

## ***GOD'S WISDOM FOR LIFE, PART 9: "THE WAY OF TEMPTATION"***

### **Proverbs 6:20-7:27**

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### **Personal Introduction**

Hi everyone. If you don't know me, I'm Jeff - one of the pastors at HMCC of Jakarta. And it's my privilege to be preaching the Word of God for us today.

### **Sermon Series Introduction**

Today, we'll be continuing our sermon series called "God's Wisdom for Life" - where we're going through the book of Proverbs together.

We'll be continuing with part 9, titled "The Way of Temptation."

Before we begin, let me pray for us.

### **Sermon Introduction**

A couple of years ago in 2022, I was invited by some church members to go hiking at Situ Gunung in Sukabumi. There were about 10 of us from our church who went, and when we got there, I realized that this is gonna be no joke. Imagine the scene... When we got there, it was raining... and all I could see were trees and mountains; we're literally in the middle of a forest. I'm thinking, "There's no turning back now..." We all put on our backpacks, wore our ponchos, and then hiked away.

The good thing is... we're not alone. The ten of us had a guide who we could follow. Our guide has gone through this trail countless times - he knows exactly where he's going... He knows where the end destination is; he knows the path to get there. And so all that we have to do was to just follow him. And try to stay alive.

Imagine if we didn't have a guide or we lost sight of our guide along the way (then there's a possibility that we could stray away from the right path... get lost, get hurt, and maybe even die). That sounds like an exaggeration, but there's been stories of those things happening...

And it's the same as we live our lives, the hard reality is that sometimes we can also lose our ways... Multiple times in our lives, we may feel lost & unsure if we're even walking on the right path.

King Solomon knows that his son may also go through something like this in the future. And so in our passage today, we'll see Solomon teaching his son about God's Word that would guide him to the way of life, and sin's temptation that would misguide him to the way of death...

## **Scripture Introduction**

If you have your Bibles with you, please turn to Proverbs 6:20-7:27.

For context... last week, we saw that - in the previous passage - Solomon taught his son to be mindful and thoughtful as he lives his life. He's not to be rash or reckless with the way he lives.

Solomon now continues teaching his son - this time, he's to consider whether to follow God's Word that leads to life, or to temptation's seductive words that lead to death.

With that in mind, please follow along, as I read for us Proverbs 6:20-7:27...

## **Scripture Reading**

Proverbs 6:20 - 7:27 (ESV)

- <sup>6:20</sup> My son, keep your father's commandment,  
and forsake not your mother's teaching.
- <sup>21</sup> Bind them on your heart always;  
tie them around your neck.
- <sup>22</sup> When you walk, they will lead you;  
when you lie down, they will watch over you;  
and when you awake, they will talk with you.
- <sup>23</sup> For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching a light,  
and the reproofs of discipline are the way of life,
- <sup>24</sup> to preserve you from the evil woman,  
from the smooth tongue of the adulteress.
- <sup>25</sup> Do not desire her beauty in your heart,  
and do not let her capture you with her eyelashes;
- <sup>26</sup> for the price of a prostitute is only a loaf of bread,  
but a married woman hunts down a precious life.
- <sup>27</sup> Can a man carry fire next to his chest  
and his clothes not be burned?
- <sup>28</sup> Or can one walk on hot coals  
and his feet not be scorched?
- <sup>29</sup> So is he who goes in to his neighbor's wife;  
none who touches her will go unpunished.
- <sup>30</sup> People do not despise a thief if he steals  
to satisfy his appetite when he is hungry,
- <sup>31</sup> but if he is caught, he will pay sevenfold;  
he will give all the goods of his house.
- <sup>32</sup> He who commits adultery lacks sense;

he who does it destroys himself.  
<sup>33</sup> He will get wounds and dishonor,  
and his disgrace will not be wiped away.  
<sup>34</sup> For jealousy makes a man furious,  
and he will not spare when he takes revenge.  
<sup>35</sup> He will accept no compensation;  
he will refuse though you multiply gifts.

<sup>7:1</sup> My son, keep my words  
and treasure up my commandments with you;  
<sup>2</sup> keep my commandments and live;  
keep my teaching as the apple of your eye;  
<sup>3</sup> bind them on your fingers;  
write them on the tablet of your heart.  
<sup>4</sup> Say to wisdom, "You are my sister,"  
and call insight your intimate friend,  
<sup>5</sup> to keep you from the forbidden woman,  
from the adulteress with her smooth words.

<sup>6</sup> For at the window of my house  
I have looked out through my lattice,  
<sup>7</sup> and I have seen among the simple,  
I have perceived among the youths,  
a young man lacking sense,  
<sup>8</sup> passing along the street near her corner,  
taking the road to her house  
<sup>9</sup> in the twilight, in the evening,  
at the time of night and darkness.

<sup>10</sup> And behold, the woman meets him,  
dressed as a prostitute, wily of heart.  
<sup>11</sup> She is loud and wayward;  
her feet do not stay at home;  
<sup>12</sup> now in the street, now in the market,  
and at every corner she lies in wait.  
<sup>13</sup> She seizes him and kisses him,  
and with bold face she says to him,  
<sup>14</sup> "I had to offer sacrifices,  
and today I have paid my vows;  
<sup>15</sup> so now I have come out to meet you,  
to seek you eagerly, and I have found you.  
<sup>16</sup> I have spread my couch with coverings,  
colored linens from Egyptian linen;

- <sup>17</sup> I have perfumed my bed with myrrh,  
aloes, and cinnamon.
- <sup>18</sup> Come, let us take our fill of love till morning;  
let us delight ourselves with love.
- <sup>19</sup> For my husband is not at home;  
he has gone on a long journey;
- <sup>20</sup> he took a bag of money with him;  
at full moon he will come home.”
- <sup>21</sup> With much seductive speech she persuades him;  
with her smooth talk she compels him.
- <sup>22</sup> All at once he follows her,  
as an ox goes to the slaughter,  
or as a stag is caught fast
- <sup>23</sup> till an arrow pierces its liver;  
as a bird rushes into a snare;  
he does not know that it will cost him his life.
- <sup>24</sup> And now, O sons, listen to me,  
and be attentive to the words of my mouth.
- <sup>25</sup> Let not your heart turn aside to her ways;  
do not stray into her paths,
- <sup>26</sup> for many a victim has she laid low,  
and all her slain are a mighty throng.
- <sup>27</sup> Her house is the way to Sheol,  
going down to the chambers of death.

This is God's Word.

## **The One Thing**

***Let's follow God's Word that leads to life,  
not temptation's seductive words that lead to death.***

## **Overview**

### **Comparison #1**

- I. God's Word benefits your life (6:20-23)
- II. Temptation can cost your life (6:24-35)

### **Comparison #2**

- III. Temptation promises life, but leads to death (7:6-27)
- IV. God's Word promises life, and leads to life (7:1-5)

## **COMPARISON #1**

### **I. God's Word benefits your life (6:20-23)**

Look at verses 20-21 - The father lovingly pleads with his son: "Son, keep your father's commandment and do not forsake your mother's teaching."

- The word "teaching" that Solomon is using there... In the original Hebrew is the word "Torah" (which refers to the Laws of God).
- So what Solomon is really saying here is for his son to keep God's commandments and laws that his parents have taught him.
  - He's saying... don't throw it away! Keep it close with you! Bind them on your heart & tie them around your neck!
  - Basically: Take God's Word with you at all times wherever you go!

Look at verse 22 - The father tells his son the benefits that this would have in his life.

- There's a reason why you'd want to keep God's Word close to you (because if it doesn't do anything and has no benefits, then why would you want to keep it? There's no point, right?)
- But he's saying... there's real benefits for you if you keep God's Word close to your heart and with you at all times.
  - The benefit is that as you live your life, God's Word will help you... (I think we're all in need of some help as we experience life's many turns and ups and downs and uncertainties).

The father mentions 3 specific ways that God's Word will help you:

1. First, when you walk (as you live your life), God's Word will lead you & guide you (so you'll remain on the right path)
2. Second, when you rest or lie down - when you sleep - God's Word will watch over you (giving you peace)
3. Third, when you're awake, God's Word will talk to you (giving you counsel, helping you as you make hundreds of decisions per day)

We see here that the Word of God is for you and is beneficial for your life... This is why you'd want to keep God's Word close with you at all times.

Look at verse 23 - God's commandments & teachings will be like a lamp that will light up your path (helping you see what was once dark, so you can determine what's right & wrong; what's wise & foolish).

- It helps you to live well in God's world, and will lead you to the way of life.

Solomon is aware that there's really 2 possible ways - 2 paths - that his son can take... the way of life... or the way to death...

- He's helping his son see here that in order to know the way of life ... you need a good guide... And there's no better guide than the Word of God Himself.

When we think of a good guide... someone you'd trust to lead you as you live your life, or as you hike a mountain...

- A good guide knows the right destination (where you're going)... And a good guide knows the right way to get you to that destination. Makes sense, right?
  - (If you don't even know the end destination and don't know where you're leading your group to, then you're not a good guide).
  - (If you know the end destination but then not how to get there, then you're also not a good guide).
    - You wouldn't want to follow that guide.
- A good guide knows the right destination, and the right way to get there.

Solomon is saying here to his son... let God be your guide in your life.

- God knows the way that'd lead you to eternal life - Make sure he's the one you're following...
- Hold on to His Word and let His commandments and laws guide you as you make daily decisions. Do what's in accordance to His will, and that would actually benefit you.

So let me ask us today, what's guiding your life? In other words, what are you following?

- Are you trusting and following a feeling that you have? Is that what's guiding you? A strong desire that's in your heart? A hunch that you have? Something that someone else says? Something that you saw on social media?
  - How confident are you that those things are leading you to the right way?
    - This is your life that we're talking about (it can literally be a matter of life or death), so you want to be as sure as possible about what's guiding you and what you're following, and where you're heading...

So out of all the things in the world that you can go to for guidance... Why not go to God's Word? Why not go to the words of the God of the universe who created the Heavens and the Earth and all of life? Why not reflect on what the Bible means for your life, praying that it would light up the darkest parts of your life and your hearts?

- Why not allow it to help you to see what's right and wrong, and what's wise and foolish; helping you to make wise decisions each day?

Let's take a moment to reflect real quick - think of the decisions that you've made this past week (both big and small)... when you made those decisions, did you think about what God's Word has to say about whatever it is that you're about to do? Or were you led by something else?

What would it mean for you to “tie God’s Word around your neck” so that you’ll always remember to think about what it has to say?

- Maybe it’s to put a physical Bible next to your bed or in your office, or to put a Bible verse as your phone’s wallpaper, or to put Bible verses on sticky notes and stick them on your mirror. It may sound silly, but whatever it is... do what you gotta do! It’s not foolish if whatever you’re doing is to help remind you of God’s Word each day. In fact, that’s wise.

This is so important, and so this is the first thing here that Solomon tells his son - keep God’s Word and hold on to it because it’ll guide you to the right way that leads to life.

And then Solomon is gonna transition here... And talks about the opposite thing. Now, he’s gonna talk to his son about a wrong way...

## **II. Temptation can cost your life (6:24-35)**

Look at verses 24-25 - The father gives a specific example here on one of the wrong ways that he can take...

He says, “Do not desire the beauty of an evil/immoral woman” (He’s not saying that all women are seductive, but he’s contextualizing here because he’s talking to his son. If he’s talking to his daughter, then he’d probably say, “Do not desire the beauty of an evil/immoral man).

What’s interesting here is that he’s not simply saying, “do not have sex outside of marriage” or “do not commit adultery.” What he’s actually saying here is one step beyond that... DON’T EVEN DESIRE IT IN YOUR HEART! Don’t be captured by her eyelashes...

- Because sexual temptation starts with visible beauty that we see with our eyes that then stir up some raw feelings and desires in the heart.
- And it’s the heart’s desires that can strongly influence what we do, and decide which path we take.

So remember what Solomon just said, let God’s Word be your guide. Now he’s saying, don’t just follow your heart’s raw desires! Don’t just follow its guidance. It can take you the wrong way!

In fact, if you go down this path, it’s gonna be a catastrophe...

Look at verse 26 - “The price of a prostitute is only a loaf of bread, but a married woman hunts down a precious life.”

- So a prostitute only costs a loaf of bread, but a married woman will cost you your life!
- Solomon is differentiating between sexual immorality and adultery here.
  - Sexual immorality can be between 2 individuals who are not yet married (that’s bad).
  - But adultery is if at least one person is married, and he/she is having sex with someone other than his/her spouse (that’s even worse).
- Solomon is not saying that sex with a prostitute is a small matter and excusable.
- What he’s saying is... as bad as sexual immorality with a prostitute is... adultery is far worse!
  - Why? Because its cost and consequences are more severe!

The rest of chapter 6, Solomon is gonna explain just how damaging adultery could be...

- [This is not the first time that Solomon has specifically warned his son against adultery. I think it's intentional... because sexual immorality is a very prevalent temptation that almost everyone in history has struggled with... then... and now... and even in the future... it'll continue to be the downfall of many men and women (that's why Solomon is teaching his son this... he knows that the next generation will continue to be tempted by the same thing)]

Look at verses 27-29 - He asks a couple of rhetorical questions:

- Can a man carry fire and not be burnt?
- Can a man walk on hot coals and not be scorched?
  - The answer should be obvious: NO! Of course not!
  - If you play with fire outside of its proper confinement (like a fireplace), it's a matter of time till you get burnt.
  - Same thing if you have sex outside of the proper confinement of marriage, it's a matter of time till you get hurt...

He's saying: The punishment for adultery is inevitable; even if nothing has happened yet... it's just a matter of time. And guess what? When it happens, you'll be burnt severely.

Look at verses 30-35 - Solomon warns his son just how serious the consequences of adultery is by comparing it to "stealing."

- His argument is basically: as bad as stealing is, adultery is even worse and more harmful.
  - Consider this...
- Because if a starving thief steals food, then notice 2 things:
  - (1) First, he's not gonna be despised by others (because others would somewhat understand why he had to steal);
  - and then (2) second, he can still make restitution and there can still be full restoration (even if he has to give or sell everything he has in order to pay 7 times what he stole). But at least there will be restoration, the victim may even be ok after getting paid 7x.
- But if you commit adultery, then you destroy yourself!
  - Why? 2 things:
    - (1) First, you'll be despised by others. You'll be disgraced and your disgrace won't be wiped away (people will remember what you did; your spouse and your kids will not forget what you did);
    - and then (2) second, you cannot make a full restitution... There's nothing that you can give - not even 100x - that can fix the damage that's done.
    - There's pain and hurt that can always be there...
      - Solomon says... Her husband's fury won't be able to be contained, and he'll seek revenge.

"Revenge" here may imply the husband taking the person's life (at the time, adultery is punishable by the death penalty. That's how serious it is).



- We may think this is overly harsh, but think of the harsh consequences of adultery... Adultery can utterly destroy and kill the relationships between spouses & their kids. It can literally ruin lives, and break up families.
- AND adultery is the breaking of a covenant between husband and wife before God.
- Those are serious matters, and that's why the punishment is also very serious.

This is why Solomon is warning his son, DON'T EVEN DESIRE IT IN YOUR HEART! It'll cost you your life - It'll cost you your honor, your reputation, your relationships.

This is so humbling. Because what this reveals about us... is that not everything that our hearts desire is good (so our heart is not always a good guide that we should always follow). Some of the things we desire are really bad, and they can be against God's commandments and teachings.

- We don't always want what we know we should want. Instead, we desire what we shouldn't want!
- And some of the things we're tempted to desire in our hearts (like adultery) is gonna cost our lives.

And you know what? It shouldn't be so surprising to us that if we do something that's not aligned with God's Word, and not aligned with our creator's commandments and laws... then it'd be damaging to our lives.

- It makes sense that if we use an equipment not in accordance with its creator's design and instructions, then we're gonna end up damaging it. Even if it seems ok for now, it's inevitable... it's just a matter of time till it gets damaged.
  - It's the same with our lives... If we don't follow our creator's guidance, we'll end up damaging our own lives (and even others' lives). It's just a matter of time...

But here's the thing... Maybe we already know that adultery is bad and not in accordance with God's commandments? And not just adultery, but we know that all kinds of sexual immorality (like premarital sex and pornography) is displeasing to God, and can be damaging. We know that... But then... even if we're Christians - and even if we know that it's sin - then why do we still get tempted to do these things even when we want to obey God?

Solomon is gonna answer this next. He knows that even though we may know intellectually that sin is bad... when the time comes, he knows that it may be hard to say "no" because it's going to be seductive...

## COMPARISON #2

### **III. Temptation promises life, but leads to death (7:6-27)**

Look at chp.7 verse 6 (we'll go back to versus 1-5 later) - Solomon shares a story with his son. Something to note: the situation he describes in this story can actually be based on what he's actually seen with his eyes, but maybe the conversations that are described here are hypothetical and based on his experience & wisdom... That's something to keep in mind...

So King Solomon shares a time when he looked through the window from his house (which would oversee the entire city). And from his time people-watching, he's seen many naive young men who lack common sense doing reckless things.

He describes one particular instance, when... at night, he sees a young man going near an adulteress' house - already, this should be a yellow flag for us (Notice how the young man in this story seems to wait for the cover of night, which implies that he knows that what he's doing is wrong and that's why he doesn't want to be seen. This also implies that he's not accidentally exploring this area either, but perhaps he was hoping or even expecting to see a glimpse of the adulteress).

Again, Solomon is contextualizing to his son (that's why it's a woman who's adulterous). It's to help him relate to how appealing this temptation can be...

Look at verses 10-13 - It seems like the adulteress also knows that she'll be seen. That's why she dressed seductively like a prostitute. She wants to be noticed. And her heart is described here as being wily (or clever and deceitful) - So she knows exactly what she's doing here; she's trying to lure and seduce one of these young men. And so as one passes by her, she grabs him and kisses him [Though I imagine that there wouldn't be much of a fight from the young man]

Then she tempts this young man with her smooth, flattering words... Pay attention here to how attractive it may be for us to sin...

1. The adulteress says, "I had to offer sacrifices, and today I have paid my vows."
  - a. (The "Sacrifices" she's referring to are the "peace offerings" that's made at the temple). She's basically saying, "Oh I just came from the temple" (or nowadays it would be like, "Hey, I just came from church!")
  - b. Seems like she's trying to get the young man to lower his defenses... to see her in a good light so that he'd listen to her.
2. Then she says, "So now I have come out to meet you, to seek you eagerly, and I have found you."
  - a. She's deceiving him. Basically saying, "Hey I've been looking for you."
  - b. Trying to make him feel special and desired.
3. Then she says, "I have spread my couch with coverings, colored linens from Egyptian linen (so look at what I prepared just for you... imagine how beautiful it is; imagine how comfortable it'll be for you to lay there on these fine linens). And I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon (with these nice aroma... imagine how pleasing it'll be for your senses). So come, let us take our fill of love till morning; let us delight ourselves with love.
  - a. But don't be mistaken, this is not love that's being offered, but lust disguised as love. (What's being offered is not true love but just sex).
  - b. But maybe that's exactly what the young man also desires... he's not in love but in lust (just having a strong sexual desire), and here is an opportunity to immediately gain physical pleasure without any commitment...

4. If that's not enough, notice how strategic and cunning this adulteress is with the last thing she says... "My husband is not at home; he has gone on a long journey; he took a bag of money with him; at full moon he will come home."
  - a. She says that her husband is not home right now, and will not return in a month.
  - b. Trying to tell him that it's ok - "no one is gonna find out about what we'll do and there'll be no consequences / no harm done." The only consequence is pleasure...

Look at verse 21 - Her seductive speech persuaded this young man (seduced him), and he follows her...

- In his mind, he may be thinking, "This is great! I'm gonna get what I want! I'm gonna live the good life!"

But look at how Solomon describes this young man's path... like:

- An ox going to the slaughter.
- A stag/deer that's caught & waiting till an arrow pierces its liver.
- A bird rushing into a trap.

These are very graphic images of an animal - not about to enjoy life - but heading towards its death!

- [Remember... Solomon already warned his son in the last passage - the consequences of adultery will be inevitable and will be great in magnitude, it'll ruin your life!]

<pause>

What a turn of events here for this young man...

- And to be honest, this "young man" can be anyone of us, right?
- We've all been tempted before (even if it's not adultery, perhaps it's pornography, or other kinds of sin that we know is wrong).

And here, the "adulteress" in this story is the personification of temptation itself.

- And here we see that when you're tempted to sin by the devil... he's not gonna make it obvious for you. He's wily (clever and deceitful).

The devil *knows* that you *know* sexual sin is bad.

- So the temptation that'll be in front of you... is not gonna be labeled and dressed as "sexual immorality" or "adultery" (that's not appealing or attractive!).
  - No, it's gonna be dressed seductively... disguised as "pleasure" and "satisfaction" and "intimacy" (it's gonna be dressed as the fulfillment of your heart's desires).
  - So that we'd forget about the seriousness of our sins... and so we take the bait.
- And after we take that bait, it's gonna draw us in closer with smooth, flattering words... helping us to justify our sins... "Hey, you're just letting off steam! You've had a stressful week! You deserve to enjoy yourself!"
- And as you continue to come closer... It's gonna make you think, "there's no harm in this. No one is gonna find out!"

Brothers and sisters, let's be aware of the enemy's evil schemes.. Because if we think about it... all temptation and sins actually works and functions in this way...

- All kinds of sin basically function in the way of sexual sin (all kinds of sin seduces you in... and makes a lot of sense to us in the moment - It promises to fulfill what is lacking in us that it can satisfy immediately)
  - Instant gratification of pleasure, intimacy, acceptance, and approval.

And that's how the enemy gets you to WILLINGLY follow him instead of following God.

But we see here that the devil is a horrible guide. Because he's intentionally working against you. So even though he knows the right path, he intentionally takes you down the wrong path (he's evil!), getting you to walk down the way to death willingly and happily, thinking that you're on the right path (when you're not).

- And the way to death that we're on is not merely physical death, but spiritual death...
- That's what Solomon is ultimately talking about here...
  - We're no longer talking only about worldly consequences, but eternal consequences.
  - Because the punishment of sinning and disobeying the commandments and laws of the eternal God... is eternal punishment in Hell!
    - Serious consequences for serious sins...

But sometimes, the hard thing for us to accept is this: At the end of the day, we can't just blame the temptation itself for our sins... because ultimately... it's on us... it's our own hearts that naturally have these sinful tendencies. That's why it's so easy for us to be drawn to temptation's false promises in the first place.

- So we can't just blame the devil each time we fall into sin.
  - Because it's our own hearts that naturally want things that are not in accordance with God's will (we don't naturally want God's glory, but our own glory - our own comfort and satisfaction).
- So ultimately, it's on us... It's our own choice to obey or disobey God.

Which means that the eternal punishment that we deserve is not merely the devil's fault, but our own fault... That's why we want to personally be mindful when we're tempted...

<pause>

So before we move to our last part, let's consider 3 questions to help us better understand our hearts and our temptations:

- (1) What have you been tempted to do recently?
  - (a) (Take some time tonight or this week to think about that)
- (2) What does your temptation reveal about what your heart desires?
  - (a) (what does the temptation reveal about what you're lacking that you feel like this temptation would fill?)
- (3) What are the steps leading you to sin?

- (a) (assess the enemy's scheme and how you're usually being led to sin. Try to think of the step-by-step process. Start with step #1 - how you'd usually get tempted in the first place, and try to track the steps that lead you to that final step of falling into sin. How can you address each step, especially the earliest step possible? For example, for this young man, step #1 may be to avoid going near the adulteress' house in the first palace).

As you reflect on these questions, I encourage you to talk through this with accountability partners of the same gender. It's gonna be so helpful to have others speak wisdom into your life. Because even if you're not sure of your own sinful tendencies, perhaps they know yours.

So let's work together as a spiritual family to help each other be wary of our temptations that promise life, but actually lead to death...

#### **IV. God's Word promises life, and leads to life (7:1-5)**

Let's go back now and look at chp.7 verses 1-5 - We see the father reminding his son to keep God's commandments.

But now we see that he actually *takes it up a notch* (from what he said in 6:20-24).

- Previously, he's said "don't forsake it" (don't throw away God's Word), but keep it!
- Now he takes it a step further... Don't just keep it, but treasure it!
  - Keep it as the apple of your eye (as the most important thing in your life).

Verse 3 - "Write them on the tablet of your heart" (Memorize God's Word! Live by God's Word! Be integrated with it so much that what your heart's desire becomes aligned with what God desires; that it literally becomes a part of your heart and you literally cannot go anywhere without it).

Verse 4 - "Say to wisdom, 'you are my sister,' and call insight your intimate friend" - Treasure it and love God's Word so much as if it's a dear family member and friend.

This is a different kind of relationship that's being described here, isn't it?

- It's not like the relationship between the adulteress and the young man, which leads to spiritual death.
- But look at verse 2 again - We see here that this kind of intimate relationship with God's Word leads to life.

Now, on this side of redemptive history (after Jesus' death and resurrection), we have a fuller understanding of what it means to call "God's Word" your "intimate friend."

Because what we now know is that the Word of God physically came into the world... Jesus Christ is the Word of God made flesh! God's Word literally lived among us!

And we know from the books in the New Testament... that those who followed Jesus, not only became his followers and disciples, but also became his close friends.

- Jesus is the best guide who taught and guided his friends to the way of eternal life.

So I have an important question to ask you - What's your relationship with God's Word? What's your relationship with Jesus Christ?

- For those who are still exploring Christianity, I invite you to take the initiative to get to know Jesus more personally.
  - What Christians want you to know about Jesus... is that Jesus Christ came into the world to die on the cross for the sins of His people.
    - So that those who've committed sexual immorality and adultery, and all kinds of sins - so sinners - still have the opportunity to avoid Hell and go to Heaven.
    - The Good News is that if you truly repent of your sins, and believe that Jesus Christ is your Lord and Savior, your sins are forgiven and you'll go to Heaven. That's the Gospel.
  - So I urge you to get a Bible if you don't have one (download the Bible App), and get to know Jesus personally.
- For those of us who say that we've already believed in Jesus, same question: what's your relationship with God's Word?
  - Is Jesus an acquaintance that you kinda know but not really?
    - Do you meet up here and there but not regularly?
  - Or is Jesus your friend? Even a close friend? Someone who you're excited to get to know deeper and more and more? Someone who you're meeting, and talking to, and listening to everyday.
    - Brothers and sisters, let's treasure Jesus and aim to know him more and more by spending time with him regularly throughout the week (and not only on Sundays).

As we do that, let's pray that God would increase the love that we have for Him more and more.

- And really, this is the best way to fight temptation.
- Yes, it's good to avoid temptation.
- But the best way to fight temptation... The best way for us to address these lesser loves and desires that's in our hearts is with an even greater love and desire for Jesus!

So that when we're tempted, we remember Jesus and what he's done, and we say "no" to temptation and "yes" to Jesus, the living Word of God.

- And really, that's a great mindset to have as we live our lives - Let's pray, "God, please help me to say 'no' to sin, and to say 'yes' to you."

## **Conclusion**

To conclude, let me ask the question that was asked in the beginning...

- What's guiding your life? What are you following?
  - Are you trusting and following a feeling? A hunch? Your heart's desire?
  - If so, how may the enemy be exploiting those things to get you farther and farther away from God?

I pray that what's guiding our lives... is the Word of God. And that who we follow... is Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

## **The One Thing**

***Let's follow God's Word that leads to life,  
not temptation's seductive words that lead to death.***

Let's pray.