

(Proverbs) ch.6:12 - 8:21

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of diligence and hard work, taking God's word seriously, and being careful in relationships to avoid spiritual poverty and God's hatred.

Duration: 1:01:10

Scripture: 1 Kings 11:3, Proverbs 1:4-5, Proverbs 3:1-3, Proverbs 6:16-23, Proverbs 7:1, Proverbs 8:6-7

Topics: "Parental Guidance", "Humility"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the issue of young people not realizing their need for God. He emphasizes the importance of humility and acknowledging one's need for God's guidance. The speaker also highlights the responsibility of parents to teach their children God's commandments and to keep them away from temptation. The sermon warns against the dangers of idleness and the consequences of falling into sinful behavior.

Transcript

In our last study, we concluded with this exhortation to go to school with the ant and to learn diligence and hard work from the ant. We considered that the book of Proverbs has got much to say to those who are spiritually foolish and those who are spiritually lazy, in other words, those who are not wholehearted. And we saw that the ant has got only a future on this earth, but we have a future in eternity, and we can learn something from that small creature.

And if there is a lukewarmness in this area, then it says in verse 10, Proverbs 6:10, it's just a little carelessness, a little sleep, a little lack of zeal, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to take life easy, and your poverty, and that is our spiritual poverty, will come like one who walks, that is, one who comes slowly, not running, slowly it comes, spiritual poverty, it doesn't hit us all of a sudden, like one who walks means spiritual poverty comes slowly, we don't realize it very soon, but when it comes, it will come like an armed man, that is, powerfully. So spiritual poverty comes slowly, but powerfully to knock us down if we are not wholehearted. Then in verse 12 to 14, 12 to 15, it speaks about some characteristics of a worthless, wicked person, and notice what the Holy Spirit describes as the characteristics of a wicked person.

It's not so much that he goes around committing adultery and murder, but it says, a worthless wicked person, a wicked man, is one who walks with a false mouth. In other words, he's a hypocrite, he's got deceit in his lips. We see that in Jesus' earthly ministry, he could forgive the adulteress and he could

forgive the murderer on the cross, but he really hit out against the hypocrites.

And here we find the mark of a worthless person is primarily hypocrisy. He walks with deceit in his mouth, and all these actions that are described here speak about deception and guile in his words and in his actions. He winks with his eyes and he signals with his feet, and he points or instructs with his fingers, and in all this, there is deception.

And with perversity in his heart, there is guile in his words and actions, and evil in his heart. He devises evil continually. And he spreads strife, means he separates brothers from one another.

So notice the characteristics of a wicked person. There is deception in his words and actions, there is crookedness and evil in his heart, and he goes around separating people, that is, by backbiting against them, gossiping against them, he separates people. Jesus is in the business of uniting, but a worthless person is in the business of dividing and separating people.

And so we find that there are lots of so-called believers who fall under this category, in whose life there is deception, whose hearts are not cleansed from evil, and who go around speaking words that, instead of uniting people, separate people. So let us never forget these marks of a worthless person and a wicked person, according to the Holy Spirit. Therefore, one who continues to do that, his judgment will come on him suddenly, and instantly he will be broken, and there will be no healing.

That means that God will suddenly bring judgment one day on hypocrites and on those who cause strife and division in the brotherhood. And then, a further expansion of that, these are again certain characteristics of the wicked person, but it is described here in verses sixteen to nineteen as seven deadly sins. Here are seven deadly sins that the Lord hates.

Not only He hates, they are an abomination to Him. And notice, right at the top of the list is pride, a pride that began in the heart and that has gradually begun to manifest itself in the outward appearance. You know, what we are in the heart, we cannot hide for long, but gradually it begins to be manifest, particularly in our eyes, in the way we look at other people, haughty eyes.

A proud look, that is number one on the list of the things that God hates, and we remember that that was the first sin that came into the universe with Lucifer, the sin of pride, of lifting oneself up, and that is number one on the list of things that God hates. Second, telling lies, a lying tongue. The tongue is very high on God's list of the possibility of doing evil as well as good.

A lying tongue, and we know that that was the, as far as we know, the second sin of Lucifer, when he told a lie to Eve, that you shall not die even if you eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. So notice, the sins described here are the characteristics of Satan, at least the first three. The first one, pride, the second one, lies, and the third one, hands that shed innocent blood, that is murder.

Jesus said in John 8.44, the devil from the beginning has been a liar and a murderer. He told a lie to Eve, and then he caused, in the next chapter, Genesis 4, Cain to murder Abel. And so we find here, haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, and today, of course, we don't take a big rock like Cain did, we do these things in a more civilized way in the twentieth century, and that is with a tongue.

And there are many who have slain others with their tongue, just as really as Cain slew Abel. You see, that's the more refined way people do it in the twentieth century. But notice that these are three on top of the list of the things that God hates.

A proud look that is filtered through from the heart to the face, a lying tongue, again, deception on the lips, and hands or a tongue that sheds innocent blood. And then fourth, a heart that devises wicked plans, evil plans in the heart. Fifth, feats that run quickly to do something wrong, and that don't run quickly to do what is right.

Sixth, a false witness who tells lies, and that probably refers to a court situation where a person does not speak the truth when called upon to witness concerning what happened. And seventh, the one who spreads strife among the brothers. Notice there's a lot of similarity between these verses and the immediately preceding we considered in verses 12 to 15.

And there we see the repetition twice in verse 14 and verse 19 about the fact that one who divides others is an abomination. It says in verse 16, an abomination to God. God hates those who separate two brothers.

Supposing you say something to someone that's going to bring a distance between him and another brother. It says here, God hates you. You say something to a sister that's going to separate her from another sister.

According to the word of God, God hates you. You are an abomination to God, according to this verse. We got to be very careful that when we say something to someone, it does not make that sister or that brother further away from that other person, but closer to that other person.

It says here, the one who sows discord. Words that are sown, that don't lead to unity, but disunity. And there we got to remember a word that Jesus said in Luke 11, 23, where he said, the one who does not gather with me is actually scattering.

In other words, there is the possibility of gathering together with Jesus, and Jesus is in the business of getting people united. And if I don't do that, I'm scattering. If my whole heart is not set on uniting the body of Christ, I'm scattering.

I'm doing the work of the devil. And that's why we have to be very careful in our speech. And we can see how guilty we have all been.

Very often, when you speak something bad about an absent person to someone, what have you succeeded in doing? You have succeeded in making that person to whom you speak a little more distant from that absent person. And that's the category of person spoken of here. One who brings a division among believers.

He's an abomination to God. God hates him. No wonder he doesn't make spiritual progress in his life.

And that's why, brothers and sisters, it's very important that we take this one sin of bringing discord among people very seriously, because it will bring upon us God's hatred, and it will make us an abomination, a stinking abomination to God, and all our prayers will be an absolute waste of time. In contrast to all this, Solomon says, my son, the one who is willing to submit to my spiritual authority, observe the commandment of your father. And as you go through the book of Proverbs, you'll see how much he speaks about the misuse of the tongue.

And I believe there are many people who go to an eternal hell just because of one small member in their body, and that is their tongue, which they've never learned to control. And I'll tell you something, you'll

never make any spiritual progress in your whole life until you begin to take seriously the words that you speak with your tongue. If we don't take that seriously, God will just leave us as people who are not interested seriously in spiritual progress.

We can become an abomination to him and one whom God hates. And we have seen examples of people who have heard the word of God many, many times in this area and have still not taken this matter seriously. And the word of God speaks much about it.

My son, observe the commandment of your father and do not forsake the teaching of your mother. Respect young children. Respect the advice that your parents give you.

Don't despise them as old-fashioned, because their advice can protect you. Bind them continually on your heart. Notice the emphasis throughout Proverbs on the heart.

Tie them around your neck. When you walk about, they will guide you. When you sleep, they will watch over you.

And when you awake, they will talk to you. That is God's word that comes through God-fearing parents. And there's a word there for parents as well.

Can you honestly say to your son and to your children, observe the commandments of God that I have given you, or have we been so lazy that we have had no time to teach God's commandments to our children? That's a challenge to parents. It's not just our own bright ideas that we are to teach our children, but God's commandments. When he says, my son, observe the commandment of your father, it was not some bright idea the father had in his head, it's the commandment of God, which that father gave to his son, according to what Moses told the Israelites, you must teach your son these laws.

All the time, when you walk down the road, when you get up, when you sit down, and that's what it says here. When you walk about, those words will guide you. When you sleep, God's word will watch over you.

It will even give you clean dreams at night. And when you wake up in the morning, God's word is there again to speak to you. See the tremendous importance given to God's word in the book of Proverbs.

And when we see that Proverbs is the book of wisdom, and the tremendous importance given to God's word there that teaches us that it's impossible to have wisdom unless we take the word of God seriously. It says here, for the commandment is a lamp. A lamp means like a torchlight.

An individual commandment in God's word is like a torchlight, and the whole of God's word is like the streetlight on the road. That's the picture used here, that each commandment shows you one step that you can take, and all of it together brightens up the whole of life's path. And reproofs for disciplines are the way of life.

It is through correction and rebuke that we come to spiritual life. Notice the contrast you will see again and again in the word of God in the book of Proverbs between flattery and rebuke. Flattery is the mark of the spiritual harlot.

Rebuke and correction is the way of life. And if you listen to that rebuke and correction, it will protect you and keep you. And it speaks here again about being kept from the evil woman.

This is another thing we find again and again and again. It's almost as though Solomon is never tired of warning young people to be particularly careful in their relationship with the opposite sex. If you tremble at God's word, if you take it seriously, it will keep you from that woman who can be Satan's agent to ruin and destroy your life.

And if he doesn't succeed in ruining and destroying your life, at least to ruin and destroy your spiritual usefulness to God as a man of God. There are people who are saved but who fooled around with women and they've lost an entire ministry that God could have given to them. You know, that's something you got to take seriously.

It's not enough just to say my sins are forgiven. Think that God had a ministry for you and you lost it just because you weren't very careful in your relationships with the opposite sex. And think to stand in eternity and discover that just for some silly little pleasure with some silly old girl, I lost a ministry that could have made my all of eternity glorious for me.

I was such an idiot on earth. Think of the regret that there'll be in the hearts of many, many people in that day. And particularly when you're young, be careful.

Take the book of Proverbs seriously. It'll keep you from the evil woman, from that smooth tongue of the adulteress, the oil we spoke about, which is on the floor. You've got to be careful about.

Here's the contrast between the rebuke of verse 23 and the flattery of the smooth tongue. And it is through flattery, as I've said, most young people fail and fall. All right, here is the warning God gives us through Solomon, through the Holy Spirit.

Do not desire her beauty in your heart. This almost looks like the new covenant. The nearest in the entire Bible to Matthew 5, 29, where it says, do not lust after a woman in your heart.

The nearest to that verse which Jesus spoke is here in Proverbs 6, 25. Do you know that there is no other verse in the entire Bible outside of what Jesus spoke in Matthew 5, 29, which is as close to it as Proverbs 6, 25? There is wisdom. It begins in the heart and it doesn't begin with the desire to commit adultery.

I'll tell you that. It begins with just an admiration of beauty in the opposite sex. And I want to emphasize this because there are Christians, believers who teach that there's nothing wrong in admiring beauty.

That's because they have no fear of God in their heart. The word of God says, do not desire her beauty in your heart. If you are one who is going to be, who has a wrong understanding of physical beauty.

Now, what's the right understanding of physical beauty? Proverbs 31, verse 30 says, physical beauty is an empty, hollow thing. And young men, I want to tell you this, if you don't keep before your mind that physical beauty is an empty, hollow, useless thing, you'll be deceived by it one day. And you'll get married to the wrong person and suffer for the rest of your life.

No, it's an empty, hollow thing. And don't turn your eyes to look and look at beauty saying, well, I'm not lusting. I'm only admiring the beauty.

It's a terrific deception. And God sees it. And you find all such young men, they may have, God may have called them for a ministry, but God puts them on the shelf and says, you can't have it.

I could have given it to you, but you just fool around with your eyes, call yourself a believer, speak, talking about the new and living way, and you're not wholehearted in this area. Do not desire her beauty even in your heart. This is not speaking about adultery.

This is just speaking about admiring physical beauty in a girl. Don't even desire it, it says. Well, that's wisdom, if you want to take it.

Don't desire beauty, be careful. And then it says, don't let her catch you with her eyelids. And it's very practical, the word of God.

Says here, there's something about a woman's eyes which can catch a young man. And that's why we find that the devil's taught these girls nowadays to paint their eyelids, make it more attractive, all types of fancy colors. And in case you're one of those who want the mark of the beast on the hand so that you can have a good testimony in the assembly, I presume there must be some colorless variety also that you can put on your eyes and lips and all over the place so that you can make yourself attractive.

Now, I want, it says here, don't let her catch you with her eyelids. I want to show you a verse of the one spoken of in the scriptures, a girl with a painted face. You read about her in 2nd Kings chapter 9. In 2nd Kings chapter 9, you read about the woman with the painted face.

And that's Jezebel. I want to tell you that Jezebel comes in the New Testament too. You read about it in Revelation chapter 2. There's a Jezebel sitting in the church in Thyatira.

And it says here, 2nd Kings 9, when Jehu came to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it and she painted her eyes. Do you know there was mascara used hundreds of years before Christ? That's not a 20th century invention. Jezebel was the one who started that product, painted her eyes, adorned her hair.

I'm sure she painted the rest of her face too. And looked out of the window and Jehu said in verse 33, throw her down. And they threw her down and killed her.

Well, he wasn't impressed by all that painted face and neither should you be. And I tell you, Jehu was not such a God-fearing man and he could withstand all that. Be careful in this area of these painted faces.

And the eyelids particularly. Don't let her catch you with one of her eyelids, he says. Because on account of a harlot, a man is reduced to a loaf of bread or as it says in another translation, that all that a harlot is interested in is a loaf of bread.

He says there are two types of evil women spoken of in verse 26. One is the harlot, the regular prostitute who runs a business. All she's interested in is making money and earning her living.

But there is another type of woman, he says, who's not a prostitute and who is more dangerous. That woman's only out to earn a loaf of bread. But the other woman is the one who's not a prostitute.

And therefore you're not so much on your guard. This is the one who doesn't do it for a living, but who just does it for fun. The flirtatious type of girl who's not a prostitute.

She's in a good home. Maybe she's married, maybe she's not married. But the flirtatious type that's flirting in her eyes, be careful of that one.

You've got to be more careful of that one than of the prostitute. The prostitute, you know, is dangerous. And so you don't go there.

But this one, the one with the flirtatious eyes, the one who is probably a married woman and who does not know how to submit to her husband and to be happy with her husband. Be careful, it says. Verse 27 to 29, it speaks about this woman, another man's wife.

It's dynamite trying to touch her. Can a man take fire in his bosom and his clothes not be burned? Or can a man walk on coals, hot coals, and his feet not be scorched? That's impossible. Can you put fire into dynamite and the thing not blow up? So is the one who goes to his neighbor's wife, one who fools around with the wife of another.

Whoever touches her, don't even touch another woman immodestly. He will not go unpunished. That means don't become familiar with somebody else's wife.

It just means that. Don't get too friendly and familiar with somebody else's wife. Men do not despise a thief if he steals to satisfy himself when he's hungry.

But when he's found, he must repay sevenfold. Even a thief who has stolen has to repay. He must perhaps give even the substance of his house.

But the one who commits adultery with a woman is lacking sense. He really lacks sense. He who would destroy himself does it.

In other words, looseness in this area is equal to spiritual suicide. It's like committing suicide, playing the fool in this area. Notice the strong warnings that Solomon gives to young people in this area, fooling around with other women.

Wounds and disgrace he will find, and his reproach will not be blotted out. That means there will be a permanent reproach upon his life, which can never be blotted out. God may forgive him, but everybody looks at him as the man who did this thing.

And he's lost his ministry for his whole life because he just wasn't careful in this area. And not only that, the man whose wife you fooled around with, jealousy will enrage him. And in the day he discovers it, the day of vengeance, he will not spare.

He will not accept any excuse, any ransom. Nor will he be content, though you give him many gifts. And then, of course, on top of that, there is God's judgment too.

The Bible says in Hebrews 13, verse 4, that God will judge all fornicators and all adulterers, all those who sin sexually with unmarried women and with married women. God will judge severely much more if they call themselves believers. Now I'll tell you the greatest warning of all from this chapter.

And you know what that is? That the man who gave all these exhortations finally fell himself. Not once, but again and again and again. And that teaches us we can be so much of an expert in this area.

We can listen to this word of God and say, yeah, that I don't need that. I'm quite careful in that area. That's exactly what Solomon felt when he wrote this chapter.

He who thinks he stands, let him take heed, lest he fall. And Solomon's fall is a tremendous warning for us. Do you know that in the entire Old Testament, there was nobody who fell in this area as much as Solomon? Now I'll tell you something else.

In the entire Old Testament, there's no person who has written as much warning people in this area as Solomon. And he was the one who ended up with 700 wives and 300 concubines. Imagine the way he fell.

That there is a living warning in the Old Testament that you can know the theory of it. You can even speak about it. You can warn others about it, exhort others about it.

But if you don't live in fear and trembling, it doesn't matter how old you are. Even if you're 70 years of age, you can fall. So be careful.

Now we move on to chapter 7. He continues on the same theme. It's really the same thing. It's amazing how much Solomon wrote on it and how much he warned others and how he fell finally himself.

Chapter 7, verse 1. My son, keep my words, treasure my commandments within you. In other words, treat God's word as a treasure. Value it.

The other day we were speaking in the meeting about those who have a bad memory. And I was saying, we don't have a bad memory for the loans that we have given to other people, do we? You remember all the loans that you gave to other people? Sure. Do you remember all the evil things that other people did to you? Sure.

Then why is it we have a bad memory for scripture? There's one reason. Those loans, that 200 rupees that I loaned out to that person is a treasure for me. That's why I remember it.

You can wake me up in the middle of the night and I'll tell you who borrowed it, when he borrowed it, and how much he owes me today, including the interest. But God's word, which I heard last week. Oh brother, I've got a poor memory.

I can't remember it. I'll tell you why. It's not a treasure.

That 200 rupees is a precious treasure. This is not a treasure. That's why I can't remember it.

It's not something I take seriously. Therefore, he says, my son, keep my words and treasure my commandments with you. Treat God's word like a treasure if you want to have wisdom.

Otherwise, we can live and die on this earth with money as our only treasure. Treat God's word as a treasure. Take each commandment and know it.

That is God's will. Those who take God's word as a treasure, they will come to wisdom. Nobody else.

Keep my commandments and live. And my teaching is the apple of your eye. And it says in the Good News Bible here, be as careful to follow my teaching as you are to protect your eyes.

Be as careful to follow my teaching as you are to protect your eyes. One speck of dust goes into the eye and it keeps on bothering us. And we stop all our work and go to the tap and wash it off.

We go to a brother and say, please blow my eye. There's what? One speck of dust. And God says, let me find someone who's interested in following my teaching in that way.

He'll be wise very quickly. It's a question of taking God's word seriously. We take care of our eyes.

And it says here, take care of God's word like you take care of your eyes. And then you'll become wise. Find them on your fingers, write them on the tablet of your heart.

That is the outer life and the inner life. And I want to read that to you from the Living Bible. It says, love wisdom, verse four, like a sweetheart.

Make her a beloved member of your family. If you don't know what a sweetheart means, it means someone you love very much, a darling. Love wisdom like a sweetheart.

Think of that. Think of a man, a young man now, who is so gripped with the desire to have God's wisdom, that wisdom has become his sweetheart. He longs for wisdom.

That's what God's word says. Call understanding your intimate friend, your closest friend. It's like out in the world, a young man wants to be with a sweetheart.

Young people in the church long to be with wisdom, wisdom in all situations. And if you do that, it'll keep you, again, it speaks about that adulteress. And it says, from that strange woman and her weapon is again flattery.

Notice the number of times already in these seven chapters we've come across flattery, as Satan's, we could say, almost master weapon in the hands of a young woman to bring down a young man. Flattery. Flattery.

And I tell you this, if you young men and young women as well are careful about the flattering words that other people speak to you, then you can protect yourself. Young women too. Some young man can come and say flattering words to you and your defenses are gone and you yield.

Be careful of flattery. Be careful about those, of those who will say nice things to you. And that applies to the false church as well, because the strange woman here is also the false church, Babylon the harlot.

And her weapon is also is flattery, to say nice things. In Jerusalem, we don't hear flattery. What do we hear? Rebuke, correction.

People may get sick and tired of it, but it sanctifies them. The alternative is to go and sit and listen to flattering words and end up in hell. And so it says here, beware of flattery.

Beware of people who say things just to flatter you. Yeah, we have no understanding of wisdom if our closest friends are those who flatter us. Just ask yourself, do you feel more happy with those who say nice things to you and flatter you? Or do you feel happy with someone who rebukes you and corrects you and tells you the truth to your face? That's a pretty good test of whether you love wisdom or whether you love yourself.

Yeah, that's a very good test. If I love myself, I'll seek the fellowship of those who say nice things to me, smooth words and flattering words. And I say, these are wonderful brothers and sisters.

That shows how much I love myself. But if I love wisdom and I see how little of it I have, I'll seek the fellowship of those who won't flatter me, but will correct me and rebuke me and tell me the truth which I need to hear. And that's how we must have it in the church.

And then he goes on to relate an instance of a young man. He says there in verse six, at the window of my house, I looked out through my lattice and I saw among all the bunch of simple people that were going down the roads. I saw one young man lacking sense.

Yeah, it's difficult for young people to realize that they lack wisdom. You remember what we saw in our last study in chapter four, verse seven, it says the beginning of wisdom is acquire wisdom. And we can put it like this.

The first step to wisdom is acknowledge that you don't have it. And don't just say that in false humility. Oh, I lack wisdom.

But really to be gripped by that, Lord, I just don't have it. And that's very difficult for young people to acknowledge because they say, yeah, I know how to take care of myself. They tell their parents, yeah, you don't have to tell me, daddy and mommy, I know how to take care of myself.

They don't. And the sad thing is they don't even realize their need. That's the condition of most young people in the world today.

But if you're humble, if you want to be a God fearing person, acknowledge your need. He says among all the bunch of the young people down the roads, I saw one young man who really lacked sense. He was the worst of the lot.

And it says here he passed through the street near her corner. He knew there was a good looking girl living over there. And he, you know, just thought I'll go for a walk.

And then he found his feet were taking him in a particular direction. And he passed through the street near her corner. And he takes the way to her house.

He took the bypass that goes past her house. Think of the folly in all this. Think of the folly there.

And it was evening, twilight, the sun had set in the evening. But he just didn't see her there. So he walked up and down the street a little bit and carries on there till the middle of the night.

Think of that. Young people, you should be very thankful if you've got parents who tell you that you must be back home by 9.30 at night or something like that. Be very thankful that you're protected from these loafer type of young people who can go out at evening and walk here and there in the middle of the night.

Also, they're found out there on the street where they can fall. They're exposing themselves to temptation. The Bible says, flee from youthful lusts.

Don't put yourself in places where you can be tempted. In the twilight, in the evening, in the middle of the night, walking around there idle. It's a sad thing when young people are idle.

Here was a young man with nothing to do. His father didn't have enough sense to give him some work to do at home. He didn't have enough to study, perhaps.

Idle and idle people are the people God is looking for. It's good to give our children something to do so that they don't have to loaf down the streets like this. And behold, a woman comes to meet him, dressed as a harlot.

You see, it's possible not to be a harlot and still to dress like a harlot. And I'm sorry to say there are believers sometimes who dress like harlots. Revealing ladies who reveal their bodies.

They come under this category. Proverbs 7, 10. Dress like a harlot.

Those who don't know how to dress modestly. Dressed as a harlot, dear young sisters. Don't let Proverbs 7, 10 be a description of your dress at any time in your life.

Dressed as a harlot. Cunning of heart. And young men, remember, a lot of young women out in the world who are cunning of heart, they want to grab you.

Don't be so stupid as to fall a prey to that trap. And notice here, there are three things mentioned in verse 11 about this loose type of woman. She's boisterous, that means she's noisy.

It's not good for a woman to be noisy. You know, a woman needs to speak a little softly and gently. It's all right if a man's a little noisy, but a woman, noisy, that's something odd about that.

And second, rebellious. Does not know submission to her husband. It's very sad when a woman doesn't know submission to her husband.

And third, it's very sad when a woman does not know how to keep her feet in her home. And she's wandering here and wandering there and wandering the other place, wasting time, instead of taking care of her family. Boisterous, rebellious, and a wanderer.

You know, let none of those, or dressed as a harlot, you can add that as well, verse 10, let none of those things describe any of the sisters in the church. Verse 12, she's now in the streets, now in the squares, now visiting that house, now a little more gossip in that house, now go to the other house and pass some more of that juicy gossip there, then the other house and some more of the juicy gossip there, and all over the place. Well, this is the type of woman described here.

And here, she's a married woman, but she finds this young man and she seizes him, it says, and kisses him, and with a bold face she says to him, you see, she's the religious type as well, she comes to the meetings, I was due to offer peace offerings. Now, peace offerings were the offerings that the Israelites had to offer to God in the Old Testament. We read about Moses laying down laws concerning that in Leviticus 7. Peace offerings, in the Good News Bible, they're called fellowship offerings.

Fellowship with God. You know, that means I've got peace with God now. And she says, yeah, I have offered my peace offerings, I'm in fellowship with God, everything's all right between me and God, and I've paid my vows to Him, I've done my religious duty, now I can have some fun.

Do you know that there are lots and lots of believers who think that just a little bit of religion can excuse all their worldliness and fun out there in the world? This is the religious type. This is the one who goes to the meetings. This is the one who probably sings in the choir.

They've got fellowship with God. At least that's what they think. I was due to offer peace offerings, I've paid my vows, and one of the laws that God gave through Moses was that when you offer your peace offerings to God, the meat that you take home, you must finish it off either that day or the next day.

You mustn't keep it till the third day. And so she says, I was waiting to eat this with someone, and I've come out to meet you. Verse 15.

So that we can have some fellowship together. Why don't you come to my home and we can have some fellowship together? Because we've got to finish off this according to God's laws. And we've got to be particularly careful about these religious type of women who are flirts.

Yeah, don't think these flirts are just out there in the world. They can be sitting in the assembly, who are not wholehearted, who don't have a modesty. You can see it in their eyes.

You can see it in the way they dress. You can see it in their noisiness. You can see it in them wandering around every house instead of learning to sit at home.

Yeah, you can see that. Be careful of such girls. Those are not the type of girls any wholehearted young man should ever marry.

No, so steer clear of such people. These religious types, and he says, I've come to meet you to seek your presence earnestly. The thing is, people may not go to the extent this woman went, but the seed of it can be there.

We've got to get rid of the serpent's egg as well. He says, I've come to seek your presence earnestly, and I've found you. There's the flattery.

I sought you. You are the brother I was seeking for fellowship. The flattery in that, and this idiot of a young man just falling.

Flattery, flattery, flattery, flattery. Beware of it. Love rebuke, young brothers and sisters.

Love rebuke. Love it when your parents rebuke you and correct you. Yeah, those are the ones who will be protected.

And then she says, I have spread my couch. That's my bed. Um, with coverings, with colored linens of Egypt.

I've sprinkled my bed with myrrh and aloes and cinnamon. All that luxury and that foolish husband of hers who wasted all his money getting all these colored linens of Egypt when some ordinary bedsheet would have done and wasted money on all these myrrh and aloes and cinnamon. This evil in all this unnecessary luxury.

Yeah. No need for this wife to work, you see. She doesn't have to work hard with her hands to keep, um, to make ends meet in the home.

She lies down on the colored linens of Egypt and has got money to waste on myrrh and aloes and cinnamon. Be thankful, dear wives, if you've got so much work to do in the home. That you don't have time to waste like this.

Be thankful if your husband cannot afford the colored linens of Egypt and all these fancy perfumes. You're protected from many evils through hard work, through struggling to make ends meet. There are many evils in luxury in that high society.

Do you think they have such an easy time? Yeah, but think of all the evil there is. Just because someone can afford five or six servants, don't think life is easy. There are many evils there in all that luxury.

And that's, you find such women even today in high society, just fooling around with other men. It's so true of all this. And then she says to this man whom he is, whom she has met, this young man, come let us drink our fill of love.

It's not love, it's lust. What the cinemas speak about love, it's actually lust. They don't know how to spell it.

It's L-U-S-T, that's what she should have said. And all this is lust. Love is what was manifested on Calvary's cross, where Jesus, in all his purity and obedience to the Father, loved us and gave his life for us.

There's nothing else that's worth being called love. All the rest must be spelled L-U-S-T, even if they call it love. Until morning, let us delight ourselves with caresses, for he, she says, my husband is not at home.

He has gone on a long journey. And I want to tell all men, never visit a home and sit there when the husband is not there. Do you young men want to get some advice? Will you take it seriously? Don't go and sit in somebody's house when the man of the house is not there.

That's for men. Sit there and say, oh, but we're brothers and sisters. That's how it all begins.

I'll tell you this brother-sister business. In the judgment seat of Christ, you'll discover how many people fell into sin that way. Stay clear.

Stay clear. Even if it's a sister in the fellowship, even if she's a modest one. For your own testimony.

I'm not saying they're evil. You can go to the home of the most wholehearted sister in the fellowship. And because you want to be a good testimony and a good example to others, stay out of our house.

If the husband's not there, he was yours to hear. Let him hear. It says in 2nd Timothy 3.6 about these men like Janice and Jambres who enter into households.

2nd Timothy 3.6, those who have a form of godliness, verse 5, who speak about the new and living way, but who don't have any fear of God in their life. They enter into houses when the men are not there, it says. You know that? They enter into houses when the men are not there.

And captivate these weak women. Yeah, these are the people who are like Janice and Jambres who say to oppose Moses. Don't fall into that category.

Be wise. And so, this woman managed to capture this young man and said, my husband's not here. He's taken a bag of money, probably of 720 and with him.

And he's gone for a long time. He'll come back only at full moon. It's a couple of weeks yet.

Still a long time for him to come. Initially, he didn't want to go that far, you know. He probably just wanted to see her and chat with her.

He didn't want to. I don't think this young man really had any intentions of sin with somebody else's wife. He just thought, I walk down the street and if she's there, we'll just say hello to her.

After all, she's a sister in the church and all that. And then, it says, with her many persuasions, 21, she entices him. And this idiot fell.

But he's got himself to blame. If he hangs around there all the time, exposes himself to temptation. It says, with her many persuasions.

In other words, this young chap didn't sort of yield in the beginning. But she kept on, kept on with her flattery and this. And prolonging the conversation and this.

And that, finally, he fell. And there you can, young men can read Genesis chapter 39. And read of Joseph.

How that married woman parted from his wife. Tempted him, tempted him, tempted him. And he ran.

And that's the thing we got to do. Run. When you find in your heart a temptation, steer clear of such people.

With her flattering lips, she seduces him. I really believe, brothers, dear young brothers, if after all that you hear here, in the day of judgment, if you find that you've fallen in this area, you'll have no excuse. You heard it clearly in the church.

Again and again and again. Flattery. Beware of flattery.

Suddenly, you see, gradually she weakens him. Weakens him, weakens him. And suddenly he falls.

As an ox goes to the slaughter. The poor ox doesn't know it's being led to the slaughterhouse. And this poor fellow doesn't know he's being led to the slaughterhouse by the devil.

Or as one infetters to the discipline of a fool. Until an arrow pierces through his liver. And his whole life is ruined in a moment.

As a bird, it's like a bird seeing a trap and running into the trap. So he does not know it will cost him his life. Yeah, that's pretty strong warning for those who have years to hear.

And then it says, now therefore, my sons, all those who listen, listen to me. Pay attention to the words of my mouth. Don't let your heart turn aside to her ways.

Long before the feet get there, the heart sits at home and thinks. Yeah, maybe I'll go and visit so and so. Or I'll take a walk down that street.

It starts in the heart. He says, stop it there. Stop it there.

Don't let your heart begin to long for someone's beauty. Stop it there. And then don't let the feet go into the path.

So the heart has already acted. Then at least stop the feet. Because many, millions, millions are the victims such women have cast down.

And numerous, too numerous to number, are the ones she has slain. Her house is the way to hell. You know what's the way to hell? Flirting girls descending to the chambers of death.

Really strong language the word of God uses. And if only all the so-called Christian young men in the world had taken these words seriously, they'd have been protected from so much ruin and evil in their lives. Yeah.

If you go to her house, the good news Bible says, you're on your way to hell. If you go to such a girl's house and you choose to go, you've taken the first step to hell already. Now in contrast to all this, it says in chapter 8, does not wisdom call? Wisdom is pictured here is another pure young woman calling people, calling young men.

Love wisdom. Understanding is lifting up her voice. And she stands all over the place on the top of the heights beside the way where the paths meet.

That means where you come to a crossroad and you want to take the road that goes to that strange woman's house and wisdom stands there and says, don't go at the crossroad. She takes her stand there beside the gate. Don't go in through that gate.

That's not good for you. At the opening to the city, at the entrance of the doors, in other words, all over the place. And she's calling whom? She's calling everyone.

Wisdom calls everyone everywhere. To you, O men, I call. And my voice is to the sons of men.

O simple ones, discern prudence. And I want to read that verse 5 to you in the good news Bible. This is what wisdom is shouting out to all people.

Are you immature? Learn to be mature. Are you foolish? Learn to have some sense. Learn to be wise.

That's the call. Are you immature? Be mature, brother, sister. Are you foolish? Be wise.

That's the call of wisdom. Says, listen. And I will speak noble things.

The opening of my lips will produce right things. Okay, now here's what wisdom says. My mouth will utter truth.

And wickedness is an abomination to my lips. Wisdom says, I'll teach you to stop all this gossiping. I'll teach you to stop telling lies.

I'll get all this crookedness out of your conversation. Because wickedness is an abomination to me. To my lips.

All the utterances of my mouth are in righteousness. There is no guile or hypocrisy. Nothing crooked or perverted in wisdom.

They're all straightforward to him who understands. And that's very beautifully paraphrased in the living Bible. Verse 9. Listen to this.

Wisdom says, my words are plain and clear to anyone. Even with half a mind, if only it is open. You see, that's the thing.

Even if you've got only half a mind, that means you're a bit of an idiot. But even if that half a mind is open, you can understand God's wisdom. That's the meaning.

That you don't have to be clever. That's the point. You can be stupid.

You didn't pass in your school final. It doesn't make any difference. You can be wise if your mind is open.

You're the type with half a mind. Who fails in all your subjects. But if your mind is open to God, you can be wise.

My words are plain and clear to anyone with even half a mind. If that half a mind is open to what I have to say. And there we see the reason why so many clever, intelligent people are so foolish when it comes to these things.

They don't have any wisdom concerning eternal things. Because their mind is not open. Like Jesus said, I thank you, Father, that you have hidden all these things from the wise and the clever and the intelligent people.

And you have revealed them to little babes who come in humility and acknowledge. And it's very difficult sometimes for young people to be a little babe. I mentioned before about that godly brother in Norway who got all the young people under 35 to stand up in the conference and say, now repeat after me.

He said, I'm young and I'm stupid. And I know almost nothing. And therefore, I will submit to my elders.

He said, say that again. I'm young and I'm stupid and I know almost nothing. Therefore, I'll submit to my elders.

And he said, if you remember that, you'll be wise. It's very difficult for people under 35 to say that. Because they think they know quite a lot.

Particularly if they're a little clever and they're able to grasp the scriptures quickly. They know almost nothing. It's difficult unless they come like babes.

Yeah, if the mind is open, it can receive. And he goes on there in verse 11, verse 10. Take my instruction and not silver.

Knowledge rather than choices gold. For wisdom is better than jewels and all desirable things cannot compare with her. There again, we come back to the old thing we've considered before.

That we can get wisdom only if we value wisdom more than anything in this whole wide world. If you value wisdom more than a promotion in your job. Value divine wisdom more than money.

More than anything. All the jewels and gold and silver and property and everything that you consider valuable. If you say, Lord, to have your wisdom in my life.

To have your nature in my life. To have that purity and peaceableness and goodness. That are the characteristics of divine wisdom described in James 3.17. To have that in my life.

I want that more than anything on this earth. Yeah, those are the people who get wisdom. I wisdom dwell with prudence and I find knowledge and discretion.

The fear of the Lord is to hate evil. Pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverted mouth. I hate.

There are two things we'll find again and again in the book of Proverbs. The fear of the Lord, verse 13 and humility. It is true.

The fear of God and humility. That we get wisdom. And if a church is to be built with wisdom.

Then we must be in a church that teaches us at least two things. The fear of God and humility. It doesn't matter if a church doesn't teach us all about the tribulation and the millennium.

And which side of the forehead the mark of the beast is going to be. Left side or right side. These are not important.

But if a church can teach us the fear of God and humility. That's enough. Those are the main things.

That's wisdom. The fear of God and humility. Counsel is mine.

Sound wisdom. I am understanding. Power is mine.

By me kings reign and rulers decree justice. By me princes rule and nobles. All who judge rightly.

In other words. All those who are sensible rulers. Will seek my wisdom.

And that applies to fathers. Fathers are rulers in their home. And if they are sensible fathers.

They'll get on their knees before God. And say oh God please help me as a stupid idiot of a father. To have some wisdom.

To bring up my children rightly. Have you ever said that to God? Fathers and mothers. God please help me.

I'm a bit of an idiot as a mother. But please help me to have wisdom. Yeah.

All those who judge rightly. Will seek for wisdom. I love those who love me.

Verse 17. And those who diligently seek me. Will find me.

There we see why. Many people don't. Find.

Because they do not seek. Diligently. And the best time to seek is when you're young.

It's to seek for wisdom. That you will not be a fool. But you'll be a wise.

Mature young brother. Young sister. One who knows.

How to conduct yourself. In a godly way. In all your relationships.

And if you see some older person behaving like a fool. Don't imitate that person. Some older sister or brother gossiping.

You don't get involved in that. Steer clear. And he says here.

Riches and honor are with me. Enduring wealth and righteousness. The things that young people seek.

What do they seek? Riches and honor. Wisdom says I give it to you. Not this empty worldly stuff.

The real stuff. My fruit is better than gold. Even pure gold.

And my yield and choice is silver. I walk in the way of righteousness. In the midst of the paths of justice.

To endow those who love me with wealth. That I may fill their treasuries. And be a wonderful thing.
If every young brother in this church. Every young sister. Would really seek wholeheartedly for wisdom.
Right from your youth. To seek that those spiritual riches and honor. That wisdom alone can give.
That is the calling of this chapter.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/14/SID14940.mp3>
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/proverbs-ch612-821/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net