

Book of Proverbs: No-Nonsense Advice and In-Your-Face Warnings

(February 19, 2011)

Men of Integrity Weekly Theme: Marriage—For Better and Worse

February 13-19, 2011

Yes, the Old Testament book of Proverbs offers *plenty* of no-nonsense advice and in-your-face warnings on immorality and adultery—like both of today's Key Study Passages. Any man who wants to remain faithful to his wife and avoid compromising situations would do well to return to these two passages time and again. As you study each passage, ask yourself an honest question: "What am I doing to make sure I can keep a safe distance from the 'fire' of passion and lust?"

Key Passage: Proverbs 6:27-35

²⁷"Can a man take fire to his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? ²⁸Can one walk on hot coals, and his feet not be seared? ²⁹So is he who goes in to his neighbor's wife; whoever touches her shall not be innocent. ³⁰People do not despise a thief if he steals to satisfy himself when he is starving. ³¹Yet when he is found, he must restore sevenfold; He may have to give up all the substance of his house. ³²Whoever commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding; He who does so destroys his own soul. ³³Wounds and dishonor he will get, and his reproach will not be wiped away. ³⁴For jealousy is a husband's fury; therefore, he will not spare in the day of vengeance. ³⁵He will accept no recompense, nor will he appease though you give many gifts."
(Proverbs 6:27-35)

- According to verses 27 through 29, what are the consequences of adultery and sexual immorality? (For further insights, see the New Testament book of 1 Corinthians 6:12-20.)
- According to verses 30 through 35, why is adultery much worse than a starving man stealing food because he's hungry? (Focus specifically on verse 34.)

Key Passage: Matthew 5:29-30

²⁹"If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish than for your whole body to be cast into hell. ³⁰And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you, for it is more profitable to you that one of your members perish than for your whole body to be cast into hell."

- Why do you think Jesus is so concerned about lustful thoughts in these two verses?
- How can Matthew 5:29-30 be applied to our everyday lives?
- How can you and your closest guy friends help one another avoid sexual 'fire'? List several practical ways; share your list with your small group or your closest male friends.

—Tony Woodlief, Essayist to *The Wall Street Journal*, *The London Times*, *National Review Online*, and *World* magazine

Thought to Apply

When you pray for your marriage, you remind yourself that you are not alone. When you pray, you remind yourself that grace has invaded your marriage, and because of it, there is hope. —Paul Tripp (preacher, writer, professor)

Prayer of the Week

Dear Father, forgive me for those times I've gotten too close to the 'fire'; guide me as I seek to take practical steps to protect myself from sexual sin; help me to be a wise friend and positive role model for my friends who struggle sexually. Please forgive me when I'm not the husband and father I should be; give me the grace to love my wife and children unconditionally; help me to see that my family is a gift and blessing from You.

Supplemental Scripture Reading: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 (as noted above)

Another Book of Proverbs “In-Your-Face Thought-for-Action Provoker” ...

What Makes You Romantic?

¹⁸“Let your wife be a fountain of blessing for you. Rejoice in the wife of your youth.” (Proverbs 5:18)

What would you say are actions a husband could do that a wife would say are the most important to romance? Not sure? Here's a little help for you...

A national survey listed a number of actions that men could take, and women were asked to rate actions from 1 to 5 according to their romantic value, with 5 being the most important to romance. Here are the responses that received an averaged score of 4.4 or higher:

- He touches me with tenderness (4.7)
- He snuggles after making love (4.6)
- He treats me as the most special person in his life (4.6)
- He gives emotionally (4.5)
- He shares his thoughts and dreams with me (4.5)
- He arranges for us to have time alone (4.4)
- He knows what makes me happy (4.4)
- He keeps in touch when we are apart (4.4)
- He is gentle in his lovemaking (4.4)
- He listens to me intently (4.4)
- He treats me special when I am sick or down (4.4)

Now that you've read the list, use it to enrich your marriage and begin to bring out the best in your wife.

–H. Norman Wright in *Bringing Out the Best in Your Wife*