Real Wisdom
A Look Into Proverbs

Lesson Three
Wisdom and Personal Purity
Proverbs 4-8

Last Week in Review
In Lesson 2, we examined the important relationship between parents, fathers in particular, and children. A father’s instruction is vital in raising children after the way of wisdom, according to God’s desires for them. Equally important is a father’s impartation by example and practical guidance in raising wise children. Children also have a role in following the instruction given to them, becoming prudent in life, not “moral dropouts.”

The importance of balanced discipline and guidance for the child was also discussed, and as parents we can follow our heavenly Father’s example in dealing with us. Lastly, we considered New Testament examples of the parenting and disciplining process, as well as the child’s responsibility in responding to the guidance and direction of their parents. The Word of God is the tool for parenting, and will produce lasting results, in addition to our prayers for our children to walk in the ways of the Lord.

This week we turn to the important topic of maintaining personal purity as Christians. Our perverted culture today is driven by the sensual and the physical, and has crept into the hearts of many, even in the church. We need God’s wisdom and strength to fight the three fold enemy of our souls: the world, the flesh, and the devil. For men especially this is a big challenge, because just being male brings a natural vulnerability to sexual temptation, but we can be freed from the slavery that sensuality can bring.¹

As we turn to face this challenge in our lives, consider the words of R. Kent Hughes:

Sensuality is easily the biggest obstacle to godliness among men today and is wreaking havoc in the Church. Godliness and sensuality are mutually exclusive, and those in the grasp of sensuality can never rise to godliness while in its sweaty grip. If we are to “discipline [ourselves] for the purpose of godliness” (1 Timothy 4:7, NASB), we must begin with the discipline of purity.²

Day One: Preventative Purity
Please carefully read Proverbs 4:20-27 and answer the following questions.

Someone once said that the best offense is a good defense. Being victorious
over our fleshly, sensual nature means we must take proactive steps to prevent it from dominating our lives. Impurity works like a bad habit, and thus we must defeat it by developing a good habit of pursuing purity! It means working out in our lives the truths Paul shared:

And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice--the kind he will accept. When you think of what he has done for you, is this too much to ask? Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do, and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect his will really is. (Romans 12:1, 2 NLT)

1. What is the first element necessary in preventing impurity from having its way in our lives (Proverbs 4:20-22)?
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Notes: The Hebrew word for health means a curative or remedy, like a medicine against evil. The Message exhorts us to “Concentrate! Learn it by heart!”

2. What is our next responsibility in preventing impurity in our lives (Proverbs 4:23)?
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Note: To keep our heart means to guard that which has been deposited diligently.

3. What else do we need to get out of our lives (Proverbs 4:24)?
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“Let no foul or polluting language, nor evil word nor unwholesome or worthless talk [ever] come out of your mouth, but only such [speech] as is good and beneficial to the spiritual progress of others, as is fitting to the need and the occasion, that it may be a blessing and give grace (God's favor) to those who hear it” (Ephesians 4:29, AMP)

4. Where should our focus be to successfully walk in purity (Proverbs 4:25)?
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5. What about how we direct our lives (Proverbs 4:26–27)?

Notes: The NLT puts this, “Mark out a straight path for your feet, then stick to the path and stay safe.” As we do, we’ll “leave evil in the dust” (The Message)! The main point of this passage has been that if we have all the parts of the body cooperating and regulated, then our lives are secure against impurity.

6. What serves as a reminder for us to walk victoriously over the impurities that seek to destroy us and our effectiveness for God’s kingdom (Proverbs 27:12)?

Scripture Memory: This week we will be memorizing Proverbs 27:12. Review the passage several times throughout the day each day this week, and by the end of the week, you should have it memorized completely. A prudent man foresees evil and hides himself; the simple pass on and are punished. (Proverbs 27:12, NKJV)

Day Two: Preserving Purity
Please carefully read Proverbs 5:1-23 and answer the following questions.

1. What will happen as we follow the guidelines we’ve learned (Proverbs 5:1-2)?

2. What is the appeal that an immoral woman has for us, but what will responding to that appeal lead to (Proverbs 5:3-6)?

Notes: The word immoral is translated in various versions of the Bible as an adulteress, a seductive woman, or strange woman; the main idea of the Hebrew word is something that deviates, a non-relative, a foreigner or
stranger, and is the pressing of two things together that don’t belong together.  

 Wormwood (gall) can be translated poisonous accursed, and was a plant that was the bitterest substance known. Interestingly, a two edged sword literally means a sword with more than one mouth.

3. What are some things that we must diligently seek to avoid if we want to walk in sexual purity (Proverbs 5:7-11)?

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Notes: Wealth literally means strength. Some versions translate the word mourn as groan; it means to growl or roar, an elemental and animalistic cry of anguish and destruction. Consumed means to be completely finished, exhausted, being entirely consumed. It is quite possible that this all may be describing venereal disease and its ultimate end in a person’s life, not just emotional suffering.

4. What is the lament of the foolish who give in to adultery and other sexual sins (Proverbs 5:12-14)?

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5. What folly comes from turning from the plan God has for the sexual relationship within marriage (Proverbs 5:15-17)? Rather than this perversion of God’s plan, what should we pursue with all zeal (Proverbs 5:18-20)?

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Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge. Hebrews 13:4 NJKV

Notes: The Message well paraphrases verse 19, “Don’t ever quit taking delight in her body, never take her love for granted.” Satisfy means to slate the thirst, to be made drunk, filled, abundantly satiated. Enraptured has been translated exhilarated, captivated, and ravished; it literally means to be intoxicated; it pictures a staggering gait, “a captivated lover who is intoxicated with her love.”

6. Briefly identify the truths about the fatality of sexual impurity entering into a believer’s life, according to Proverbs 5:21-23.
Scripture Memory: Try to fill in the missing words in the blanks below, by memory if at all possible, and then review the passage several times today. A prudent man foresees evil and ________________ himself; the simple ________________ _______ and are punished. (Proverbs 27:12, NKJV)

Day Three: Practical Purity
Please carefully read Proverbs 6:23-35 and answer the following questions.

1. What is the primary tool we have when we come across times of sexual temptation (Proverbs 6:23, 24)?

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How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word...I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. Psalm 119:9-11 NIV

2. Why should we avoid lust even being stirred up in the slightest in our lives (Proverbs 6:25, 26)?

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Note: The word lust is the same Hebrew word used for coveting in the Ten Commandments; lusting is the same thing as the action, not just a step toward it. 16

You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. Matthew 5:27, 28 NKJV

3. What graphic example is given of the foolishness of giving in to sexual sins (Proverbs 6:27-29)?

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Note: Touch means to have physical contact with for the purposes of sexual stimulation. Men, we must have a “hands off” policy when it comes to women other than our family members, as it can lead to a point of physical
stimulation and eventually to a point of no return!  

We must set loving, logical hedges in our life to avoid this.

It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. 1 Corinthians 7:1, 2 NKJV

4. What comparison did Solomon make between a thief and an adulterer in Proverbs 6:30-32?

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Adultery is a brainless act, self-destroying, self-destructive. Proverbs 6:32, The Message

5. What can be some further results of an adulterous “affair” (Proverbs 6:33-35)?

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Scripture Memory: Try to fill in the missing words in the blanks below, by memory if at all possible, and then review the passage several times today.

A prudent man ___________________ evil and ___________________ himself; the simple ___________________ and are punished. (Proverbs 27:12, NKJV)

Day Four: Preserving Purity

Please carefully read Proverbs 7:1-20 and answer the following questions.

1. What extensive efforts do we all need to undertake to preserve our personal purity as we face sexual temptations (Proverbs 7:1-5)?

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NOTE: The term sister was one of endearment for a wife or girlfriend, and we should just as closely embrace wisdom to avoid sexual sin. “Sister” is used repeatedly as a term of affection in Song of Solomon, as we’ll see later this year.
2. Solomon next relates the story of a young man he had observed fall into sexual sin. What was the young man’s first fatal mistake, demonstrating his foolishness (Proverbs 7:6-9)?

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Note: Proverbs emphasizes looking ahead to see where our actions will lead us, thoroughly considering their consequences. This young man did neither, and followed the drives of his flesh instead.

3. How is the sexually loose woman described, one we would do well to avoid (Proverbs 7:10-12)?

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4. We next come to the seduction itself that led to being snared into sexual sin. Put on your thinking cap. Consider each step of the seduction, record here what its significance is, and what our response should be to such situations that may try to entrap us into sexual sin. We’ll revisit this on Day Six, and personalize it:

Verse 13:
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Verse 14:
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Verse 15:
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Verses 16, 17:
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Verse 18:

Scripture Memory: Try to fill in the missing words in the blanks below, by memory if at all possible, and then review the passage several times today.
A _______________________ man _______________________ evil and _______________________ himself; the simple _______________________ and are _______________________. (Proverbs 27:12, NKJV)

Day Five: Pursuing Purity
Please carefully read Proverbs 7:21-27, 8:13-18 and answer the following questions.
1. The foolish young man we read of yesterday fell hook, line and sinker. What can be the dramatic result of giving in to sexual sin (Proverbs 7:21-23)?

Note: There was actually a death penalty imposed for adultery in the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 22:22), but there is a living death: “Whereas she who lives in pleasure and self-gratification [giving herself up to luxury and self-indulgence] is dead even while she [still] lives” (1 Timothy 5:6, AMP).

2. What further warnings are we given to avoid sexual sin at all costs (Proverbs 7:24-27)?

Her house is the road to the grave. Her bedroom is the den of death—verse 27, NLT

3. What will show the world if we truly do fear God or not (Proverbs...
4. Where will true power for purity come from (Proverbs 8:14-18)?

5. What final warnings do Proverbs 22:14 and 23:26-28 give us about avoiding sexual immorality? What attitude should each of us take on as our heart’s cry when we daily face the difficult sex-mad culture we live in (Genesis 39:9)?

I have made a solemn promise never to look with lust at a girl.—Job 31:1, TEV

**Scripture Memory:** Can you write out this week’s passage by memory here below? Give it a try, and keep reviewing the passage several times throughout the day.

Proverbs 27:12:

**Day Six**

**Wise Walking**

1. It is sad to realize that although Solomon himself knew and taught these principles, he failed to live them out in his older years, falling to the very things he had expounded against. Many of the very people who have fallen to sexual sin hypocritically allowed themselves to turn from the practical application of the truths they shared in theory. How will you determine to be different, to both know and to live the truths of God’s Word that will save you from sexual perversion, sexual practices, and “addictions?” Share some ideas here, and also discuss this with your group so you can help each other to live these truths.

But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself. Daniel 1:8
NKJV

2. Singles often feel that being married will be the solution to their sexual strivings and desires. That is not true. Whether we are single or married, we continue to fight the flesh. We must have a strategic plan for dealing with temptations toward sexual relations outside the bounds of marriage, or other activities that may desensitize us to our ability to stand against them.22 Getting God’s Word into our heart and mind is essential. The world strives to program our mind toward impurity, but we can “reprogram” it to respond all but automatically to such situations by disciplining them according to God’s Word. Our thoughts influence our will to choose the right or wrong actions.23 So reprogram your mind by filling it with God’s Word, and other things worthy of your mind, that will lead you away from sexual impurity.

How can you personally do this through:

Prayer:

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Memorizing God’s Word:

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Meditating on things worthy of thinking about (Philippians 4:8):

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Build a perimeter around your eyes (what you allow yourself take in through the eye-gate and other senses):

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For the single person—seeking your love, meaning, contentment, and full acceptance in Christ rather than in others:

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For the married person—seeking to honor and cherish your spouse, and guarding your marriage against all outside attacks:

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For the rest, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is worthy of reverence and is honorable and seemly, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely and lovable, whatever is kind and winsome and gracious, if there is any virtue and excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think on and weigh and take account of these things [fix your minds on them]. Philippians 4:8, AMP

3. Let's go over the seduction scene we read in Proverbs 7. To be victorious in the war against our flesh, we must know how the enemy operates, and many of his classic techniques are found right there. How can you personally stand against the following temptations toward sin? Discuss this with your group.

Verses 10, 11: A woman dressed inappropriately or acting in a sensual manner:

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Verse 13: Having physical contact or intimate conversation with or from another:

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Verse 14: Covering it with religiosity; “God will forgive us,” etc.:

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Verse 15: Using flattery to build up our pride and lower our resistance:

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Verses 16, 17: Making the sin sound pleasurable rather than the disgrace it really is in multiple ways:

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Verse 18: Calling it love when it has nothing to do with love, just hormonal responses:

Verse 19, 20: Temptation to not take seriously the marriage vows made between you, your spouse, and God Himself:

4. Please take the time to record anything else that you learned this week through our study that especially ministered to your heart. We need accountability with each other as men, especially in dealing with this struggle, so please share what you’ve learned. Commit it to the Lord in prayer as a group.

Scripture Memory: Hopefully you now can write out this week’s passage completely by memory. Do so now, and keep on reviewing it do you will be ready to share it with others in your group time.

Proverbs 27:12:

3 Arterburn and Stoeker, Every Man’s Battle, p. 107.
5 Ibid., p. 74.
6 Except where noted, subsequent word definitions are based on Spiros Zodhiates (Ed.), *The Complete Word Study Old Testament* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, Inc., 1994), and can be found in order on pp. 2312, 2326, 2371, 2338.
12 Ross, “Proverbs,” p. 928.
16 Ibid., p. 932.
22 Hughes, *Disciplines of a Godly Man*, p. 23.

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