

## “Quickening Communion or Fatal Seduction?” (Prov. 7)

Intro. Thankfully, I’ve learned to let the Bible dictate my sermons rather than organize it around them. I was taught how to develop sermons from beginning to end e.g. one should always end with the Gospel invitation. Rather than beginning with verse 6 and ending with verses 1-5, I’ll preach it as it’s laid out.

### 1. Prevention of Seduction (1-5)

- a. Reiteration (1-2) Echoes previous proverbs re: adherence to benevolent commands.
- b. Regeneration (2a) Abide and “live” contrasts to “turn”ing, “stray”ing to perdition (25-27).
- c. Admiration (2b) “Apple of your eye” The life-giving Law is a treasure, a beauty, and a desire of the one who abides therein.
- d. Foundation (3) “Bind” in the “heart.” Having an intimate relationship with the Person for whom the Law expresses, grounds us with a firm foundation i.e. the LORD Himself! We know the LORD intimately and thus abide in Him and are grounded in Him (cf. Mat. 7:24-27) – which will anchor us in the storm of flattery and seduction (v. 5).
- e. Relation (4) “Sister.” Technical commentators rightly point out the usage (here and elsewhere in Scripture) the use of “sister” in such a context. First, Bruce Waltke: “*You are my sister*” expresses at the least an acceptance of wisdom as one’s dear family and probably is the language of love to designate the groom’s commitment to his bride (Song 4:9, 10, 12; 5:1, 2; Sir. 15:2; cf. Job 17:14) for whom he left his father and mother (Gen. 2:23–24; cf. Tob. 7:16).<sup>1</sup> D. Hubbard: “treasuring the teacher’s law is tantamount to treating wisdom (and “*understanding*”) as “*sister*” and “*nearest kin*” (see Ruth 2:1; 3:2 for the same Hebrew root) and so making her not an abstract idea but a person whose love and care will protect (“*keep*” or guard) us from the flattery of the seductress (vv. 4–5), as Miriam guarded the young Moses, cradled in the reed basket and floating in the shallows of the Nile (Ex. 2:1–10).”<sup>2</sup>
- f. Application: Like the term “sister” is also used for “wife” or “mother” [see underlined references above], lady wisdom represents Christ who is seen e.g. as our brother and our bridegroom, among other relationships with us. I’m getting right to the point of the Gospel regarding this relationship. I’m told preachers ought not to extensively quote others but I can do no better with my limited time than to quote Raymond Ortlund’s insightful articulation on this. He first quotes Paul and then offers the implications.

Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, “The two will become one flesh.” But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. (1 Corinthians 6:15–17)

The concept of “accepting Jesus” is Biblical (John 1:12), but it is often misunderstood. In America’s Bible Belt especially, many people need to be saved from their salvation. They have “accepted Jesus” in the sense that they have allowed him into their lives, up to a point. But this passage in 1 Corinthians 6 shows us more. Becoming a Christian is the joining of two into one. It is trust and surrender such that we give ourselves entirely to Christ, like sexual union. But if all you have done is “accept Jesus” on your terms so that you retain control of your life, you have only flirted with Christ. You need to go all the way. Then you will feel loved.

Here is what it means to be a Christian. You become joined to the Lord Jesus Christ, in body and spirit, through his finished work on the cross. He gives himself to you completely by grace, and you give yourself to him completely by faith. Not only your spirit but also the

<sup>1</sup> Waltke, B. K. (2004). *The Book of Proverbs, Chapters 1–15* (p. 370). Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

<sup>2</sup> Hubbard, D. A., & Ogilvie, L. J. (1989). *Proverbs* (Vol. 15, p. 111). Thomas Nelson Inc.

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members of your body, your very organs, are so indwelt by the living Christ that you are his physical presence in the world today. From head to toe, all that you are is not only *for* Christ but also *of* Christ. That includes your sexuality, married or single, because you *are* married—to Christ. You have been joined by grace to the Lord. You have been brought into union with the most loving Person in the universe. He is giving his love to you with all his passionate heart. He is so close to you, he identifies so intensely with you, the Bible is saying he and you have become one spirit, the way a married man and woman become one flesh. But to be one spirit is even more profound, more intimate, deeper, and richer than to be one flesh. And Paul wrote this to *sinful* Christians. Throughout the New Testament this Corinthian church was the biggest mess of all. But Christ loves and redeems people no one else can love. He loves *you* to this full extent.

Will you believe it, receive it, and open your heart to Christ today?<sup>3</sup>

### 2. Pursuit of Seduction (6-13)

- a. Treading the Path Unaware (6-9). The youthful man is seen as simple not wise. Whether or not his path led legitimately toward her house, or he was veering alone and away from the open traffic anticipating a rendezvous, the seclusion and darkness afford the atmosphere of seduction.
- b. Setting the Trap with Intention (10-13). “Crafty heart” and “caught” are terms of the huntress. “Wily of heart” means, literally, “guarded of heart.” She is unguarded in her dress, revealing much. But she is guarded in her heart, revealing nothing.<sup>4</sup> Revealing the flesh but guarding the heart avoids the true intimacies of the heart e.g. sacrifice, loyalty, and purity; while unveiling the flesh merely pursues licentious pleasures. Her attitude is “loud and rebellious” v. 11 with itching feet, prowling v. 12 anxiously to hunt down her next victim for her own pleasure. Her opposite is found in ch. 31 and 1 Pet. 3:1-6. The adulteress has a husband but hunts for another. She has a luxurious home but not a healthy household. She has youth, beauty, and riches yet she is unsatisfied. She shamelessly v. 13 seduces in the street. She lures him into the trap with promises of luxury, pleasure, justification, and impunity. The religious “vows” are likely Pagan and involve fertility practices (e.g. Exod. 32:1-6 cf. Nu. 25:1-2).

### 3. Persuasion of Seduction (14-20)

- a. Jive Justification (14). Such is the inconsistent logic of sin viz. justify adultery with religion while having to assure the prey that harm will not befall him as her husband is gone for ample time to commit the violation. Now, even the church is overlooking and even justifying adultery and fornication. Though not promoting adultery, the recently released movie “Redeeming Love” is supposedly based on Hosea and Gomer. From what I’ve heard, it can be a misleading moral lesson at best and a stumbling block at worst. It has a cinematically performed steamy sex scene in it and the ‘rescued’ woman is conveniently the most attractive one in the trafficked girls. It seems to have more similarities with the allure of the flesh, youth, and desires of the world than it does with the biblical *Hosea* and the *Proverbs*. Hosea is about Israel’s whoredom against God, her husband. Not God rescuing a beautiful woman from evil people.
- b. Feigned Flattery (15)

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<sup>3</sup> Ortlund, R. C., Jr. (2012). [\*Preaching the Word: Proverbs—Wisdom that Works\*](#) (R. K. Hughes, Ed.; pp. 111–112). Crossway.

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- c. Promised Pleasure (16-18)
  - d. Inferred Impunity (19-20). Gen. 3:4 “You will not surely die,” said the serpent. “It’s OK, God surely won’t condemn you for just following your feelings. After all, you are in love,” says those in the church. But again, Mat. 5:27-30 cannot be ignored. Hubbard noted, “there is something about sexual immorality that anesthetizes our judgment.”<sup>5</sup>
4. Perdition of Seduction (21-27)
- a. Sprung Trap (21). All too often we fall for lack of heeding wisdom. It is imperative that we not neglect nor soften the Word of warning. But it is also a Word of the wedded husband i.e .Christ.
  - b. Stupid Animal (22a). He went dimwittedly into the spiced bed which became a slaughter bin.
  - c. Fatal Capture (22b-23)
  - d. Warning of Wisdom (24). He’s seen it before as it happens too often. He had just given them a poetic story of observation.
  - e. Stay Straight (25). Rather than abiding on the path that gives life by binding the commands to the heart, the fatal fool falls afoul thus the adamant prohibition.
  - f. Ironic Tragedy (26). Many mighty have fallen for the delicate seductress. Mot = death who was a pagan deity, had to be conquered by Baal in order to end the droughts caused by Mot. The picture seems to be that Mot (death) is the pursuer of the many mighty men who would otherwise be victorious. Yet they dropped their guard and veered into death (Mot) willingly thus being conquered by their own desires.

PC: It is no wonder why we must have repeated warnings in *Proverbs* and throughout Scripture to avoid seduction at all costs. Sin is spiritual adultery against the One who made us to volitionally enjoy Him. And rather than seeking God and to be faithful to Him, we follow the desires of our fallen flesh which crave the immediate gratification of pleasure. Sin so easily seduces and takes us away from the righteous path, and to the corner of sin where it is “black and dark” v. 9 cf. Jn. 3:19. Even those who have seen the love and faithfulness of God play the harlot with idols and other gods, as illustrated by the live parable of Hosea and Gomer in the book of *Hosea*. Death and judgment are legitimate motivators to seek and abide in the righteous path but we have the supreme impetus for such – Christ. His love for the Father and His lost and adulterous children was demonstrated by leaving glory, taking a body forevermore, and suffering the Cross and death to redeem us to betrothal. This is true love! Jesus does not seduce with pleasures of the flesh but offers Himself to us through His sacrifice. He offers us righteousness, beauty, and love forevermore. The righteous path is Jesus. The path to death is the adulterous one.

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<sup>5</sup> Hubbard, D. A., & Ogilvie, L. J. (1989). *Proverbs* (Vol. 15, p. 115). Thomas Nelson Inc.