

Proverbs Week #69 (6:23-29)

For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching is light; and reproofs for discipline are the way of life to keep you from the evil woman, from the smooth tongue of the adulteress. Do not desire her beauty in your heart, nor let her capture you with her eyelids. For on account of a harlot one is reduced to a loaf of bread, and an adulteress hunts for the precious life. Can a man take fire in his bosom and his clothes not be burned? Or can a man walk on hot coals and his feet not be scorched? So is the one who goes in to his neighbor's wife; whoever touches her will not go unpunished. (Prov 6:23-29)

*Some Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?" And He answered and said, "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE, and said, 'FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH'? "So they are no longer two, but one flesh. **What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.**" (Matt 19:3-6)*

*Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has the Messiah with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. "Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE," says the Lord. "AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; **And I will welcome you. "And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me," Says the Lord Almighty.**" (2 Cor 6:14-18)*

Last week I used the illustration of a flashlight to remind us all of the importance of letting God's teaching and instruction guide our daily lives. The opening verse from our section from Proverbs says, "For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching is light." In the beginning, God created Adam and Eve as man and woman. He joined the two together and gave them the ability to have children. God's commandments and teaching in the area marriage and family provide us with the perfect picture of how things ought to be. As I mentioned last week, the sin of man is like a black tar that apart from God's grace would block out that light.

The verse above continues, "...and reproofs for discipline are the way of life to keep you from the evil woman, from the smooth tongue of the adulteress." If we expand the context of this verse to include fathers and mothers teaching their daughters then it can also be understood to say 'from the evil man.' We would like to believe that everyone we meet is honest, but this is not always the case. The discipline that wisdom hopes to impart will prepare us to know the difference. As families we must continue to learn and remain faithful to what God teaches. Men and women who do not acknowledge God can attempt to hamper us in the task of living out His truth and teaching our children. We must trust God to teach us and enable us to impart that wisdom to our families. Is this type of learning "the way of life" in our families? Are we active or passive in this learning process?

We can learn in a variety of ways. Sometimes the method of trial and error can produce a desired end; as when someone is learning an instrument or how to improve at a sport. In some areas of life, this method should never be the one we choose. No wise person would ever suggest that you could just marry and divorce as much as you like, start families here and there, and think that a 'practice-makes-perfect' attitude in this area is a good way to live. The picture of God's type of family is lost in such a scenario. God desires for us to learn faithfulness and has given us mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, and extended families to know the truth of His purposes. How we do and teach in this area will speak volumes to our children. Actions will speak louder than words.

Some of today's subject may be hard for younger children to understand and we might wait for them to mature before we teach them the fullness of these subjects. At the same time, the subject of marriage, divorce, remarriage, infidelity, and faithfulness are playing out all around us. Regardless of how much we shelter our children, they will experience both the joys and the sorrows of others choices' in this area. Even in the midst of our own shortcomings in these areas, may God grant us the wisdom and strength to faithfully proclaim His truth.