

**Divide-The-Truth Sunday School Preview Notes**  
**Proverbs 5:3-6, 5:7-14, 5:20-23, 6:23-24, 6:27-29, 32-34**  
**Explore the Bible Sunday School Lesson for February 15, 2004**

**Introduction:** I remember the first message I ever heard preached about sex. You may think that must have been some message for me to remember it. No, the reason it has stuck with me for so long is because I preached it. I have been in the ministry almost eight years now. When I was in my former church as Minister of Education, I began a series of expositional messages from Colossians. Having never had a preaching course in my life, and having only preached a hand full of times prior to this endeavor, I preached the only way I knew how. I began at the beginning of Colossians and continued verse by verse, chapter by chapter. I knew that if God permitted me to stay there very long, for I was without a pastor at that time, I would eventually get to Colossians 3:5, "*Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.*" To be real honest, I was praying that the Lord would move me before I got to this message, but as I progressed through Colossians it became evident that this would not happen. All you have to do to understand my feelings is read the verse. It is crystal clear that this passage deals with sexual immorality. It was a topic I was uncomfortable with and would not have chosen to deal with had I not been cornered by one simple fact. It was the next verse. I prepared, I prayed, and I preached like I had every previous message and God got me through it and He blessed it.

We hear so little from the pulpits and in Sunday School classrooms today about the subject matter of this week and last week that one wonders why. There are but two reasons why. First, as I have already mentioned, it is a subject that we are uncomfortable with. Some of you right now are thinking, "I going to call in sick this week" or "I think this would be a great lesson for \_\_\_\_\_ to teach." Second, we have allowed Satan to deceive us into thinking that the message is not needed because they already know it or it is not an issue because I teach senior adults. It may be that they know it, but the issue is not that they know it but do they practice it. We do not know what is going on in people's minds and hearts. This is why we must continually teach and admonish about the things that we do not think are important.

So how important is this message? Possibly it will be the most important one you will ever teach. You do not know of the husband already in the grips of adultery that might hear this message. You do not know the wife contemplating leaving her husband. You do not know of the man, woman, or youth who is in contact, right now, on the Internet with someone. You do not know how far the young girl or young man in your youth class has already gone in the area of sex.

Premarital sex, homosexuality, and extramarital affairs invade our minds everyday. TV sitcoms, movies, romance novels, and advertisements for everything under the sun (cars to pool tables) all use sex to sell their products, and it works, otherwise advertisers would not use these things. We cannot avoid this subject because it is all around us, and we must not avoid this text because we need to hear it, either to be reminded or remanded.

As you teach this message, especially for those who are apprehensive about it, learn a principle that I have learned. The things that I would not choose to do because they make me uncomfortable, I haven't done them before, I don't know how, or they really stress me out are the things that once completed have brought the greatest joy and growth. Why? Rather than living in the fear factor we are living in faith.

**5:3-6** In verses one and two of this chapter we see the plea of a father to his son. It is a plea that we have already seen many times and will see many more times. In the previous chapter, it was a plea against the evil man and his ways. In this chapter it is a plea against the "*strange woman.*" If our children do not learn correct information about sex from their parents, especially their father's, where are they going to receive this information? You know, as well as I do, they will get misinformation from a variety of sources. The responsibility of teaching children about sex does not fall on the schools or any other source but it must come from the home.

## Class Interaction:

1. What is it Solomon is attempting to communicate to the son?

Answer: “*discretion*” and “*knowledge*”

Good sex education can only be good when it comes from the right source for the right reasons. Children pick up on things at a very young age. As children are growing, they need to be taught proper things about sex but they only need information that they can understand. In other words, the younger they are the less information they need but as they get older the more correct information they need.

2. Why?

Because with proper knowledge they are better able to make discerning (wise) decisions. This was Solomon’s intention and it should be ours. I cannot leave out that proper teaching must always include the way of salvation.

3. Why?

Because information without relationship (Jesus as Lord) does not change the heart. It only fills the head with information. We will see the heart factor later in our studies.

**3** We now see what Solomon is warning about in verse three, “*the strange woman.*” We have met her before in Proverbs 2:16, and she is seen again in the rest of this chapter and the next one, along with 7:5, 20:16, 22:14, 23:27; 27:13. While there is a lot of debate about who she is, Hebrew or non-Hebrew, there is no debate about what she is, a harlot.

As we will see, the Bible is very blunt about sexual sins. It does not focus on the details of the sin like modern romance novels do. It only states clearly and plainly “*You shall not commit adultery.*” And if you do, it give in detail the price it will cost you. Someone might be thinking, “These passages in Proverbs and the command “*You shall not commit adultery*” are only speaking about adultery. They only apply to the act of adultery not sex before marriage or even homosexuality.” However, the commandments given and the warnings seen here and everywhere else in the Bible always deal with sexual sins in general (Leviticus 18, Romans 1:18-32, I Corinthians 6:9-20, Ephesians 5:1-14). Since God invented sex, He has right to tell us how to use it.

She is a woman who is described as sexually provocative in her ways and tantalizing in her words, her “*lips drip honey and her mouth is as smooth as oil.*” She knows the right moves and the right words to inflame the passions of this young man. While the description is of a woman seducing a man, it is not out of context to understand that these descriptions, warnings, and results equally apply to a man seducing a woman.

**4** “Look before you leap” is an old English Proverb that is verbalized and understood throughout the entire book of Proverbs (“*Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end*”). Do you know where you are going to land before you leap? Many a man or woman could have been saved from ruin had they heeded the words of this verse. The wise man understands that there is an afterward to every decision made in our lives. If you buy more than you can afford, the afterwards is debt. If you fail to plan in your business, the afterwards is loss. If you leave the wife of your youth and the “*end is bitter as wormwood and sharp as a two-edged sword.*”

“*Wormwood*” is a species of plant that is similar to our western sagebrush. It’s dried leaves and plant tops are used to make an oil and a liqueur. The continual use of this liqueur leads to mental deterioration and even death. In the Bible it is always described as bitter and it always has negative meanings. In fact it is only mentioned nine times in the Bible. The word “*gall*” is used in the NIV for this was the translation found in the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Hebrew OT). Gall was bitter in taste. While we are here,

let me encourage you to purchase a good Bible dictionary (I recommend a single volume one) and a Concordance. They are invaluable resources that cost very little.

The *“two edged sword”* was no ordinary sword, in that it had two sharp edges. It was doubly deadly in that it cut in multiple directions at the same time.

**5** Not only do you get a bitter taste in your mouth and a stab to your heart, her ways lead to *“death.”* There is irony in verses four and five. The actions of adultery and fornication seem sweet and pleasurable but they turn into bitterness and pain. They seem to bring new life and new vigor but turn into death.

**6** Solomon’s whole point is that the one who is tempted would see the devastating affects it has on him and that he would weigh the cost before making the move.

**5:7-14** What is the alternative to not heeding God’s Word? This is what we will see in the verses to follow, and this is why the father continues to warn his children against the *“strange woman.”* The warning is so strong that following after her is considered a departure from *“the words of my mouth”* (God’s Word). We see in verses seven and eight the solution to not falling prey to adultery.

First and foremost, the best protection against sexual impurity is the heeding of God’s Word. Solomon was telling his children not to fall asleep to his warnings. The nation of Israel is a perfect example to look at. In Old Testament times no Israelite woman was to become a prostitute. In fact, according to the law a prostitute was to be stoned. This is what the Pharisees were attempting to do when they brought the woman caught in the very act of adultery. However, as Israel got farther from God, they also sank deeper and deeper in sin, especially immorality. Why is there immorality in the church? Because our people have drifted farther and farther away from God’s Word. *“His truth shall be thy shield and buckler”* (Psalm 91:4b). I will speak more about this when we get to Proverbs 6:23-24.

Second, we see the most practical way to avoid the temptation of sexual impurity in verse eight, *“Remove thy way far from her...”* There is always a practical side to the warnings of Scripture. Most times it is so practical that we refuse to believe that it is so easy and we fail to put feet to the warnings. The counsel here is “get far away.” The warning emphasizes a great distance away rather than standing at her doors. I don’t understand this, but too many men and women seem to think it is spiritual to get as close to the temptation without falling into it. This is contrary to the Word of God and contrary to common sense, which we will see in Proverbs 6:27-28. Paul makes almost the same statement in I Corinthians 6:18 when he states, *“Flee fornication.”* The emphasis here is to make a quick departure from it. We see the most perfect example of both passages of Scripture in the life of Joseph (Genesis 39:7-12). In Joseph’s actions we see that he *“refused”* the master’s wife’s intentions, thus heeding the Word of God, then when push came to shove he *“fled”* (indicates quickness in his actions) and *“ran outside”* (NJKV) (indicates distance).

**Point:** Following Solomon’s advice would solve much of the problem of immorality.

**9** Beginning in verse nine and continuing through the rest of this lesson we see the tragic consequences of adultery.

The first tragic consequence is dishonor, *“lest you give thine honor unto others.”* Many a man has lost his reputation by being caught in adultery. The sins of our lives, especially adultery, are not easily forgotten by believers and non-believers. It is difficult to remove from our minds the innocent people who are caught in this sin. The wife who has been left and the children who are abandoned are in our thoughts so much that it causes continual dishonor upon the guilty man or woman. Forgiveness may be granted but forgetfulness is impossible.

The second tragic consequence is *“our years are given to the cruel one.”* The word *“years”* speaks of the best years or the prime of life. It is the years when we accomplish the most and do our best. The point is that when things should be grand in our lives they are taken away. Time with children is lost. The years that are spent with our wives are lost. The most important time we should have had will be lost if we fall to the terrible sin of adultery. Things will be lost that can never be repeated, purchased, or made right again.

**10** A third tragic consequence is financial ruin. Sexual immorality can financially ruin a family. The most common consequence of adultery is divorce. Divorce is never cheap! We have all heard the stories of the wife who “got it all” when the divorce was final. Everything the man worked so hard for was lost at the signing of a divorce decree, only years later to be enjoyed by the new husband, the “*stranger*.” But most often times, there is nothing for the wife to get. Adultery causes financial ruin long before the divorce decree. Often times there are astronomical debts that cannot be repaid. Debts that were manageable with two incomes become a monster that adds to the pain and suffering of the couple. Worse, it is often times the woman who is left with the smallest amount of income and the largest responsibility towards the debt. Is it no wonder that God hates divorce?

**11** The fourth tragic consequence is the loss of good health. I remember once taking care of a woman in the Emergency Department who had just been diagnosed with a sexually transmittable disease. When made aware of her diagnosis, her only response was, “I have been with no person other than my husband.” At the very moment she said that you could see in her eyes the realization of what was going on. She realized that her husband was having an affair. It was a second of hurt that soon changed to rage as she stormed out of the Emergency Department stating, “I’m going to kill him.” Her “*flesh and body were consumed*.” Having worked in Emergency Medicine for several years, I can say that I have seen and heard it all. I say that without a doubt the diagnosing of someone with a sexually transmitted disease ranks among the top ten most common diagnoses in that setting. Gonorrhea, Herpes, syphilis, and AIDS are greater health risks now than ever before in our nation and the world. While in Africa this past summer, we went to a clinic to witness. On the walls in this concrete block building was an AIDS awareness poster of the continent of Africa enveloped in a condom. Education and public awareness was their way and ours to prevent this and other STDs (Sexually Transmitted Diseases). It was not working there, not here, or anywhere. The only safe sex is no sex until marriage. Safe sex can only occur within the confines of marriage. Only marriage makes it physically safe, emotionally safe, and spiritually blessed! Who says God’s Word is not applicable today!

**12-13** The fifth tragic consequence is regret. As you read the words of these two verses, one does not have to be too discerning to realize there is great pain and agony by the offender. He says he “*hated instruction*” and “*despised reproof*.” The word “*hate*” means to hate violently and the word “*despised*” means to revile or scorn. He then admits that he refused to “*obey the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me*.”

**Class Interaction:**

1. From Proverbs alone we see that failure to obey my teachers applies to our fathers and mothers. Who else in your life has given you teaching and instruction that you have heeded or not heeded?
2. Parents, do you ever say to your children, “One day you will wish you had listened to me?”
3. Do you ever say to yourself, “I wish I had listened to...?”

**14** I most often use the KJV of the Bible. It is a great translation, but sometimes it can be difficult to understand because of the vernacular it uses. This is one of those times. The NKJV and NASB give a much clearer understanding without sacrificing the accuracy of the text. The NJKV states, “*I was on the verge of total ruin*,” and the NASB states “*I was almost in utter ruin*.”

Sin dishonors all. It dishonors the sinner, it dishonors the saints, and it dishonors the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Whenever a brother or sister finds himself or herself in sin, especially sins of a public nature, the whole Assembly of God is affected. You know what I mean. A man can leave his wife for another woman and everybody in town soon knows about it and where he went to church. Not only has the reputation of the man been scandalized, so has ours!

I remember once in seminary a seminary professor made this statement, “I have asked the Lord to kill me dead with a heart attack if I should ever come close to committing adultery. For it would be better for me to die than to destroy my good name, hurt my family, and disgrace the name of my Lord and his people.” He later stated that he no longer prayed that prayer because he was afraid that if he died suddenly of a

massive heart attack, those he had made this statement to would conclude that God took him out because of immorality.

**Point:** Sin dishonors everyone!

However, notice what the verse says, *“I was almost (NASB)/on the verge (NKJV) of total ruin.”* This is the picture of last minute deliverance. He was so close to committing adultery it was scary.

**Class Interaction:**

1. What kept him from *“total ruin?”*

The answer is found in the second part of this verse when it states, *“In the midst of the assembly and congregation.”*

2. What kept him from ruin?

Answer: *“The assembly and congregation”* (i.e. the church)! If we do not restrain evil, then who will?

In Old Testament times immorality was a capital offense. The Jews chose stoning as the method of death. In the New Testament excommunication from the church was the method of dealing with such gross sin (I Corinthians 5:9). We call this church discipline. Most people believe that church discipline is “calling someone on the carpet.” Church discipline is when a brother or sister, lovingly in Christ, confronts someone caught in the clutches of sin. This is our responsibility (James 5:20). How wonderful it will be to one day get to heaven and see the ones that we saved from *“total ruin.”*

Only after the ruin does one realize the great cost of adultery.

**5:20-23** The question asked in verse twenty is the result of the words written in verses fifteen through nineteen. This is why I am a firm believer in the expositional teaching of God’s Word. By skipping the previous verses we miss the reason for the question. We have already made the comment that God’s Word provides the answer in how to avoid this devastating sin. One, stay in God’s Word. Two, put it to practice (*“flee!”*). However, there is a third way. It is found in verses fifteen through nineteen. The snare of immorality can be broken when sexual fulfillment is in the bounds of marriage. Verses fifteen through nineteen are a beautiful picture of God’s provision for satisfying sexual desire. These verses describe love in marriage, and the Bible makes it very clear that physical love and sexual love are held in high esteem as long as they are in the bounds of marriage. Hebrews 13:4 tells us, *“Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.”*

For believers, marriage represents the mystic union between Christ and the Church. Every Christian marriage should be a small picture of our relationship with the Lord and the members of His body.

This is why Solomon is asking this question. He is comparing the love of a wife to the love of any other woman. The love of a wife is like drinking pure fresh water that comes from a well. The love of any other woman is like drinking polluted and foul water, like you would find in a gutter or sewer.

**21** Just recently in the news we have been informed about a senator, who is now dead, fathering a child by a woman other than his wife. The child is grown which means this occurred many years ago. As I heard this story on the national news I thought two things. What a way to end your life, and his sin found him out. You may think you can get away with sexual immorality because you can hide it from the eyes of man for long periods of time. You may even be able to hide it from the eyes of men forever, but you cannot hide it from God. *“Do not be deceived; God is not mocked: for whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap”* (Galatians 6:7).

**22** The lack of self-control in the area of sexual gratification is destructive. Sin always has consequences. What seems to bring freedom actually binds with cords. Enslaving sin always has a way of starting out small from our perspective. A thought here, a glance there with no intention of every committing an act of

sexual immorality. However, the thought here and the glance there are cords. You might describe them as strings at first. But as one is added to another and as time progresses, the strings become a rope (Romans 6:16). This is what is so deceptive about sexual sins. If not dealt with early, they become cord or ropes that are difficult to break and eventually hang you. Also notice that Solomon writes, "*own iniquities*" and "*his sins*." While we see the picture of immoral woman seducing the young man, there is no one to blame but himself. He has been warned. He knows what is right and wrong.

**23** Every consequence in chapter five thus far has been of a temporal nature. In other words, they are consequences that one will reap on earth. This verse speaks of the hereafter. The man or woman who lives a life of lust and sexual immorality will not see heaven. "*Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abuser of themselves with mankind, nor thieves nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God*" (I Corinthians 6:9-10). But it does not need to be this way for the Bible tells us, "*If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed*" (John 8:36), and Paul continues in I Corinthians 6:11, "*And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of God.*"

**Point:** No sin is beyond the scope of God's forgiveness. No sin!

**6:23-24** We must remember that the words written in these chapters were written by a parent to his child. It was a parent anguishing over the tragedies of sin that he did not desire his child to enter into. I encourage you to read verses twenty to twenty-two as part of your studies.

**Class Interaction:**

1. What is the goal of the father?

Answer: "*To keep thee from the evil woman...*"

2. How is he going to do this?

Answer: By the Word of God.

Every time there are warnings against adultery in chapters five through seven, there is instruction on how to avoid it. The instruction is always the same. In 5:1 it was, "*attend unto my wisdom and bow thine ear to my understanding.*" In 6:20 it is "*keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother,*" and in 7:1, wisdom personified, cries out "listen and heed." Each one of these phrases can be summed up for us as "Heed the Word of God."

**Point:** I stated in the introduction that it is the parents' responsibility to teach their children about sex. However, sex education without the Lord's Word is only information for the head and not the heart. Only heart knowledge can change behavior.

**6:27-29** Solomon asks us two questions that have obvious answers in verses twenty-seven and twenty-eight to demonstrate the seriousness of sexual immorality. He then makes the statement that whoever "*goeth in*" and "*toucheth*" his neighbor's wife, which are references to sexual intercourse, can blame no one but himself. He "*shall not be innocent.*"

**6:32-35** Solomon uses the illustration of a thief stealing food because he is hungry in verses thirty and thirty-one to illustrate a point. A man who steals food when he is hungry is easily forgiven, though the repercussions of his sin are very costly, "*he shall give all the substance of his household.*" Why is he easily forgiven? Because possessions can be replaced. Food can be bought again. However, when one steals another man's wife, for this is what adultery is, there can be no price paid to replace what has been lost (v.35). And there can be nothing said that will diminish the anger of the man wronged. Nothing can satisfy the husband but revenge!

Verse thirty-three is perhaps one of the saddest verses of this entire study, *“A wound and dishonor shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away.”*

Sexual sins can be forgiven as we have already noted in previous verses. They can also be forgiven by the one offended. However, the consequences remain for a lifetime. The word *“wound”* refers to a blow, a stroke, a plague, leprosy, or a pestilence and it is not something that can be erased (*“wiped away”*).

**Point:** Committing adultery is something that will scar you for life!

I close with verse thirty-two for it states, *“But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding...”* This could read *“lacketh common sense.”*

Adultery has very serious physical, psychological, and spiritual consequences, but they need not affect us for we have been warned clearly of them. May we not *“lacketh common sense.”*

**To God be the Glory!**

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