

**PROVERBS**

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Proverbs chapter 4 as we continue our study through the Word of God. Keep in mind that Proverbs is a book that shows us how to live godly in an ungodly world! Thus, we would be wise to heed the instructions that God has set before us in this book. In these first nine verses of Proverbs chapter 4 Solomon is instructing his son, his children how to live. And what Solomon is doing is passing on lessons that his father David taught him.

This is an area that is lacking in our society today and because of that we are suffering the consequences. Families are so busy, families are split apart, single parent families, parents want to be best friends with their children and they are not taught the lessons they need to learn to live out their lives. And because of that as well as some other things, they will not be able to cope with the things they will face in this world in a healthy way.

How many of you when you were in school were made fun of? Most if not all of us were and we were able to deal with it. I am not saying that it was right, but we have kids and adults that can't handle life's situations anymore and I think that they were not trained up like they should have been. I am not saying that every child is going to listen to you and do what is right, but when you look at what is happening in our society, there is something seriously wrong!

Parents are to impart wisdom to their children, help them to grow, help them to mature, help them to learn what is right and what is wrong. How is that done? They will learn from us as we have learned through our struggles, suffering, the things we have experienced in our life that will help them in their life!

And even more importantly, this book was written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and thus, these are the things that our heavenly Father wants to impart to us. So as we are going through these words of wisdom may we learn the lesson, may we apply these things to our own lives so that we may be able to live godly in this ungodly world!

With that said, let's begin reading in Proverbs chapter 4, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word this evening.

## **PROVERBS 4**

### **VERSES 1-2**

1. Like any good father, Solomon is speaking to his children and is trying to impart to them his wisdom which he has learned throughout his life. Think about growing up and how our parents did not want us to learn the hard way but to learn the lessons they learned so that we would not make the same foolish mistakes that they did and that we would follow the positive role model that they were to us.

These words that Solomon learned from his father but did not necessarily apply to his life all the time are "**good doctrine**" or healthy words to grow by! And for us as Christians, it is not only the wisdom that we can learn from our earthly father, but also the wisdom we can learn from our heavenly Father.

How can we learn the wisdom of God? By being in His Word and the Holy Spirit will open up the Word of God to our lives and help us to grow! Paul told Timothy in I Timothy 4:6, **“If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed.”**

Make no mistake about it, doctrine, teaching, nourishes our lives, it helps to keep us spiritually healthy. But we are seeing a gradual moving away from good doctrine, healthy doctrine. We see it with the Seeker Friendly churches, the Purpose Driven churches, the Emergent churches and-so-on. Now many may disagree with me but I think the pastor of the Community Church of Joy in Glendale, Arizona imparts to us what many churches are doing today and this is from several years ago. He said, and listen carefully, *“People today aren’t interested in traditional doctrines like justification, sanctification and redemption.”* And thus, he does not teach those doctrines! We must get back to sound doctrine and not listen to the foolishness of man. If we don’t, the church will continue to be tossed to and fro by the winds of false doctrine that are blowing by! As the Lord is telling us through Solomon, **“Hear, my children, the instruction of a father”** may we listen and obey!

#### VERSES 3-9

1. Solomon says that his father, King David, instructed him on how to live. He wanted Solomon to **“Get wisdom! Get understanding!”** Please understand that they are not the same thing. When we speak of understanding we are talking about facts, truths, and principles. When we are talking about wisdom we are talking about applying those facts, applying those truths, applying those principles to our lives. I think they are both very important.

Think about that for a minute. You can have all the understanding in the world, but if you don't apply it to your life, you are a fool. On the other end of the spectrum, you can be very wise, you can apply all kinds of things to your life but if you don't have understanding, the truth to apply, you are also a fool.

Let me show you what I mean by looking at a person who believes in the theory of evolution. People who believe in evolution have all kinds of information but their application of that information shows they are fools. Dr. Wald, one of the foremost biologists in this country said, "Spontaneous generation was totally disproved 100 years ago by Louis Pasteur . . . That leads us only one possible conclusion. That life arose as a super natural creative work of God. I cannot accept that philosophically, because I don't want to believe in God. I choose to believe that which I know is scientifically impossible, spontaneous generation arising to evolution." You see, he has all the right information, he just refuses to apply it properly. As Paul said, **"Professing to be wise, they became fools."** Romans 1:22. Knowledge without wisdom and wisdom without knowledge can be dangerous and thus, we need both!

2. Let me share with you some of the wisdom that David imparted to his son before he died, before Solomon became King over Israel. Keep in mind that Solomon may have been only 14 or 15 years old when he became King and thus, he did not have a lot wisdom and understanding. That is what he was seeking and yes, the Lord gave him the wisdom he needed to run the kingdom but he did not apply that to his life. For most of his life he lived in a backslidden condition. But before he became King, his father David wanted to impart the wisdom that he learned over the years to his son.

This was David's charge to Solomon as he was about to take over the nation, **"I go the way of all the earth; be strong, therefore, and prove yourself a man. And keep the charge of the LORD your God: to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn; that the LORD may fulfill His word which He spoke concerning me, saying, 'If your sons take heed to their way, to walk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul,' He said, 'you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.'"** I Kings 2:2-4. Now, what David imparted to him he is imparting to his children!

3. Solomon is illustrating this wisdom as being like a woman and he tells us that we need to pursue this wisdom, we should not forsake or leave this wisdom but love her and she will take care of us. In other words, if you apply wisdom to your life you will be blessed and the implication is that if you don't, then you won't be blessed! Again, let me give you an example. In the schools, in the music, in the movies, on television we are teaching our children about sex, they have the information or understanding you might say. But we don't teach them the proper application of sexual relations, and that is not wise.

Now hear me out on this, don't get mad at me or tune me out. We teach our children about sex and the application of that knowledge that we have taught them is that you can have sex with anyone you want anytime you want, just be protected. The phrase these teachers love to use is "safe sex." Sorry, the only safe sex is between a husband and a wife. Outside of marriage it is a crap shoot what kind of disease you might get!

Let me show you what I mean and for those that are for Planned Parenthood, what is wrong with you! This is a quote from Margaret Sanger and she founded Planned Parenthood and see if what she says is wise. And this was from some 90 years ago and I think what she tried to implement has occurred. In *The Woman Rebel* she wrote back in 1922, “Our objective is unlimited sexual gratification without the burden of unwanted children. . . . Women must have the right to live . . . to love . . . to be an unmarried mother . . . to create . . . to destroy . . . the marriage bed is the most degenerative influence in the social order.”

In other words, abortion is a form of birth control, of getting rid of unwanted children and a woman is not there for having children but for satisfying her own sexual desires with whoever she wants and whenever she wants! Marriage is evil; sex outside of marriage is good! That is the wrong application of knowledge, the knowledge of sex and that is what we have taught our children and look at where we are at today!

Look at this sexual revolution we have in our country and it is not good. I will just give you one example and you will see what I mean. The example I want to share with you deals with STD's or sexually transmitted diseases and how they are at epidemic or rampant proportions in our country and for one reason, we did not listen to God and we have done it our way and we are suffering the consequences of that rebellion, of not being wise!

This is 2011 data on chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis published in CDC's annual report, and they tell us that,

CDC estimates that 19 million new STD infections occur every year in this country, nearly half among young people ages 15-24. Each of these infections is a potential threat to an individual's immediate and long-term health and well-being. In addition to increasing a person's risk for HIV infection, STDs can lead to severe reproductive health complications, such as infertility. STDs are also a serious drain on the U.S. health care system, costing the nation about \$17 billion in health care costs every year.

- <http://www.cdc.gov/std/stats11/trends-2011.pdf>

You see, that is the wrong application of knowledge and there are consequences because of that. Not only STD's, but divorce, sexual addiction, all kinds of perversion, rape and-so-on. Then what is the right application of this knowledge. The Bible tells us in Hebrews 13:4.

**“Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers**

**God will judge.”** You see, that is the right application of knowledge, sex within marriage is beautiful and enjoyable. Sex outside of marriage is a sin before God and you are accountable for your actions and the repercussions are devastating to a society! God is not trying to keep anything from us but has what is best and we need to know the truth and then apply that truth to our lives. That is wisdom!

VERSES 10-13

1. Now as you read through these verses, as you were listening to these words, can't you just see our heavenly Father speaking to us? I can and it is beautiful. He loves us that much and we are His children!

2. How come so many of us as we are walking are hindered in our walk? How come so many of us as we are walking stumble in our walk? Because we are not following the right paths, we are not taking the right steps; we are not running down the right road. Step by step the Lord leads us but many times we don't follow, we don't listen, we don't apply what we know to our lives and thus, we stumble through life!

You see, God's Word does not restrict us from all that is good, it protects us from what is bad, what will hurt us. The reality is that God's Word gives us life, abundant, joyful life. When we do things contrary to God's Word we find ourselves in bondage, we stumble through life. There is life found in being wise. How can I accomplish this? Like Solomon said, "**Take firm hold of instruction, do not let go; Keep her, for she is your life.**" Proverbs 4:13. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you and you will not go down the wrong paths, you will not be hindered in your walk, you will not stumble when you run!

VERSES 14-17

1. Solomon just spoke of walking in the ways of wisdom, the ways of God, the right paths, take the right steps, run down the right road, and now he is contrasting that with those that travel down the wicked path. This is not a game, it is a battle for your life and many fall prey to these evil people who entice you to go down the wicked path!

Again, let me give you an example. Say you are dating a young man and you are in love. And this young man wants to have sexual relations with you because he says he loves you, you are the only one for him! Run away as fast as you can because he does not love you, he lusts after you and many times once he has you, he will move on. Don't fall prey to that garbage! Walk in the ways of the Lord and avoid these evil paths, these evil people at all costs!

2. Again I do understand that this is difficult because of all the peer pressure that is out there for us to conform to this world, but God does not want us to be conformed to this world, but allow Him to transform our lives! Several years ago some young adults removed a stop sign in a busy intersection. With that warning gone, a car entered that intersection and the results were death and destruction.

What does that have to do with us? God has placed warning signs for us to follow, to warn us of the danger that is around us. To ignore them is foolish because it will only lead to death and destruction in your life. To remove them is also foolish because it too will only lead to death and destruction in your life. And understand this; once you start traveling down these wicked paths, it is hard to get out.

Listen to what the Psalmist said in Psalm 1, **“Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.”** Psalm 1:1-3.

You do have a choice what path you want to be on. One leads to life, a blessed life and the other to destruction!

3. And make no mistake about it, the wicked live to do evil, they feed upon it and unless they are doing wickedness, they are not happy. The wicked sin because that is what they feed upon. They are sinners and the only thing that can satisfy their hunger is sin! How sad a state to be in, that your life is bent on doing evil. May we be wise and walk in the ways of the Lord!

#### VERSES 18-19

1. Solomon is contrasting the righteous life with the wicked life. The righteous life does not burn out but it shines brighter and brighter as the noon day sun! The path of the righteous grows better and it grows brighter all the time!

What a glorious truth that is but how is that applied to our life? How do we shine brighter? The more time you spend with Jesus the more He will shine through you. Think of it this way, the more time you spend in the sun the more its effects will shine from you. Some who are fair-skinned will be glowing red, others will tan, but either way, you will see the effects the sun has had in their life.

The same is true as we spend time with the Son of God, with Jesus Christ. It is as Paul said in II Corinthians 3:18, “**But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.**” You see, the longer you walk with Him, the more He will shine through you and that light, that brightness should grow until one day you go to be with Him.

2. Now on the other end of the spectrum are the wicked and the path that they are taking. They stagger all over the place because they truly don't know where they are going. They are moving farther and farther into darkness and they don't even know what they are stumbling over!

You see, the wicked life has the opposite effect on a person's life. Instead of shining, instead of being bright, they are in darkness and that is what is seen in their life. They can't see where they are going for there is no light in them to guide them. They are stumbling in the darkness! And look at those that have rejected God and they are tossed to and fro not knowing where they are going and yet they are very determined to get there!

3. As you look at these two different lives, which one is free and which one is truly in bondage? I think you can answer it by answering this question, "Where do you want to walk, in the light or in the darkness?" Of course we want to walk in the light and thus, it is easy to see that Christ sets us free as we walk in His light and apart from Him we are in darkness, we are in bondage. We are told in Proverbs 16:25, "**There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.**" Don't go down that path of destruction, walk in the light as He is in the light!

#### VERSES 20-23

1. Once again let's look at this from our heavenly Father's point of view, what He is instructing us. The focus is God's Word and thus, there truly is life found in keeping God's Word. And we are told to pay attention to it, listen to it; we need to keep our eyes focused upon it, because we will be blessed if we do.

Remember in the book of Joshua as Joshua is now taking over for Moses and he will lead the people into the Promise Land. I think Joshua was a little nervous. Moses had these people for forty years and they basically just went around in a circle, they did not enter the Promise Land because of unbelief.

But now here is Joshua and God, in instructing Joshua before they enter the land of Canaan said, **“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.”**

Joshua 1:8.

“Joshua, you may be sacred, you may be afraid of the challenge that is before you, but don’t lose sight of what I am going to do through you! Focus on my Word day and night and not only listen to My Words but obey then and your life will be prosperous, you will have good success.” That is what the Lord was basically telling Joshua and He is also telling us. Stay in His Word, listen to what He is saying and then obey, stay on course and you will be blessed.

2. Way back in the 1600’s William Harvey discovered that blood is pumped by the heart and it circulates throughout the body. How true that is as once every sixty seconds your blood will travel the 60,000 miles or so of arteries, veins and capillaries. How does it do this? Your heart has to beat and it does so approximately 100,000 times every single day and that means in a lifetime it beats on average of 2 ½ billion times!

Solomon tells us that we are to **“Keep [our] heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.”** Proverbs 4:23. And I think that Solomon is speaking of more than just physiologically, I think he is looking at the spiritual aspect also. Remember what Jesus said in Matthew 15:19-20, **“For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man.”** What are you filling your heart with? If it is not the things of God then your heart is spiritually diseased and the only cure for that is found in Jesus!

And yes I do believe that sin affects the physical body as well. What do I mean by that? Simply, when a person is living in sin it puts stress upon the body that causes so many of the diseases, illnesses that we see today! Thus, pay attention to the Word of God! Keep God’s Word at the center of your life, the center of all that you do! And be diligent about staying in the Word and obeying the Word because that is where true life is found, physically and spiritually because God’s Word brings us to Jesus and helps us to grow in Him!

#### VERSES 24-27

1. What is Solomon saying here? He wants us to ***STAY FOCUSED!*** You see, there are a lot of wicked things in this world that want to destroy our life if we let them. We need to be like race horses that have those blinders on so they cannot be distracted by what is going on around them so they can finish the race. We too must stay focused on what is before us, the Lord! Now I am not saying that we should be blind to what is happening around us, but we are not to be taken captive by it. Don’t allow your eyes to dwell upon evil, or your ears to listen to it. We need to ***PRESS ON!***

2. Why do we have such a struggle in our walk? Yes, the flesh is there and it tries to take over our lives. But the other issue is that we don't consider the consequences of our sin. I think if we truly did, if we understood them, we would not go down that path! Think about the fish that is swimming in the water and right before him is this beautiful worm just waiting for him! So what does he do, he takes a bite not knowing that there is a hook attached to that worm that has him captive now. He did not consider the consequences of his actions and he got caught and so does man in sin. It looks so good and we don't see the hook that is on the other end of it. Solomon is going to talk about this more as we get to chapter 5 as he speaks of adultery! The way to keep your heart is to focus your eyes on the Lord. If your eye is focused on wickedness then it will pollute your heart. Let God transform your life; don't let the world conform you to its image! In other words, watch your step, watch where you are going!

## **PROVERBS 5**

### **VERSES 1-6**

1. Solomon is speaking to his son and the women that will try to seduce him. But this is also against men who go out to seduce women. Now let's be honest here and this is what Solomon is telling his son, make no mistake about it. He is saying, "Son, you are going to be tempted. There is a world of sexual temptation that will try to take you captive. It will look good, it will be like honey but the reality is, it will be poison to you!" And we can see that sexual temptation has permeated our society!

Yes, it looks so good, it may feel so right, but in the end it is a poison that will destroy you and like a sword it will cut you to pieces and fragment your life. If you don't believe it, look at what divorce has done in this country - destroyed and fragmented lives. And if you travel down these paths, committing sexual sin, there is a good chance that your life will be cut short. Don't be fooled!

2. Now people laugh at what I am saying, they think I am old-fashioned in my thinking. They may think I am an old fuddy-duddy! I am not even sure if they use that word anymore, I guess I am one! But don't be foolish, this is not my thinking, this is what God is saying to us and as our heavenly Father He is that concerned for us and is warning us of the seductive woman who wants to destroy our lives, take us to Sheol!

Let me share with you these words from the famous Nineteenth century writer who fell into the temptation of unnatural sex. You tell me if he made a mistake. He wrote,

The gods have given me almost everything. But I let myself be lured into long spells of senseless and sensual ease. . . . Tired of being on the heights, I deliberately went to the depths in search for new sensation. . . . I grew careless of the lives of others. I took pleasure where it pleased me and passed on. I forgot that every little action of the common day makes or unmakes character, and that therefore what one has done in the secret chamber, one has some day to cry aloud from the house-tops. I ceased to be lord over myself. I was no longer the captain of my soul, and did not know it. I allowed pleasure to dominate me. I ended in horrible disgrace.

- Oscar Wilde, *The Portable Oscar Wilde*, pp. 580-581

VERSES 7-9

1. Paul warned Timothy to, **“Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”** II Timothy 2:22. If you flee something that means you are going towards something else. Think about it, if you are fleeing from God then you are going after things that are contrary to the ways of God. That is why Paul told Timothy to flee those youthful lusts, don’t get yourself dirty. How do we stay clean? Don’t play in the dirt! That is pretty simple.

Not only that but as you flee these things then run to righteousness, faith, love, peace with a pure heart and fellowship with others who are doing the same. Why is that? This is important for us to understand. As we gather together we will help keep each other accountable in our walk and spur each other on in service.

We have over ten billion cells in our brain, some have a little less, and the majority of those cells are used for memory. At least I think they are, I don’t remember. Anyway, everything that goes into our brain we retain, although at times it may be hard to extract.

Thus, what you put in your mind is there. If you put garbage in, you may not remember it for years and then all of a sudden, there is that garbage coming up again because it has always been there. Don’t play with fire because you will get burned!

I like what Paul tells us to do in Philippians 4:8-9, **“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy — meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.”**

Fill your mind with the things of God; don’t put anything in there that will hurt you!

2. Make no mistake about it, Satan has come to kill, steal, and destroy people's lives, and one of the ways that he does this is through sexual sin. Solomon is saying to stay clear of this, don't even play with it, for once it has a hold of you, it will consume your life. And think about what sexual sin does in our life, the cruelty of a broken life, a broken heart, a broken home, and a broken body - all the needless results of promiscuity. Don't let Satan steal your life away!

### VERSES 10-11

1. Now here's the thing. Do you really think that you can play with sin and keep it under your control? If you do then you are a fool! Martyn Lloyd-Jones gives us this perspective of the situation as he wrote,

Be careful how you treat God, my friends. You may say to yourself, "I can sin against God and then, of course, I can repent and go back and find God whenever I want him." You try it. And you will sometimes find that not only can you not find God but that you do not even want to. You will be aware of a terrible hardness in your heart. And you can do nothing about it. And then you suddenly realize that it is God punishing you in order to reveal your sinfulness and your vileness to you. And there is only one thing to do. You turn back to him and you say, "O God, do not go on dealing with me judicially, though I deserve it. Soften my heart. Melt me. I cannot do it myself." You cast yourself utterly upon his mercy and upon his compassion.

- Martyn Lloyd-Jones, Revival, p. 300

Make no mistake about it, when we disobey God our hearts will harden towards Him!  
The cost is high, so don't take the bait that Satan is hanging in front of you because behind that bait is a hook!

2. And listen to what verse 11 says, “**And you mourn at last, When your flesh and your body are consumed.**” Keep in mind that back then there was no cure for sexually transmitted diseases. And if you live this loose lifestyle and catch one of these, it was a slow, agonizing death. And in the end, all that you worked so hard for, so hard to obtain will be given to another. Today we once again are seeing a tremendous increase in sexually transmitted diseases, some for which there is no cure! And it is not just the young, we are seeing an increase in STD’s in older people, in their 60’s, 70’s and even 80’s!

Listen to this regarding AIDS. We are told,

The first cases of what would later become known as AIDS were reported in the United States in June of 1981. Since then, 1.7 million people in the U.S. are estimated to have been infected with HIV, including over 619,000 who have already died and approximately 1.2 million (1,178,350) adults and adolescents who were living with HIV infection at the end of 2008, the most recent year for which national prevalence estimates are available. The impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic spans the nation with HIV diagnoses having been reported in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. dependencies, possessions, and associated nations.

CDC estimates that more than one million people are living with HIV in the U.S. One in five (20%) of those people living with HIV is unaware of their infection.

Despite increases in the total number of people living with HIV in the U.S. in recent years, the annual number of new HIV infections has remained relatively stable. However, new infections continue at far too high a level, with approximately 50,000 Americans becoming infected with HIV each year. More than 17,000 people with AIDS in the U.S. died in 2009 and more than 619,000 people with AIDS in the U.S. have died since the epidemic began.

- <http://aids.gov/hiv-aids-basics/hiv-aids-101/statistics/>

There is a cost and that is what God is warning us about. It is a physical loss, it is a spiritual loss, there is nothing good that can come from sexual promiscuity, from sexual sin, only death and destruction of lives! How can people fall prey to this? We don't have to guess, Solomon is going to tell us.

#### VERSES 12-14

1. God has given to us His instructions on how to live out our lives and we have the option of obeying what God has said or rejecting it. But if you reject His Word and do your own thing, understand that there are consequences to your sin; you will reap what you have sown!

Notice the progression here. First of all he heard God's Word but he despised it, he rejected it. He did not want to listen to correction. And when the teachers of God's Word spoke, he closed his ears to them. He did not want to hear what they were saying. And he even went to Temple and he looked like all was well, but he was on the verge of total ruin, his life was on the verge of destruction! That is pretty accurate of what happens in a person's life who rejects the truth and does his own thing.

2. And even today many have rejected what God has said regarding sex and they have opened themselves up to all kinds of sexually transmitted diseases, and then it is too late! They have destroyed relationships, and then it is too late! They have lost jobs, and then it is too late! Don't be a fool, heed God's Word. Let's not have our epitaph read like King Saul's who said towards the end of his life, "**. . . Indeed I have played the fool and erred exceedingly.**" I Samuel 26:21. We don't have to play the fool, we do not have to error exceedingly, we can walk in the wisdom of God and be blessed.

And think about it. How many today sit in church and their lives are consumed with sexual sin, on the verge of ruin? They don't want to hear what God has to say. They don't want to be told what to do. They don't want to heed the instructions of the teachers. They have heard it all before and they don't want to hear it again. Before you crash and burn you need to confess your sins, not only sexual sins, and get right with God, and pray for one another. Remember what James says, "**Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.**" James 5:16.

3. Now maybe some of you have been down that path and you feel condemned. Maybe someone here tonight or listening on the radio or Internet is in a situation of sexual sin. If you are in it now, you need to repent and get right with God. If you have done that, then let me share some Scriptures with you to give you hope, to show you that God loves you. That He has forgiven all of your sins on the cross of Calvary, all you need to do is come to Him. The world may shun you, may walk by you, but God won't!

Paul reminds us in II Corinthians 5:17, "**Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.**" Notice that we are a new creation in Christ, those old things are gone and we are fresh, we are new in Him!

John tells us in I John 1:9, "**If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**" Isn't that wonderful, that is what God has done, He is faithful to forgive our sins, all we must do is give them to Him, confess them before Him!

Also, we are told in I Corinthians 6:11, “**And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.**” Don’t go back to the old ways, that is where you came from and it is not where you are going!

4. Now Solomon is going to talk about sexual wisdom, yes, we will have that talk! Don’t be afraid, listen to what Solomon says.

#### VERSE 15

1. Why do you drink water? You drink water to satisfy your thirst. Let’s apply that to what Solomon said here and please understand that Solomon is speaking poetically here and he is saying that we should be satisfied with what God has given to us, our spouse, and not go drinking elsewhere. I don’t think we know what we have many times until we don’t have it anymore. God has brought you together in marriage, do you think He made a mistake? Now some say that they made a mistake and they were not listening to God. You know what I say to that, too bad! If you are married, then it is a covenant that you made before God! I actually had a person tell me, a man who was divorced and remarried, that he needs to divorce his wife and go back to his first wife because that is what God wants. Two wrongs don’t make a right! So he wanted to destroy this relationship because that is what God wanted, I don’t think so! Be satisfied with the person that God has given to you and don’t walk into sin!

2. Now here is something that we might not think about. If God only approves of sexual relations within the bounds of marriage, why didn't He make that sex drive kick in after we are married? That is a good question. The answer is simple, we have a choice, to walk in the Spirit or work in the flesh. We can give into the flesh but as we do we move away from the Lord. Thus, the Lord is telling us, "Crucify the flesh, don't give in to the flesh, walk in the Spirit and enjoy that fellowship with Me!" He will give us the strength that we need to say no to our flesh and to grow in Him as we pray, as we discipline our bodies unto godliness! Stand strong in the Lord and the power of His might!

#### VERSES 16-17

1. The streets of America are filled with children that have been fathered outside of marriage and many of these children are not wanted. Solomon is telling us to be responsible in our conduct and children should be born out of a marriage relationship and not outside one! A father needs to be in the home, part of the family with a mother. Listen to what is happening in America and you tell me if sexual promiscuity, if immoral sexual behavior has hurt us or helped us. This is from an article from 2011 and we are told,

One-third of American children are growing up . . . without their biological father, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. In the past 50 years, the percentage of children who live with two married parents has dropped 22 points. During that same time, the number of babies born to unwed mothers jumped from 5 percent to 40 percent.

The growing trend of father absence could have grave implications for society, researchers say, because having dad around has been linked to important developments in a child's physical, emotional and behavioral health. At the same time, though, research indicates it's not enough just to have a male figure in the home.

- <http://www.deseretnews.com/article/700137767/Fatherless-America-A-third-of-children-now-live-without-dad.html?pg=all>

May we learn to be satisfied with the wife that the Lord has given to us and to be fathers that are actively involved in the development of our children, it is that important!

#### VERSES 18-20

1. For some strange reason the church has adopted the philosophy that sex is only for procreation and anything besides that is wrong, it is not of God. Are you kidding, God has given us sex to enjoy within the bounds of marriage. And here Solomon is saying to be enraptured with your wife. And if you are blushing now, wait until we get to the Song of Solomon!

I don't know about you but for me, I am intoxicated you might say with my wife. I am head over heels in love with her and that is the way it should be. And if it is not that way in your relationship with your spouse, repent and get right with God and fall in love with your spouse all over again!

What happens many times today is that when people get married, once the vows are said and the papers are signed, the dating is over. Wrong! Men are especially guilty of this because we are so goal oriented. Once that goal is achieved, we move on to something else. Let me ask you this, when was the last time you dated your wife? If you can't remember, you better plan a date. Send her flowers. Do those things you did when you were dating her, and more. Show her you love her even more today than you did when you were dating her. If you refuse to do that, then just make an appointment for marriage counseling now, you are going to need it!

2. And notice the contrast here. Listen again to what is said in verse 20, **“For why should you, my son, be enraptured by an immoral woman, And be embraced in the arms of a seductress?”** Why in the world are you falling prey to an immoral woman? “She is not immoral, she is beautiful!” You fool, do you really believe that? If she is going after a married man to have sexual relations, does that make her moral or immoral? I think you know the answer to that question!

The problem for many is that they have bought into Hollywood's idea of love, but that is not love, it is lust. And you can see it in their relationships, for true love is a commitment, lust is the satisfying of a need and once that has been met, they move on. Be satisfied with what God has given to you and cherish that person, love them to the fullest and don't get hooked by the bait that Satan has placed in front of you!

VERSES 21-23

1. Think about that for a minute. Before you commit some immoral activity, understand that God is right there with you. You can't hide anything from Him! It is like Hannah said in her prayer found in I Samuel 2:3, **“Talk no more so very proudly; Let no arrogance come from your mouth, For the LORD is the God of knowledge; And by Him actions are weighed.”**

2. Sin is very destructive in our lives. What happens is that as we indulge in sin we move away from God's Word and as we move away from God's Word we are more vulnerable to more sin and it is a vicious cycle that can only be broken as we repent of our sin. The Psalmist said, **“How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.”** Psalm 119:9-11.

As we walk with God, as we take in His Word, when we begin to walk down that path of sin God's Word will expose it to our lives. We can listen or we can close our ears to what He is saying and as we do we are hardening our hearts to God and we become less and less sensitive to what He is saying to us. Be careful!

Listen to how E. Stanley Jones put it,

You cannot “get away with it,” for it registers itself in the inner deterioration, in the inner hell of not being able to respect yourself, in compelling you to live underground in blind labyrinths.

- E. Stanley Jones, The Christ of the Mount, p. 143

Make no mistake about it; people living this kind of life are not free. They are in bondage and many times, because they refuse to heed God's warning, His instructions, their life comes to an end. Moffatt wrote, "For lack of sense he dies; his utter folly ruins him." Don't fall prey to that, learn the lessons and walk circumspectly, cautiously in this evil world.

3. Let me close with these words from Solomon as he said, "**My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart; For they are life to those who find them, And health to all their flesh. Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life. Put away from you a deceitful mouth, And put perverse lips far from you. Let your eyes look straight ahead, And your eyelids look right before you. Ponder the path of your feet, And let all your ways be established. Do not turn to the right or the left; Remove your foot from evil.**"

Proverbs 4:20-27. May we heed the warning and obey!