

Explore the Bible: July 5

By Laura Lee Leathers

Following God's Design • Proverbs 5:3-11, 15-18



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Farmers who raise livestock use fences of various types to mark off their property lines. Growing up, when our small herd of cows strayed into another person's pasture, it was my job to get them back home and repair the broken fence. However, for several years when spring arrived, the neighbor's Hereford bull would jump the fence and join our herd. This created several issues.

The adage, the grass is never greener on the other side of the fence, applies to today's most combustible and often controversial subject: sex. In Proverbs 5-7, Solomon transitions into sharing God's design for sex and the sexual sin of adultery. God's plan is good, He gives clear guidelines, and He "set wise boundaries as to how this most sensitive gift should be enjoyed within a committed and monogamous marriage between a man and a woman (Lifeway)."

See the Reality (Prov. 5:3-6). What are the warnings Solomon shares with his son? First, be aware of the seductive speech, the communication that comes from a forbidden woman's lips (v. 3, Prov. 7:5b). Honey tastes sweet and pleasant. A little bit is enough to place a desire for more. Then, there is a reference to her speech being like oil. The enticing words go down into the heart, mind, and soul smoothly.

The next warning is that the forbidden woman has no concern regarding her steps and where they lead. She doesn't think about what she is doing. Finally, she doesn't truly comprehend her choice, the destructive dark abyss down which this

behavior is taking her. or who goes with her.

The reality is this: flattering words, flirtatious behavior, and immodesty are all avenues to which a man or woman may succumb when it comes to sexual sin. "However, marital faithfulness and sexual intimacy between a husband and wife is one of the life-enriching blessings that come with following God's design for sexuality" (Lifeway).

Think Long Term (Prov. 5:7-11). It is hard to visualize how a decision made today will affect the future. Many times, the best choice to make is – don't do it! When dealing with the forbidden woman, the alarm is loud: "Keep your way from her, and do not go near the door of her house (v. 8)" Another way of saying it is, Run! (1 Cor. 6:18).

Do you need an example? Look at Genesis 39:1-12. Joseph ran from Potiphar's wife. His statement to her, "How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God? (v. 9b)" As believers, we have a high calling of honoring the Lord, valuing His wisdom, knowing His Word, and living it out.

Solomon addresses the cost of adultery in Proverbs 6:20-35, "He who commits adultery lacks sense; he who does it destroys himself (v. 32)." Think about it!

Enjoy God's Provision (Prov. 5:15-18). "Solomon gives us two ways to fight this sin: vertical and horizontal. Your vertical relationship with the Lord must be right in order for your own horizontal relationship with your spouse to be right. These work in concert" (Akin & Akin, Proverbs Commentary). This is God's perfect plan.

Sexual intimacy is a gift from God exclusively for the marriage relationship. If a spouse violates this covenant relationship and turns in repentance, there is hope. For all sinners, it is the saving grace of Jesus Christ that redeems the repentant sinner.

The words of Jesus on this subject are found in Matthew

5:27-28: "You have heard that it was said, "You shall not commit adultery. But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

The grass is never greener. A wise person guards their heart and follows God's design.

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