

The Heights Baptist Church * Sermon Series: N/A

*** Topic: Self Control * Proverbs 6:20-35 * 6/14/26 ***

MAIN POINT

As followers of Christ who have been justified by grace alone, we remain secure in our standing before God, even when we stumble into sin. However, this does not mean that our actions are without consequence. Scripture calls us to live in obedience to God's commands, recognizing that our ability to do so is not found in our own strength, but through His power.

INTRODUCTION

What would you say are some of the greatest threats to marriage and family in America today?

God's institutions of marriage and family are integral to the well-being of society. Adultery is one of the threats against these institutions. Adultery, like murder, tends to start with an attitude of the heart (Matt. 5:21, 22, and 28), and the only remedy comes from God, through His grace, and His Holy Spirit.

UNDERSTANDING

Note to study leader: We are starting a two-week break in the sermon series on doctrine at The Heights. This week's Lifegroup lesson is a stand-alone lesson from the book of Proverbs related to resisting temptation. Today's lesson could be titled, "Self-Control". The focus will be on sexual immorality, but the principles that will be covered can be applied to any sinful habit that might be plaguing us.

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ PROVERBS 5:15-23

What is the message of this passage about sexual purity?

Why was the analogy of drawing water from your own well powerful in that society? What would be a comparable metaphor for sexual purity today?

We take a ready and healthy source of water for granted in America today. But water was far more precious to the people who first read the Book of Proverbs. People often provided water for their families by digging wells or devising cisterns to catch and hold rainwater. The metaphor of drinking water from one's own cistern was especially appropriate for a husband's satisfying his sexual thirst with his wife.

What boundaries has God set for us regarding sexual purity, and why?

This world throws temptation at us, and it tells us we are entitled to happiness. These temptations and philosophies tend to pull us away from Christ and His perfect plan for our lives. We need to live within the boundaries God has laid out. They are not designed to limit us, but to benefit us. They protect us from damaging attitudes and actions that war against our souls (1 Peter 2:11), ruin our lives (Proverbs 6:26-27), and hurt those who are most important to us.

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ 1 CORINTHIANS 7:1-5

What does God command us to do as Christians

How will this attitude in marriage help minimize the temptation our spouses may be facing?

Almost all couples have differing needs for sex in marriage. We need to realize God commands us to help protect our spouses from temptation in this area.

What distractions can undermine finding fulfillment in our spouses?

Once we have slipped into trying to find sexual fulfillment outside of our spouses, we may need to re-train ourselves to “drink water only from our own cisterns” (Proverbs 5:15).

Note to study leader: The Heights Church offers a “Faith at Home” activity guide which can be found in the racks near the Welcome desk. These have activities for the whole family, with one specifically for married couples.

What lessons can single people take away from this proverb?

We ultimately need to find fulfillment in God alone. Remain in Jesus the true vine (John 15) and remind ourselves that we died to sin. We must not live in it any longer.

Once Solomon taught his son these positive lessons about faithfulness to our spouses, he went on in chapter 6 to discuss the consequences of allowing adultery to invade our lives.

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ PROVERBS 6:20-35

Looking at verses 20-23, how seriously did Solomon want his son to take what he was about to say, and what benefits would come from heeding these instructions?

This is to be taken very seriously. Not just sort of listen but bind them on your heart (internalize these ideas deeply within our being), and fasten them around your neck (keep consciously aware of these teachings). When you do this, these teachings will guide us by day and watch over us by night. They will speak to us and illuminate the correct paths we are to take in life.

What do verses 25-29 tell us about the consequences of falling into this sin?

“Sin always has a price tag we didn’t see, and that we can’t pay.” Pastor Randy Hahn, The Heights Baptist Church, April 27th, 2025

How can being aware of the cost help us become proactive in protecting our marriages from being torn apart by lust and the actions that follow?

In his warning to his son, Solomon gave some wise advice about not letting lust for another woman take root in his heart. The price to be paid will be the man’s very life. Solomon used visual images to demonstrate the consequence of lust—being burned by fire and stealing food. Lust has consequences.

What are some of the takeaways from this Proverb for those of us who are single?

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ MATTHEW 5:27-30

What do these verses teach us is the root of sexual sin?

Jesus intensified the Seventh Commandment by looking at the heart of the command and exhorting His listeners not to lust. The act of lusting that Jesus is talking about is not the inadvertent, accidental glance. Rather, it is the purposeful, engaged looking. The heart that commits physical adultery is the same heart that looks lustfully at others.

How did Jesus emphasize His point in verses 29-30?

Jesus uses hyperbole to emphasize the point by telling them to put out the right eye or cut off the right hand if it leads to sin.

Even though self-mutilation and amputation are not effective ways to overcome sin since sin arises from a corrupt heart rather than flesh and bone (Colossians 2:23), Jesus is conveying a vital requirement to flee from temptation and separate from sin. Disciples should put off their old nature and put on our new natures in Christ (Colossians 3:5-14).

“What we stare at will determine what we are living for.” Pastor Randy Hahn, The Heights Baptist Church Sermon Notes for Aug. 17th, 2025

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ PROVERBS 25:28

How does the picture of “a city broken into and left without walls” relate to a person who lacks self-control? What are some practical ways we can build walls that give us self-control where we would otherwise indulge in sinful behavior?

Proverbs 25:28 doesn’t mince words. If you lack self-control, you’re like a city that has been broken into and left without walls. When we lack self-control and give into temptation, we invite destruction.

STRATEGY FOR DEALING WITH TEMPTATION

ASK VOLUNTEERS TO READ JOHN 15:4-5 AND GALATIANS 5:22-23

Why is it significant that “the fruit of the Spirit”—which includes self-control—isn’t called “the fruit of fleshly efforts”?

It is God’s Spirit, and not fleshly effort, who ultimately causes this fruit to develop in our life.

***Note to study leader:** The internet has brought the adulteress from Proverbs 6 close to all of us. One way to help us with accountability is through a tool such as “Covenant Eyes”. This app can be installed on our electronic devices, and it provides our internet search history to a trusted accountability partner.*

APPLICATION

Martin Luther said of sexual temptation, “We can’t do anything about the birds flying over our head, but we can prevent them building a nest in our hair.” How does this relate to our study of lust today, and how can we apply this to our life today?

Is there anything I need to change in my life in order to better attach myself to Christ so that His Spirit can better develop the fruit of self-control in my life?

***Note to study leader:** The following question incorporates the “LIFE” acronym (from our “Starting Point” classes) into the lesson. A summary of this acronym is included in the first portion of the Commentary section of this lesson. Include a brief description of “LIFE” as part of this application. Today’s application is based on the “F” in the “LIFE” acronym.*

Faithful follower: I am sensitive to the moving of the Holy Spirit in regular times of prayer, worship, and Bible study.

PRAYER

Ask God to help us be vigilant and aware of the temptation and lusts of the world. Pray that God would keep us away from temptation and that we would rely on the power of the Spirit to fight against lust. Pray for God’s grace to help those in our church, our lifegroup, and our family who are struggling with lust—that we would find freedom in Christ. Ask God to renew in us clean, willing, and steadfast hearts that say “No” to temptation and “Yes” to Jesus Christ.

COMMENTARY

The LIFE Acronym

This acronym is part of our “Starting Point” training programs. The letters in LIFE stand for the following:

Loving neighbor: I am motivated to show God’s love and compassion to others where I live, work, and play.

Intentional friend: I am purposefully cultivating relationships within my church family.

Faithful follower: I am sensitive to the moving of the Holy Spirit in regular times of prayer, worship, and Bible study.

Engaged disciple-maker: I am regularly looking to invest in others to help them take their next step in following Jesus.

Proverbs 5:15-20

Verse 15 means that a man should have sexual relations only with his wife. The man should not take his love and desire to anyone else by going out into the street. The analogy implies that husband and wife fill and refresh each other, like a flowing stream and a peaceful well.

Verse 17 means that a man should never be willing to share a woman with another man. This naturally excludes visiting prostitutes and immoral women, since they belong to many men.

The blessing in v. 18 might appear to be a promise of many children, but the emphasis is on sexual pleasure in marriage (v. 19). The command to “take pleasure in your wife” implies that a man should never have sexual relations with another woman, and that sex in marriage should be joyful and fulfilling.

Verse 19 brings out both the tender affection and the exuberant pleasure of love. She is a loving doe, and he will be drunken with satisfaction in the pleasure she gives. Verse 20 is linked chiasmatically to v. 19. The man should not stagger from the affection of another woman, nor should he embrace her “bosom.”

Proverbs 6:20-35

This exhortation begins with an appeal to the son to heed his father’s words (vv. 20-24). The command to bind the teachings to the neck means that they are vital to the young man’s survival.

The woman is identified as the wife of another man. This does not mean that in every case where Proverbs discusses the immoral woman it means an adulterous wife. This woman is alluring and attractive to the young man (v. 25), but she is also deadly.

The man’s life, which the wayward woman hunts, is called “precious” (i.e., valuable) in contrast to meager payment the prostitute demands. This obviously is not meant to endorse going to a prostitute as opposed to having an affair with another man’s wife but to show the complete folly of getting involved with another man’s wife. The adulteress is described as stealing away his very life. The price also indicates the degradation of this act to both man and woman; it reduces the intimacy of sex in the marriage relationship to a cheap, animal-like gratification of a physical desire

The outraged husband will bring all his fury down upon the adulterer, who will be at least humiliated and beaten if not murdered (implied in v. 35). Even if the adulterer is wealthy, that will do him no good. The comparison to the thief in vv. 30-31 is meant to bring home the point that there can be no escape for the adulterer once he is finally found out. People have compassion for a thief who steals out of hunger, but even so they require that he repay his victim seven times over. How much more will society bring down a harsh verdict on an adulterer, a man for whom they feel only contempt?