

The Antidote to Adultery

(Proverbs 5)

8/30/17; Wed PM Pine Grove

Introduction

Statistics on adultery have steadily climbed over the past 25 years...

In 2017, 1 in 5 marriages will experience the heart-break of an adulterous relationship.

And what used to be an overwhelming sin of the husband is now a sin committed by wives as well..

58% of those adulterous relationship will be committed by husbands and 42% by women..

The shocking statistic is this...

The number of adulterous relationship is not much less for those who consider themselves to be Christians..

1 in 7 Christian marriages will be marked by adulterous relationships as well..

Though adulterous acts stretch back to the very beginning of time, the rise over the past 25 years is related to a number of factors...

According to experts, the mobility of the population makes adultery easier...

People are now able to travel easier and more frequently..

Technology also plays a factor as adulterous relationships can start through a computer screen or phone...

There is also the rising number of women who are now in the work force, which exposes them to men and men to them...

Some also see a decline of the influence of the church on society as a reason for the jump in adultery...

Whatever the reason, we live in a world that is impacted more and more by people who commit adultery more frequently...

Again, adultery is nothing new...

In Genesis 19, we see one of the first acts of adultery in human history...

And one of the most famous acts of adultery was committed by Israel's most famous king, King David...

And then in the NT, there is also a woman caught in adultery and a woman at the wall who had committed multiple adulteries...

So in one sense, adultery has been around forever but in another sense, we are in an age where it is clearly on the rise in our culture...

The unfortunate thing is that it is rarely talked about in the church....

We have made it a sin that no one wants to address in order to prevent it..

Instead, we keep our mouths shut, watch it happen to people we love and then talk about the rest of their lives...

Which is quite shameful in my opinion...

Our mouths need to be open before it happens in hopes of preventing adultery...

Yet, Christians have simply let adultery be one of the sins that no one addresses and we wonder why people commit it...

And families crumble and churches lose members...

Well, Solomon was not going to let that be the case with his son...

In fact, he is going to spend a lot of time talking to his son about avoiding adultery even before he is married...

Chapter 5, chapter 7 of the book of Proverbs and numerous other verses are going to give us examples of a father teaching his son about the dangers and destructive consequences of adultery....

And this is good for us to consider as we go through the book of Proverbs because adultery is a devastating sin that we must guard ourselves from while also warning others, especially our own children..

So, let's look at Proverbs 5 tonight in 3 parts...

I. The Seduction of Adultery (1-6)

II. The Solution to Adultery (7-19)

III. The Stupidity of Adultery (20-23)

So, let's begin in verse 1 with the...

I. The Seduction of Adultery (1-6)

Veres 1...

*1 My son, give attention to my wisdom,
Incline your ear to my understanding;*

2

*That you may observe discretion
And your lips may reserve knowledge.*

3

*For the lips of an [a]adulteress drip honey
And smoother than oil is her [b]speech;*

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 take hold of Sheol.*

6

*[c]She does not ponder the path of life;
Her ways are unstable, she does not know it.*

Verses 1 and 2 remind us of the setting of these opening proverbs as Solomon calls his son to listen to him..

This reminds us of the the need to plead with our children to listen to us at times...

Solomon literally calls for his son's ears to listen to him..

And the point of the teaching is to help his son observe discretion, which simply means his teaching is designed to help his son's decision making...

Discretion is simply the ability to choose wisely the paths of life...

Most people act without thinking...

Wisdom calls us to think before acting..

Solomon desires his son to use discretion and act slowly based on the wisdom of God...

But not only does Solomon want his son acting wisely, he wants his son to speak wisely and with knowledge...

And that is important because the words on our lips can lead us into sin and out of sin, and also our words can help others avoid sin...

Therefore, Solomon is setting out in this proverb to help his son speak and act with the wisdom of God...

And then in verse 3 we get into the topic of wisdom for today and that is the subject of adultery...

And Solomon starts off his teaching by alerting his son to the pull of adultery...

Which often begins with the words of the adulterous woman...

Solomon says that her lips don't speak wisdom...

Instead, her lips drip honey, which is a reference to the often sweet speech that an adulterous woman speaks to her victim or an adulterous man speaks to his victim...

Not only are the words of an adulterer sweet, they are also smooth...

In other words, adultery often begin with sweet flattery that appears to come with smooth sincerity from the mouth of the adulterer...

So, let's us all be warned of what to someone of the opposite sex but also of what they say to us...

There is nothing sinful about encouragement but words can be dangerous..

First, they may be offered without any thought of adultery or flattery but they can often be taken that way...

So be careful of what you hear and of what you say...

To make his point clear, Solomon says that the words may taste sweet in the ear but they are actually bitter as wormwood...

Wormwood was a bitter root in the Middle East that was very unpleasant to the tongue...

I often think of bitterness in terms of eating a pecan that hasn't been cleaned off good and you end up eating some of the shell of the pecan...

The words of the adulterous may also appear smooth but they cut like a knife in the end....

Often the words of an adulteress that draw you in are also the words that will wound you in the end when the truth is exposed..

IF that isn't enough reason to avoid her, Solomon even warns that an adulteress is the doorway to death and Sheol...

Sheol is simply the OT term for the grave...

And many people have died in adulterous relationship from enraged spouses or accidents of even sexually transmitted diseases...

And then verse 6 reminds the son that the adulterous woman is unstable...

She is off the path of wisdom and godly living and when you end up with her, you find yourself equally lost and in need of rescue...

And so you see some principles here to help in the fight against adulterous temptations...

Guards your ears and even your words...

Consider the end of adultery which at best will be the sting and shame of the sin being exposed or at worst could end in your own death..

So that is the seduction of adultery...

And that is important because an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure...

So the best way to avoid adultery is to see it coming...

However if that temptation comes, Solomon offers some solutions to avoiding the trap of adultery...

Which brings us to the second part of our message tonight...

I call this...

II. The Solutions to Adultery (7-19)

In the next section of Proverbs 5, the father begins to lay out some help to his son who will be tempted to commit adultery...

And the first solution is found in verses 7-8..

7

*Now then, my sons, listen to me
And do not depart from the words of my mouth.*

8

*Keep your way far from her
And do not go near the door of her house,*

The first solution to the temptation of adultery is to stay away from the adulteress...

No obviously, you cannot avoid members of the opposite sex...

You can't live in fear and you must interact with all people as you are part of the church and even as you share the gospel with the world...

But you should be careful when you feel any speech is out of line or when someone pays you extra attention...

The waning here is to cut those things off by staying away from her home, which speaks of 1 on 1 settings...

Obviously, if you are married, it is never good to be alone with any member of the opposite sex other than your spouse..

But that would especially be true of someone who has spoken flattering words to you on previous occasions...

So, the first solution here is to avoid personal contact and stay far away....

The second solution is found in verses 9-10...

9

Or you will give your vigor to others

And your years to the cruel one;

10

And strangers will be filled with your strength

And your hard-earned goods will go to the house of an alien;

The second solution to help you defeat the temptation of adultery is consider personal ruin....

Verses 9-10 may seem a little strange but what Solomon is trying to pass on to his son is this...

If you give in to the temptation of adultery, you may end up in financial disaster...

Giving your vigor to others...

Giving your years to a cruel one...

Giving your goods to a stranger...

All speak of financial ruin that can accompany adultery...

Now, there are a couple ways to think about this...

One possibility is that the adulteress may cause you to spend all of your hard earned money on her...

The statistics today actually support verses 9-10 because the most common acts of adultery happen between a wealthy man and a impoverished woman...

And you all know about these cases where poor women use their bodies to seduce rich men in hopes of gaining wealth...

That happens with much regularity...

There is also the idea that other men may profit from the adultery in the sense that that adulteress is a professional harlot and makes money for her managers..

There is also the idea of financial ruin that can now come through expensive divorce proceedings and court costs...

In other words, Solomon is telling his son to avoid adultery by considering that it may cost him all of his wealth and therefore waste of all his hard work...

So, the first solution to avoid personal contact with an adulterous woman..

The second solution to escape the trap of adultery is to consider personal personal financial ruin...

The third solution is found in verses 11-14..

11

***And you groan at your [d]final end,
When your flesh and your body are consumed;***

12

***And you say, "How I have hated instruction!
And my heart spurned reproof!***

13

***"I have not listened to the voice of my teachers,
Nor inclined my ear to my instructors!***

14

***"I was almost in utter ruin
In the midst of the assembly and congregation."***

This solution to avoiding adultery is to imagine the personal shame that comes from committing adultery...

Verse 11 is a reminder that sin causes us to groan with guilt and shame...

David said that his body even ached when his sin with Bathsheba was revealed..

But then there is also regret..

Verse 12 and 13 is the cry of someone who says, "I should have listened to my dad and to the Lord when they warned me of the dangers of adultery."

And then verse 14 is the picture of public humiliation...

Adultery leads to same in the midst of the congregation or assembly...

So many adulterous men and women have been shamed by their adultery when they were disciplined out of churches and their sin exposed for the world to see...

Not only does adultery ruin you financially, it ruins your reputation in the community and in the church...

How do you overcome the temptation to commit adultery?

Stay away from adulterous people and think about the high cost of personal ruin and shame...

As it has been said numerous times, it takes years to build character and minutes to destroy it...

The price of personal sinful pleasure is way too expensive...

A fourth solution to overcoming the temptation to commit adultery is found in verses 15-19...

15

***Drink water from your own cistern
And [e]fresh water from your own well.***

16

***Should your springs be dispersed abroad,
Streams of water in the streets?***

17

***Let them be yours alone
And not for strangers with you.***

18

***Let your fountain be blessed,
And rejoice in the wife of your youth.***

19

***As a loving hind and a graceful doe,
Let her breasts satisfy you at all times;
Be [f]exhilarated always with her love.***

The easiest way to summarize this 4th solution to overcoming adultery is this...

Be content with your own spouse...

And to illustrate this, Solomon uses the picture of drinking water...

And the teaching to his son is this...

Son, drink from the well that the Lord has given you...

In other words, the grass on your side of the fence is greener than the grass on the other side of the fence..

Find joy in your wife or husband...

Find contentment in your own spouse...

And then in verse 16, the Lord speaks very graphically on the dangers of dispersing springs in the streets...

If you were wondering, it is a very graphic picture of men and even women who are promiscuous and share their water with anyone who wants a drink...

This is the loose woman or the cheating man who commit adultery with any and everyone....

The command against that sort of adultery is clear in verse 17..

Sexual relations are for the marriage relationship and nothing else...

Let your waters be for your spouse and vice versa...

And then in verse 18, the picture of water is now a blessed fountain filled with joy of a man over his wife...

Who is know called a doe who is loving and graceful and satisfying to her spouse..

And the clear solution to the temptation of adultery in verse 15-19 is finding joy, pleasure and excitement in your own spouse...

How much destruction has come from momentary dissatisfaction with a spouse?

One commentator on the book of Proverbs, Charles Bridges, says this...

If a man or woman is discontent with their spouse at home, they wont find contentment with another man or woman...

Discontentment is a spiritual matter that can't be satisfied with physical pleasure...

You see adultery is the gift that never satisfies...

Adultery is a sky full of clouds that never gives you rain...

In order to avoid the temptation of adultery, find joy at home with your spouse...

Lest you go to the streets searching for it and end up dead..

Therefore, the last and final solution to defeat the temptation of adultery is to find joy in your spouse...

This leads to the last section of proverbs 5....

I call this....

III. The Stupidity of Adultery (20-23)

Let's read verse 20...

20

*For why should you, my son, be exhilarated with
an [g]adulteress
And embrace the bosom of a foreigner?*

To wrap up this short lesson to his son, the father asks a rhetorical question...

The question is not meant to be answered by the son but highlight the stupidity of adultery in terms of all the father has just taught the son....

So, the question goes like this...

With all that I just said, why in the world would you want to commit adultery?

But just in case the son is still not getting the picture, the father moves to impose more fear in his son in verse 21...

21

*For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the
Lord,
And He watches all his paths.*

One of the major reason that people commit sin is that they don't believe God is real...

Even many people who say they believe in God, act as if they don't believe He exists..

Because if they truly believed He existed, they would live and continually practice their sin...

So Solomon reminds his son of an important truth that many adulterers forget...

And it is this...

You may successfully hide your sin of adultery from the entire world, but God sees it all...

And ultimately, his knowledge of it is the most devastating and detrimental in your life...

You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you can never fool God any of the time..

So is it stupid and foolish to think that your sin of adultery will go unnoticed...

Because it won't...

Second, it is also foolish to think that your sin will not have consequences..

Some consequences of the sin of adultery are found in verses 22-23...

22

***His own iniquities will capture the wicked,
And he will be held with the cords of his sin.***

23

***He will die for lack of instruction,
And in the greatness of his folly he will go astray.***

A likely consequence of adultery is being caught in your own sin...

Sometimes this means that your own sinful actions come back to haunt you...

Do you remember Haman in the book of Esther?

He built a gallows to hang Mordecai but ended up hanging on the gallows and dying there himself..

Often times, the adulteress will end up committing adultery with someone else...

And the person will experience the same pain that they put their spouse through...

A second consequence of adultery is being enslaved by it...

The second half of verse 22 says that the cords of sin hold the one who commits it...

This is certainly the case with any sin but adultery becomes addictive and the person is controlled by it...

And then the worst possible consequence of adultery is seen in verse 23...

They are those who die as a result of adultery..

And Solomon wants to end this instruction with his son by reminding him that death is a great possibility in any sin but it is a clear possibility in the sin of adultery....

Now, that wraps up Proverbs 5, but let's put a few thoughts in our hearts and minds from this important instruction....

Conclusion

#1 - Teach your children the dangers of adultery.

A lot of people stumble over teaching the 10 commandments to kids when they get to the commandment, “You shall not commit adultery.”

We get images of affairs and sexual immorality and we usually just tell our kids, “We will talk about that one later.”

And guess what happens?

WE never talk about, and they learn about adultery from their friend and TV and internet..

Look, we need to teach our children what adultery is...

We don't have to be graphic, but we can surely talk about adultery being a sin because it violates a promise of a husband and wife before God...

We also don't need to hide acts of adultery from our kids...

Talk to them when you see it in people around you..

Tell them that adultery is the sad result of the fallen human heart to be selfish and self-centered...

Always be age appropriate but don't shy away from it...

We need to be the voices of Godly instruction in the lives of our children...

We need to point them to commitment before God..

WE need to point them to sexual purity...

WE need to teach them that God has made them sex for the enjoyment of a husband and wife.

We need them that God has made sex for the purpose of filling and subduing the earth..

We need to teach them that sex is only permitted in the context of a marriage relationship between a husband and wife..

And I challenge you...

If you don't teach them these biblical truths about sex, adultery and marriage...

Someone else will..

#2 - Guard your heart from the temptations of adultery...

a. Be aware of flattering words spoken to you and spoken to others...

b. Remind yourself of the consequences of adultery...

Financial ruin.

Family ruin.

Reputation ruin.

Addiction.

Regret.

Guilt.

c. Arm yourself with ways to fight temptation...

Stay away from temptation.

Look, you can't avoid or control what another person says to you the first time..

But make sure to guard your heart from going back a second and third time...

Stay satisfied at home.

Be content with the spouse that the Lord has provided...

Enjoy him or her and stop thinking that the grass will be greener on the other side of the fence..

The other side of the fence may look like better grass but tastes bitter and eating it will ruin your life, your family, your character...

And may eventually kill you...

Stay on your side of the fence and be blessed by God..

Let us pray..