

SEDUCED

By Sin



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From ancient art to modern movies, the seduction of a man by a beautiful woman has typified the common understanding of sin's deceptive and alluring nature. Everyone has read a book or seen a movie where a woman entices a man with her beauty and ends up controlling him. With words like honey, a seductive woman could bring even the strongest male warrior to his knees.

Indeed, this theme started at the beginning of mankind when Eve seduced Adam into eating the forbidden fruit. The serpent deceived Eve while Eve enticed Adam. From the exchange described in the Bible, it does not appear that Eve had to work real hard to convince Adam to disobey the command of God. With just one bite, Adam and Eve committed sin introducing the adulterous nature of sin into the bloodline of all men. At its core, sin is spiritual adultery, trading God's holy standard for a carnal lifestyle marked by fornication with the gods of men.

Am I being too harsh? Let's consider what God has to say on the subject.

Proverbs Warn of the Adulterous Woman

King Solomon knew what he was talking about when he cautioned about being tempted by women. Solomon had 700 wives and 300 concubines; he experienced the pain caused by ungodly relationships. Just like his father (King David), women were his weakness and led to his downfall.

It is fitting that Solomon wrote about wisdom versus sin in the context of an adulterous woman. Consider the following Scripture passage:

Proverbs 6:20-27, 32

²⁰ My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: ²¹ Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. ²² When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee. ²³ For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life: ²⁴ To keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman. ²⁵ Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids. ²⁶ For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life. ²⁷ Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? ³² But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul.

Solomon encouraged his son to seek wisdom and godly discipline while he warned about the enticements of sin. As a woman whispers seductive words, flattering a man to his death, so does sin call to those with carnal appetites. Solomon cautioned his son about desiring sin in his heart, opening a

door for the devil to frolic and play. To the enemy, men are nothing more than a meal. The souls of men are consumed to feed the hatred of the prince of darkness. In the end, the man who sleeps with the adulterous falls prey to a trap, and one night of pleasure will cost him his life.

Solomon continues the theme in the next chapter. Let's delve even deeper into the tactics of the enemy.

Proverbs 7:6-27

⁶ For at the window of my house I looked through my casement,
⁷ And beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding, ⁸ Passing through the street near her corner; and he went the way to her house,
⁹ In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night:
¹⁰ And, behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart. ¹¹ (She is loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house: ¹² Now is she without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner.) ¹³ So she caught him, and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him, ¹⁴ I have peace offerings with me; this day have I paid my vows. ¹⁵ Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee. ¹⁶ I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt. ¹⁷ I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. ¹⁸ Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves. ¹⁹ For the goodman is not at home, he is gone a long journey: ²⁰ He hath taken a bag of money with him, and will come home at the day appointed. ²¹ With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him. ²² He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; ²³ Till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life. ²⁴ Hearken unto me now therefore, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth. ²⁵ Let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths. ²⁶ For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her. ²⁷ Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

This simple story reveals the strategy of the devil as he seeks to entice men. In the story, a young man goes somewhere he should not have been at the wrong time of day. After sunset, he walked by the door of a wicked woman. The Bible does not make it clear if he knew the adulteress or purposefully walked to her house. It does not matter if he was unsuspecting or not, because the result was the same. The adulterous

woman was lonely. She lurked around every corner calling out to whomever would listen.

The adulteress uses five major tactics to tempt the young man.

1.) SHE KISSES HIM

The adulterous lured the young man into her web by meeting his basic need to feel loved. He needed physical affection, and she made a personal, intimate connection with him. Her kisses pulled on his flesh and soul, tearing down the defenses he had built. The world wants to be kissed. From the wealthy and the famous to the homeless and the poor, everyone has a void in his/her life. God placed a sense of emptiness in people that only He can fill. But many look to momentary kisses from the god's of men to satisfy.

2.) SHE FLATTERS HIM

Once again, the adulteress preys upon a basic human need. She sought to feed the man's ego. In verse 15, she makes it sound as if he was the only true love for her. She makes the man feel special, desired. The devil understands the areas where we feel inadequate, a failure. He will use our past to be a snare in the present. Beware flattering lips. They tend to drip with spiritual death and ruin. Remember — Christians find their self worth in Christ not anything else.

3.) SHE MAKES SIN APPEALING

Describing her bed room as a place with ornate wood and fine spices, the adulterous tries to make the entire trap seem like a paradise. Indeed, sin appears good to the eyes, the appetites of the flesh. In the garden of Eden, the fruit appeared pleasing to Eve. Although sin may appear pleasant to the senses, the pleasure of sin quickly turns to bitterness.

4.) SHE ENTICES HIM TO ESCAPE PAIN

Everyone experiences physical, emotional and spiritual pain in life. Just like the adulteress, the enemy will package sin as a convenient escape from pain or present troubles. Why deal with problems when you can drown your sorrows in alcohol, drugs or pleasure? The current culture's obsession with entertainment, especially movies and television, illustrates how people desire to escape from the everyday pain of life. Even Christians groan against the struggle between the flesh and the spirit; no one is immune. The adulteress calls for us to solace ourselves in sin.

5.) SHE DENIES JUDGMENT

It's the sinful, human nature to try to get away with sin. People tend to be riskier if they think they will not have to deal with any negative conse-

quences resulting from their actions. In the story, the adulteress tries to convince the young man that he will not get caught. Her husband has gone away for a long time. She tries to make the young man feel safe by removing the fear of judgment or punishment.

No matter what the adulteress said. The young man should have remembered that she could not be trusted. Her willingness to cheat on her husband shows that her word is no good. The young man failed to see things as they really are. He opened doors and made bad choices, eventually leading to spiritual death. Proverbs compared the young man to a cow being slaughtered. His lack of wisdom cost him his life.

Gomer's Tale - Spiritual Prostitution or Purity?

The wisdom of Proverbs leads one to the question — are you a spiritual whore or a devoted bride? Have you given your heart to worthless gods or Jesus, the beloved king and groom? In the book of Hosea, God uses the personal life of Hosea to illustrate the moral and spiritual condition of hard-hearted Israel. Are we any different today?

Let's look at the story of Hosea to get a good picture of how being a casual Christian is the same thing to God as committing adultery.

I will never forget the first time I ever heard the story of Hosea and Gomer. I was encouraging a friend about hearing from God, and in one of those classic learn from your own mistake situations, I said, "Well there are some things you know that God would never call you to do, such as marry a prostitute." I had barely gotten the words out of my mouth before my friend asked, "But what about Hosea?" I sat dumbfounded as my friend described the story. It was hard for me to believe that God would call a holy man to unite in marriage with a "wife of whoredoms." But as the Word explained, "The foolishness of God is wiser than men...God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty" (1 Corinthians 1:25, 27).

The Bible does not tell us much about Hosea's background. As a prophet to the Northern Kingdom of Israel, Hosea preached during a time of prosperity. He preached more than 30 years, warning about the pending doom. Drunk on their own wealth and power, the people of Israel had become idolatrous and wicked.

Possibly in preparation for his calling or to provide us with a warning for today, God called Hosea to marry an unfaithful woman. It is not clear if she was an unfaithful woman at the time or would just simply become one and God made sure that Hosea was prepared for the future. Regardless, Hosea seemed to know the exact woman God was talking about. Her name was Gomer. Obedient to the word of God, Hosea took Gomer as his wife, and they had a son.

In time, Gomer forsook Hosea for other men. She desired something different, seemingly better. Gomer thought, “I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink.” Her plan revealed a selfish heart. She had no commitment to her wedding vows.

Hosea responded, “She (Gomer) is not my wife, neither am I her husband. Let her therefore put away her whoredoms out of her sight, and her adulteries from between her breasts; lest I strip her naked, and set her as in the day that she was born, and make her as a wilderness, and set her like a dry land, and slay her with thirst.” Hosea called Gomer out of her sin. Yet he warned of the dire consequences of remaining in adultery. God dealt with Israel in the same way when He sent time and time again disaster on His people. God tends to allow disaster to come upon us when He wants to get our attention. It can take people hitting rock bottom before they will repent and seek God.

Eventually sin caught up with Gomer. God threw up obstructions in her path. She no longer found enjoyment in the arms of her many men. They left her for something better. Gomer looked around and realized that she was better off with her first husband. Israel did the same thing when it repeatedly turned back to God. All along, the people of Israel were blinded to the truth that God had provided the very corn, wine, oil, gold and silver used in sacrifices they made to Baal.

God eventually returned to take away the plenty of Israel and judge her. Through Hosea’s prophecy, God declared, “And now will I discover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers, and none shall deliver her out of mine hand.” All of Israel’s feasts and celebrations came to an end. Destruction overtook the land. Mourning replaced shouts of joy and dancing. God consumed their sin in His jealous fire.

Then things began to change. God wooed back his unfaithful wife just as Hosea ended up doing. God desired to “bring her into the wilderness and speak comfortably unto her.” Notice God’s desire to be alone with his bride in the wilderness, the removal of all distractions. Caring for her needs, the Lord provided hope and gave her fruitful vineyards. Hosea prophesied of a peaceful time when God would remove the idols from his bride, and she would be faithful unto Him. God said through Hosea, “And I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the LORD. And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the LORD, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth...I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God.”

Hosea’s prophecy was fulfilled in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus opened the way for Gentiles to receive God’s love and become part of the covenant promise. Christ has committed to marry the bride in righteousness, judgment,

faithfulness, kindness and mercies. Just as a man asks a woman to marry him, God calls out to you and me wanting to commune with us. Have you heard the call?

Many times we end up just like Gomer. We continue in sin despite God's offer to deliver us. Gomer tumbled down the path toward destruction. She became a prostitute, possibly at a temple to a foreign god. She was a slave, a symbol of mankind enslaved by the death grip of sin. Yet in love, Hosea found Gomer and bought her freedom. At a costly price, he redeemed her from despair. But that should come as no surprise. After all, Hosea's name means "salvation." Hosea's actions serve as a foreshadowing, a preview of what Jesus Christ did on the cross when He saved mankind from sin and death. Jesus paid for our freedom with the precious price of His own blood. Just as Hosea found Gomer in her sin, Christ died for us while we were yet sinners (Romans 5:8).

Hosea ended up taking Gomer home with him. He commanded her not to sin any more. In the same way, God calls for his bride to be faithful and to abstain from false gods. God demands his bride to live in respect of His holy name.

Beware the Seduction of Sin!

From the accounts in Proverbs and Hosea, the Bible clearly identifies the allure of sin and the price of spiritual adultery. What can a carnal man do? Scriptures offer hope through Christ's blood and sound Biblical truths.

1.) SMALL SINS OPEN GATEWAYS FOR THE ENEMY TO ROAM.

Think of the fight against sin as a war. The enemy will look for small openings in the wall to send in troops. Those forces will develop strategic outposts from which to launch a firestorm of assaults against your heart. Remember the young man in Proverbs chapter 6? He walked down the wrong paths toward a dangerous place at the wrong time of day. It's not just the 'big' sins that lead to destruction. What we tend to think of as small sins can open up the life of a person, including a Christian, to spiritual attack.

2.) SATAN SPOUTS OUT A NEVER-ENDING STREAM OF LIES AND ACCUSATIONS.

Listen to the apostle John's warning about satan, "He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44). First the devil lies to you saying sin is no big deal. Then he turns right around and convinces you that your sin has become so great that God wants to have nothing to do with you. The devil attempts to tear down the Biblical foundations necessary for a victorious Christian life by attacking key doctrinal truths. He will use fine sounding arguments to confuse people. His entire goal is to separate you from the love of God.

3.) COMBAT SATAN'S LIES WITH SCRIPTURE.

How did Jesus deal with satan? When Jesus was tempted by the devil, He responded not with force but the Word. Jesus countered satan's attacks with the Word of Life. The Bible defeated the prince of the air because it contains truth and the promises of God (Matt 4:1-11).

4.) SET YOUR FOCUS ON SPIRITUAL, HEAVENLY THINGS NOT THINGS OF THIS EARTH.

Both the foolish, young man in Proverbs and Gomer sinned because they sought the wrong things in the wrong way. They were selfish and did not fear the Lord. The apostle Paul warned against settling for treasure on earth when God offers so much more for those who are His faithful bride. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:1-3).

5.) SEEK WISDOM AND DEDICATE YOUR WAY TO GOD.

Solomon encouraged his son to seek wisdom because it would be a shield to protect him. Too often, people seek direction from fools or listen to their own desires. God will lead those who are willing down the right path. King David understood the wickedness of the heart of men. He wrote, "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression" (Psalm 19:12-13).

6.) COME OUT OF THE WORLD.

A loud voice called to those who belonged to the Lord, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities" (Revelation 18:4-5). Christians are to be separate from the world, not inclined to sin but righteousness. Sometimes we fear the world (peer pressure) more than God.

7.) FREELY LIVE IN GOD'S GRACE BY REPENTING DAILY.

Sometimes Christians think they only have to say the sinners prayer and confess their sins once and never be concerned about sin again. But God calls believers to live in a continual state of repentance where we quickly confess any sin and embrace God's forgiveness. We are not to be mired down by past sin. Instead, we give sin over to God and let Him deal with it. This enables us to live free without being burdened by old debt. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9).

Be the Bride!

As a Christian, you have a choice every day. You can live as the bride of Christ or a spiritual whore. Both are hungry and thirsty. It simply comes down to where are their needs met and where is their focus.

The bride looks to Christ to supply all of her needs according to His riches and glory. The whore seeks solace in the seduction of sin, power, wealth and pleasure. The bride is satisfied only in the warm embrace of her husband, Jesus Christ.

The bride focuses on doing the will of Christ while the whore is selfishly living a ‘me first’ lifestyle. She has no concern for how her sins will harm others. The bride honors God, but the whore does not fear the Lord. She wears her pride as a necklace of honor, flaunting all authority ordained by God.

The apostle Paul used the wedding metaphor in Ephesians to describe Christ’s relationship to the Church. Christ loves and died for the Church. As described in Genesis, the two become one. In the same way, we as individuals and collectively as the Church will be united with God, our lover, at the end of the age.

The wedding metaphor describes a close relationship. Many of the most intimate moments in life are experienced in private between two lovers. Likewise, our personal walk with Christ should be the pinnacle of our spiritual lives, not a weekly church service. Although both private and group gatherings are critical to the development of our faith, our private walk determines our level of intimacy with God.

By comparing sin to adultery, God shows through the life of Hosea how seriously He views sin in the lives of His people. Even in our modern, sex-crazed society, cheating on a spouse is considered one of the most difficult sins to forgive. Sin breaks bonds of trust and destroys intimacy just as adultery does between a man and a woman. God jealously desires the devotion of His people. Have you been faithful?

If you feel like you have been living more like a whore than a bride, stop to consider the following prophecy:

Hosea 6:1-3

¹ Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. ² After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. ³ Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.

Confess your unfaithfulness, seek God and fear His name. Enjoy the refreshing peace of the Holy Spirit as He rains down God’s love on you. Seize life. Be the bride!

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