

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Proverbs: Topical Applications of Proverbs
II. Motivational Commands, Proverbs 1:8-9:18
A. Things To Avoid
3. Avoiding Sexual Immorality
(Proverbs 5:1-23; 6:20-35; 7:1-27; 9:13-18)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Sexual immorality often lurks below the surface in our mainstream culture, but when it emerges, it can do so with a vengeance, harming a lot of people:

(1) Annie Lane's "Dear Annie" column published a letter to her readers on February 14th that read: "Dear Readers, Valentine's Day has a funny way of making people take attendance of who remembered the holiday, who didn't, who has plans, who pretends they do, who smiles at the grocery store display of roses and who speeds past it like it might ask a personal question . . . If today feels tender, lonely, complicated or just plain annoying, you are not alone. Love is not a neat holiday . . ." (Republican-American, February 14, 2026, p. B12)

Such discontent over "love" issues is foreboding because it can lead to destructive sexual immorality: a "Dear Annie" letter from "Watching a Trainwreck" reported, "My friend of 20 years confessed to having a crush on her executive coach, which then developed into a flirtation, which then became a sexting affair. I have always known she is unhappy in her marriage, but I cannot condone cheating and have told her so . . . She swings between crying about feeling worthless after her affair and snickering about her 'bad girl' behavior . . . I . . . feel she's destroying her life, but I can't force anyone to change, so what should I do?" (op. cit., February 19, 2026, p. B12)

(2) This same problem led to the ruin of Britain's former Prince Andrew: "Virginia Giuffre" alleged she was "trafficked to Britain" by disgraced financier Jeffrey Epstein "to have sex with Andrew in 2001, when she was just 17. Giuffre died by suicide last year," and King Charles III has stripped Andrew of his royal title to where he is now known as "Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor." (Danica Kirka, Associated Press, "Former Prince Andrew arrested," op. cit., February 20, 2026, p. A9) "'This is the most spectacular fall from grace for a member of the royal family in modern times,' said Craig Prescott, a royal expert at Royal Holloway, University of London." (Ibid.)

Incredibly, King Charles III's adulterous affair with now Queen Camilla when he was Prince Charles and was still wed to Princess Diana was public knowledge, but he was crown prince and Camilla was not a minor like Virginia Giuffre was when she was trafficked to Prince Andrew, so Prince Charles escaped the shameful fall of his brother!

(3) Sexual immorality greatly affects even evangelical Christians: According to a Pew Research poll, 36% of evangelical Christians claim that casual sex between consenting adults is sometimes or always acceptable. (Jeff Diamant, "Half of U. S. Christians say casual sex between consenting adults is sometimes or always acceptable," August 31, 2020; pewresearch.org) However, sexual immorality among young evangelicals is far more intense. As reported in Forbes, "A study by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy found that . . . '80 percent of unmarried evangelical young adults (18 to 29) said they have had sex . . .'" (Eric Cain, "Study Finds Majority of Young Evangelicals Have Premarital Sex," October 1, 2011; forbes.com)

Need: So we ask, "What does Scripture say about sexual immorality, why, and how should we handle it?"

- I. Since Proverbs 1:8-9:18 provides motivational commands to get readers to align with God's "wisdom," His *hokmah*, or fixed eternal moral order for success and blessing, Proverbs 5:1-23; 6:20-35; 7:1-27 and 9:13-18 reveal what we need to know and do about sexual immorality as it is contrary to God's *hokmah*.
- II. These passages describe sexually immoral people so that we can discern who they are (as follows):
 - A. Sexually immoral people target lonely, naïve young people to seduce them to sin, Proverbs 7:6-19; 9:16.
 - B. Such people use their physical attractiveness to seduce their victims, Proverbs 6:25a; 7:10.
 - C. Sexually immoral people can also use their eyes to allure others to commit immorality, Proverbs 6:25b.
 - D. Sucky people use sweet, smooth, sensual, flattering, alluring and reassuring speech to seduce their victims, Proverbs 5:3; 6:24; 7:5, 14-18, 21; 9:17; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Proverbs 7:13-21.
 - E. Such people can switch to loud, defiant and aggressive conduct to seduce others, Prov. 7:12-13; 9:13a, 14-15.
 - F. Sexually immoral people hypocritically misuse Scripture out of disrespect for God to seduce their victims to commit immorality with them: In Proverbs 7:14-18, the adulteress urged her victim to rush into the capital sin of adultery (cf. Leviticus 20:10) with her by alluding to Leviticus 7:12-17 that required her to eat her peace offering meats with him as her guest before Scripture required her to burn them up. (Ibid., fn. to Prov. 7:14)

- G. They express disrespect of their spouses to their victims in order to seduce their victims, Proverbs 7:19-20.
 - H. Sexually immoral people end up bitter, harmful in speech and damaging to themselves and others, Prov. 5:4-5.
- III. These passages also describe the negative effects that sexually immoral people have on their victims:**
- A. Sexually immoral people cause their victims to face intense anger from the cheated spouse, Proverbs 6:27-35.
 - B. Such immoral people cause their victims to end up in poverty, Proverbs 5:9-10; 6:26.
 - C. Sexually immoral people cause their victims to suffer physical, emotional and social decline, Prov. 5:11-14.
 - D. They incite their victims to make quick decisions to sin, but with bad results, Proverbs 7:22-23, 26-27; 9:18.
- IV. These passages also teach us how to avoid being victimized by sexually immoral people and their sins:**
- A. Heeding godly parents and Scripture guards us from sexually immoral people, Proverbs 5:1-2; 6:23; 7:1-5.
 - B. When we discern the ungodly paths of sexually immoral people, we must avoid their paths in life, Prov. 5:7-8.
 - C. We should meet our needs for sexual fulfillment in a monogamous, heterosexual, permanent marital union to resist the influence of immoral people and to resist committing sexual immorality, Proverbs 5:16-20.
 - D. Recalling our accountability to God keeps us from sexually immoral people and sexual sins, Proverbs 5:21.
 - E. Recalling the bad effects of getting involved with sexually immoral people and sexual immorality keeps us from interacting with such people and from committing sexual immorality, Proverbs 5:22-23.

Lesson: *Negatively, sexual immorality is very destructive for those who commit it, and immoral people can be identified as those who use various seductive actions in violation of Scriptural boundaries to get others to sin with them. Positively, God directs that we meet our needs for sexual fulfillment in a monogamous, heterosexual, permanent marital union in accord with the advice of godly parents and God's Word. Recalling our accountability to God and the harmful effects of sexual immorality also motivate us to remain upright by the Holy Spirit's power.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. (2) May we heed Proverbs 5:1-23; 6:20-35; 7:1-27 and 9:13-18 by relying on the power of the Holy Spirit to avoid people who are sexually immoral and sexual immorality itself.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message and/or provide additional guidance . . .)

Even informed people in the secular realm realize that fulfillment is not found by indulging in sexual immorality. As an example, Annie Lane of the "Dear Annie" column last Valentine's Day (Lane, loc. cit.) used her training and extensive experience of fielding questions from many people over the years about finding happiness and love in relationships to advise her readers to view love differently than how it is often defined. She wrote, "We have all been taught in one way or another to treat love like a prize. Find it, secure it, prove it, post it, and if you do not have it, you must be behind. But love is not a status symbol . . . It is the daily decision to be kind when you could be sharp, to be honest when it would be easier to disappear and to be present when distraction is calling your name . . . Most of the love that steadies us is ordinary. It is the friend who texts, 'You crossed my mind,' and means it. It is the partner who notices you are running low and takes something off your plate without being asked . . . It is the co-worker who says, 'I've got this,' on the day you can't do it. It is the way someone stays when it would be easier to drift. If you want to make Valentine's Day brighter, start by widening your definition of love. Romance is lovely, but it is not the only measure. Love also looks like friendship, loyalty, forgiveness, compassion, respect and the courage to show up . . . Love does not always arrive with trumpets. Sometimes it arrives with someone who tries, who learns, who apologizes and who stays. Sometimes it arrives after you decide to treat yourself more gently. Sometimes it arrives in a hard season, not as a solution but as a companion."

That sounds similar to what the Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a NIV (as follows): "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails." Such love is the product of relying on the Holy Spirit for behavior control like Paul urged us to do in Galatians 5:16. That reliance produces "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control" according to Galatians 5:22-23 NIV.

Avoiding immorality and the influence of immoral people and replacing that avoidance with godly love as defined by the Lord is the result of a believer's reliance on the Holy Spirit. As we live by the power of the Holy Spirit, God will guide us into righteous living regarding moral matters, producing true happiness and blessing.

May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life. May we heed the instruction of the book of Proverbs on sexual issues by relying on the power of the Holy Spirit to avoid sin with God's blessing.