

# Proverbs Week #52 (5:5-10)

*"Now then, my sons, listen to me and do not depart from the words of my mouth. Keep your way far from her and do not go near the door of her house, or you will give your vigor to others and your years to the cruel one; and strangers will be filled with your strength and your hard-earned goods will go to the house of an alien" Prov 5:7-10*

In today's verses I want to emphasize the importance of remembering the lessons we learn and using our lives to bring about God's purposes. Whether we realize it or not, we all process what we hear and assign value to it as we listen. If something we hear seems of little importance we are likely not to remember it. For example, if I were to mention finding a place where gasoline could be purchased at 50% off the going price, who might I expect to be interested in that information? If you aren't old enough to drive or purchase gas you probably won't be listening for details concerning this location. This process of sorting out whether we see something as important to us is also used when the words or lessons to be remembered come from the scriptures.

The father in Proverbs is again stressing to his child the importance of paying attention to what he says. His urgings describe how his son's life energies and days could be wasted if what is taught is forgotten. The woman, Wisdom, and the strange woman are often used in a figurative way. Wisdom represents holding on to and living by truth and the strange woman represents embracing error. The strength of this illustration comes from how easily one can discern its truth in everyday life. As with most proverbs, commonly observed truths are recorded in short phrases that enable a wise listener to avoid pain and suffering in life. While following the wisdom is no guarantee of avoiding hurt in life at least it can minimize the self-inflicted pain.

Marriage and children are gifts from God. From the beginning He created marriage to fulfill His purposes and declared what He made to be good. Even after the fall the introduction of the promised "seed" (Gen 3:15) spoke of the importance of marriage and a future generation that would be a part of fulfilling God's purposes. Without the context of godly families even today's message of a father teaching his son might be lost. The choices we make in intimate relationships can be a blessing or a devastation. Failing to place proper value and making wrong choices amounts to wasting years of your life and strength to someone who may appear to be loving but in reality is cruel. (Prov 5:9,10)

Instead of going close to the house of the strange woman, walking up to her door, and finishing our journey in disaster we should turn from this evil way and turn to God. How much trouble do we get ourselves into by not following this advice? If we know that something is bad and wrong how often do we wander right up to the bad thing and think that we won't finish the journey? If we watch too much TV and spend too much time on the internet, how often do we decide to just turn on the TV set or sit down in front of the computer thinking we will "just take a few minutes" to see what we can see? These minutes turn to hours and we may even find we are wasting days and years of our lives. Not all things that are wrong are of equal value, but when it is compared to the good that might have been, anything that wastes our time could be keeping us from things that God desires for us to do. In that respect making the most of our time is of great importance.

As we conclude this lesson I would like to sum up its lessons in two main points and then give two points of action. First, consider those things which you know are wrong in your life. If you don't think you have anything wrong in your life then that opinion may be a good place to start. Next, before doing what you know to be wrong, can you identify any "doors" or doorways that may lead to you doing that wrong? While you are praying to God for wisdom ask Him to help you identify those doorways to sin in your life. Now for the two action points! Identify the way to escape and complete your turning away from that which is wrong by turning to that which is right. It is this kind of repentance I believe we seek and ask God to grant. This kind of repentance causes us to turn away from what is evil and cling to what is good.

In Psalm 1 there are ways, a road, and a seat where evil men walk, stand, and sit. We are blessed by not participating with them. This song goes on to say that the ones who are blessed meditate in the Torah of the LORD. Then it describes the fruit in their lives. They are like trees planted by streams of water yielding fruit in its season. If we are not to do what is evil we must also turn to the LORD and seek His good. A repentance of this kind may come in steps. Remember these words, don't go near those things which are destructive and evil, certainly don't go to the very doorway of these things, and finally turn to the good which God provides.