices, which, again, is one of the purposes the Book of Proverbs was written. The Holy Spirit wants to give us guidelines and principles to help govern our choices and give us wisdom to walk through this life. I pray that we pay close attention to the warnings we find in this book. May we, too, hold His Words close to our hearts so we won't sin against Him.

First Day

1. Read Proverbs 7:1-27. As you read, notice that first Solomon writes as if he's speaking to students in a schoolroom, then in verse 10, he moves into more of an "eye witness" testimony, and then, in verse 24, he's back in the schoolroom. What is the main subject of this chapter? Do you notice any repeated words, phrases, or thoughts?

2. How would you describe the author's tone?

3. How would you summarize verses 1-5? According to the author, what is the remedy for promiscuity?

I like what one author said; "If you keep them (His Words), they will keep you from the arms of the immoral woman."

Eric Lane tell us that Solomon gives us a series of vivid comparisons:

- (a) *Keep* them as you would treasure (vs 1- store)
- (b) *Keep* them as you would your life (vs 2a)
- (c) *Keep* them as the tenderest part of your anatomy (vs 2b), such as the pupil of your eye, which is sensitive to the slightest speck.
- (d) *Keep* them as you would something precious to you personally (vs 3a), such as the ring on your finger, which may have monetary value, and will certainly have sentimental value.
- (e) *Keep* them as you would those whom you are most fond of, like the friends whose names you cherish in your heart (vs 3b).
- (f) *Keep* them as you would the affection of a close relative (vs 4).
This means cultivating familiarity and intimacy with the Word, as if it were speaking personally to you.

If you *keep* His Word like this, they will certainly *keep* you from danger!!

4. The phrase "apple" is literally the center of a thing. The pupil is considered the "most sensitive and carefully guarded of the human body's exposed organs." Read Deuteronomy 32:10 and Psalm 17:8. What do these two verses say about "apple" and how can you relate it to our text?

5. What does it practically and literally mean to keep God's Word as the "apple of your eye"? Are you doing this?

6. In verse 3, it says to bind them like rings on your fingers. What does Proverbs 3:3 say to bind and write them on?

7. To close this section, write your thoughts on chapter seven. Did you observe anything new? What practical advice can you take from it?

Memory Verse of the Week: "For wisdom is better than rubies, and all the things one may desire cannot be compared with her." Proverbs 8:11

Second Day

Review your memory verse. Isn't it a great one?

1. Read Proverbs 7:1-27 again. In verse 6, Solomon talks like he's really looking out the window. He could be, but he could also be speaking figuratively or theoretically. Describe the young man and the details that surround him. Is he alone or in a group? What time of day it is? Is he busy or idle? Which path did he take?

2. From our past readings, had Solomon warned against any of these things specifically?

3. In verses 10-12, what do we know about the woman's character?
(What do we know about her "intent"?) How is she like a spider?

The woman's husband was away, so she decided to play! She was looking for victims in the street, but this naïve young guy was walking right up to her door. She grabs him and kisses him like they were long lost lovers, showing no sign of embarrassment. She wasn't a prostitute, but seemed to be a respectable married woman, just willing to have some fun and make some money while the husband was gone!

4. How does she entice him in verses 13-20? How did she make him feel "special"?

Verse 14 refers to "peace offerings" and "paying her vows." Lane writes, "These offerings were made as a special thanksgiving usually for a personal reason (Lev. 3). She had made a vow to offer these for some unknown cause and had now performed it, or so she says. With the fellowship offering a substantial portion of the meat could be brought home but must be consumed the same day, due to lack of refrigeration. She was thus offering him a share in her celebratory and substantial feast. Some think she says this to give an appearance of piety and this may be so." Most agree that this was probably an effort to cloud any sense of wrongdoing she may have had.

5. The coverings of her bed were both expensive and beautiful. What conclusion can you draw from this regarding her husband's financial position?
6. It sounds like an offer he couldn't refuse. According to verses 21-22, does he give in to temptation?

7. What illustrations does Solomon use to describe what it's like to consent to adultery? What's his point?

8. How is adultery like stealing?

I think Solomon's point is that when the pleasure is over, there are consequences, and it has to be paid for. (Romans 6:23) This house was a trap that ultimately cost him his life.

9. Solomon jumps back into teacher mode in verses 24-27. How would you describe his final exhortation? Which verse shows us the ugly reality of sexual sin?

The word "stray" in verse 25 means "to wander." The young man got himself into trouble because he wandered or strayed near the woman's house. He chose the wrong path and he paid the price for his foolishness. Because the man immediately went after her without stopping to reflect, investigate, or seek counsel, the bedroom became a slaughterhouse.

10. Sin always has consequences. Are you contemplating any "sin" right now? Have you considered the consequences? How can counting the cost first help keep you on the right path?

11. I read once that sexual immorality has a way of "anesthetizing our judgment." What do you think that means? Do you agree?

3. Compare the ways of the immoral woman to this one, from verses 1-9. (For example, one was seductive and deceptive, the other was open and honest.)

God wants His ways to be known throughout the earth (Psalm 67:2); His wisdom is available to all. (James 1:5) All mankind is invited to taste and see that the Lord is good! Wisdom shouts to all who will hear. She cares too much to be silent!

4. From verses 3-11, which shows us that wisdom's call is public? Personal? Reliable?

5. We should choose wisdom because of its great value. Which verses tell us this, from 6-11 and 18-21?

6. How is wisdom greater than material wealth? Can you explain Solomon's point?

We know that Solomon was an incredibly wealthy man (1 Kings 4; 10), but he believed that God's wisdom was more important than money. This is Solomon's version of what Jesus said in Matthew 6:33. John Henry Jowett said, "The real measure of our wealth is how much we'd be worth if we lost all our money." Character and wisdom are always more important than position and possessions.

7. Read what Job had to say about wisdom in Job 28:12-28. What are some key points of this section?

8. Have you ever lost sight of this principle, and made wealth or possessions more important than the things of the Lord? How can you tell if this is true in your life right now? (How does it happen so subtly?)

9. What are some practical ways to help us keep these principles in focus?

10. By the way, what else is worth more than rubies according to Proverbs 31:10? What does that mean? (How wealthy is your husband?)

That's all for today. May you always keep a Godly perspective on wealth, possessions, and money. And remember that "all the things you may desire cannot be compared with her!"

Fourth Day

What's your verse?

1. Read Proverbs 8:1-21. Reread verses 12-21. What would you say is the main thought of this section?

2. Personal pronouns (I, mine, me, my) are used 16 times in these verses. What is significant about this?

3. How would you define:
 - a. prudence

 - b. discretion

4. According to verse 13, how is wisdom moral as well as mental?

5. How does a lack of "fear of the Lord" lead to all kinds of trouble, especially pride and arrogance?

6. Do you "hate evil" and the "evil way"? Take a moment and examine your heart. Does the way you live your life show that you hate evil?

Verse 14 shows us that wisdom is strong and insightful. Ortlund wrote, "Wisdom provides both strategies that succeed and strength to carry them out and not quit in the face of hardship and opposition. Wisdom is practical. Wisdom works. Wisdom makes us influential. But the wisdom of Christ belongs only to those who humble themselves, because they want to change and grow and make an impact for Him."

7. When you need help, where do you go for counsel? When you have to make decisions, where do you seek your advice? Do you seek the Lord and His Word or do you seek the wisdom of the world? Is His wisdom the best for "all" situations, including parenting, finances, friendships and marriage?

8. What's the difference between natural wisdom and spiritual wisdom?

9. Read verses 14-16. What can wisdom do for rulers?

Godly leaders will rule justly through His wisdom. If they are lacking wisdom, they can ask the Lord for it. They will recognize God's power and sovereignty in their lives rather than try to do things in their own strength. Ungodly rulers love power for power sake. The leaders who seek God's wisdom through humility will produce great results.

10. How can you better pray for those leaders over you, especially in government?

Hopefully, you are getting a clear understanding of wisdom and how important it is, or how important "He" is, in our lives. Let's not be a fool or lean toward evil behavior today. Instead, let's pursue knowing Christ in an even deeper way than we do at this moment.

Fifth Day

Write out your verse by memory.

1. Read Proverbs 8:1-21, focusing on 17-21. How do we acquire wisdom, according to these verses?

2. What are the rewards or "benefits" of wisdom from these verses?

The love relationship with Christ that is portrayed by verse 17 is beautiful. It's intimate (vs 17; John 14:21), enduring (vs 18), fruitful (vs 19), has a clear path (vs 20), and comes with a huge inheritance (vs 21).

3. How would you define the word "diligently"? Is diligent a word that describes you?

"God honors an earnest heart. He even offers a seeker 'riches and honor.' The Bible warns us that just desiring money, not necessarily getting it but just desiring it, destroys us (1 Timothy 6:9). But if we love and seek Christ as the prize of our hearts, He supplies all the money and all the treasure and all the honor we will need to love Him and serve Him according to His will and plan for us." (Alexander Heidel)

The word "diligent" means "with intentionality, going out of our usual way, breaking with routine."

4. Are you diligently, or intentionally, seeking Christ? (Hebrews 11:6) Are you willing to "break routine" to seek His wisdom, strength, or counsel? How can you be more intentional? What roadblocks get in the way?

5. What do the following verses say about "diligence"? Note any verses that are particularly challenging to you.

- (a) Romans 12:11
- (b) Deuteronomy 4:9
- (c) Deuteronomy 6:17
- (d) Proverbs 4:23
- (e) 2 Peter 1:5-11
- (f) Proverbs 10:4
- (g) Proverbs 12:24

6. List 2 things that challenged you or specifically spoke to our heart in this week's lesson.

**I pray that you and I will be more intentional in loving Christ this week.
Purposefully seek His counsel, His wisdom,
and His strength in all you do!**

**"How much better to get wisdom than gold!
And to get understanding is to be chosen rather than silver."
Proverbs 16:16**