



15 Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well. 16 Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets. 17 Let them be only thine own, and not strangers' with thee. 18 Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. 19 Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love. 20 And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger? 21 For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings. 22 His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins. 23 He shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray. (Prov 5:15-23)

### **Fidelity to the Woman or Man to Whom you are Wed**

Long ago, so long ago that no one remembers just how long ago it was, God created man and woman after His own image. He endowed them with mental and physical attributes unparalleled in the animal kingdom. Man was His crowning achievement of all of creation, and rightly so, for man was made in the image and likeness of God. God created woman for man, and man for woman – no exceptions, please! Before He instituted the Church, God instituted marriage between a man and a woman. The very first recorded Commandment of God to man was: "***And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it*** (Gen 1:28). As you will know from logic derived from this Commandment, there is no fruit from sodomy or homosexuality. It is for this egregious abrogation of the Creation Model of God that Homosexuality is such an abominable and filthy sin in the eyes of God.

So, you may ask, what has this to do with today's lesson? It has everything to do with today's lesson on a man's responsibility of fidelity to his wife. The two great institutions God established for man are marriage and the Church. Every institution has a head. That head should be dedicated to keeping the institution safe, secure, and fulfilling its purpose. For the marriage, the head is the husband. For the Church, the head is the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ is Crowned Head of the Church. As its head, Christ loved the Church more than His own life, and gave that life to purchase the Church. The fact is Christ loved the Church before the Church loved Christ! *We love him,*

*because he first loved us.* (1 John 4:19) The Head is the source of direction and love when it is governed by the heart of love. That relationship of the Church as the Bride of Christ, and of Christ as the Bridegroom, is the perfect example of that first institution of marriage in the Garden eastward in Eden. God intended that man would love the wife as his own body and even lay down his life for his wife. If he were that kind of husband, the wife would, as the Church, reciprocate that love. *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.* (Eph 5:25)

We now come to the Wisdom lesson today in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of Proverbs, Chap 5. Please bear in mind that every principle that applies to the relationship between Christ and the Church also applies equally to Man and Wife. **15 Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well.** Wells are sources of life-giving waters. Marriage, in a sense, is also like unto a well. The precious children born to parents are the waters of that cistern of marriage, or well, that is own by both husband and wife in the bonds of marriage. If a man digs his own well, he will know the source of his water, and he will know if it is safe to drink. If he goes to the well of another, he will be drinking uncertain waters. If a man or woman is a philanderer, he or she exposes themselves to danger of disease, shame, and the wrath of God.

**16 Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets.** The source remains constant, but the waters flowing from the well of marriage are children who are the cherished fruits of the fountain. **17 Let them be only thine own, and not strangers' with thee.** Let those waters (children) come from your own well (marriage) and not the product of a diverse fountain (whoredom).

There is no more sorrowful sight than to see a widow in her old age abandoned by the husband of her youth in favor of a younger woman. All of her life has been devoted, faithfully, to one man; and when her wrinkles proliferate, his unfaithful head is turned to a pretty face. **18 Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth.** Good marriages do not occur by chance. They require great investment of patience, time, and especially love. When the shadows lengthen, and the autumn leaves begin to fall, we have the blessing to reflect upon the beauty of spring, and an abundant summer of marriage, with a kindred heart over whom we may rejoice. It is those fond memories - both of trials and triumphs - that will see us through the bleak winters of our years.

An old friend of mine, though he has been dead for 150 years, wrote: *A painter lays down a dark ground to lean his picture on, and thereby bring its beauty out. Such is the method adopted in this portion of the Word. The pure delights of the family are about to be represented in the sweetest colours that nature yields - wedded love mirrored in running waters; surely we have apples of gold in pictures of silver here. And in all the earlier part of the chapter the Spirit has stained the canvas deep with Satan's dark antithesis to the holy appointment of God. The Lord condescends to bring His own institute forward in rivalry with the deceitful pleasures of sin. How beautiful and how true the imagery in which our lesson is unfolded! Pleasures such as God gives to His creatures, and such as His creatures, with advantage to all their interests can enjoy - pleasures that are consistent with holiness and heaven, are compared to a stream of pure running water. And specifically the joys of the family are "running waters out of thine own well." This well is not exposed to every passenger. It springs within, and has a fence around it. We should make much of the family and all that belongs to it. All its accessories are the Father's gift, and He expects us to observe and value them. But because the stream is so pure, a small bulk of foreign matter will sensibly tinge it. The unguarded word, neglected thoughtfulnesses, or slovenly and careless ways. But careful*

*abstinence from evil is only one, and that the lower, side of the case. There must be spontaneous outgoing activity in this matter, like the springing of flowers, and the leaping of a stream from the fountain. All the allusions to this relation in Scripture imply an ardent, joyful love. Husband and wife, if they are skilful to take advantage of their privileges, may, by sharing, somewhat diminish their cares, and fully double their joys. But we must take care lest the enjoyments of home become a snare. God is not pleased with indolence or selfishness. If the family is well ordered, ourselves will get the chief benefit, but we should let others share it. (W. Arnot, D. D.)*

I have learned much from old friends such as William Arnot, Bishop J.C. Ryle, Matthew Henry, Bishop Dees and others. They are all old friend whether living or dead, and I trust that I shall see them for a happy reunion at some point of God's own choosing. We have a wonderful friend in Wisdom, and in Solomon who is relating its essence to us in this lesson, do you agree?

19 *Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love.* In the first days of marriage, it is possible that physical attraction overwhelms the attraction of true spiritual love; but as the years mount up, a deep love and reverence for the marriage partner will begin to build so that the physical attraction seems to have been only a passing fancy. My wife and I continue to argue and disagree over the most ridiculously minor issues, but deep in our hearts, we love each other with a love that will transcend each other's death in this flesh. When I am in a crowd of people, I love to suddenly hear my wife's voice either speaking to me, or to another. I realize what tremendous debt of gratitude I owe her for loving a scoundrel such as me.

20 *And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?* This circumstance develops when sensuality overcomes every charm of wisdom a man has left. Reverting to the nature of the brute beast, he lays aside his humanity and becomes very much like a dog or a pig – the very kind made reference to by the Apostle Peter: *But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.* (2 Peter 2:22 & Proverbs 26:11) There is no righteous profit to be had in a stranger to thy bosom.

21 *For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings.* You may hide your sins from other men, but you will hide not the slightest vice from God Almighty. His eyes are continually upon the righteous (Psalms 34:15) and His face against all who do evil. *Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.* (Gal 6:7)

22 *His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins.* Every deliberate or careless sin is a strand in the web with which we are bound as slaves. The snare we lay for others will be the snare of our own demise. Sin is a heady wine. It is not the wine that makes joyful, but leaves the dregs of sorrow in the heart. 23 *He shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.* He will die, as do all sinners die the death of eternal darkness, because they have **rejected** instruction. Perhaps there was a time when Frank Sinatra believed that he "did it MY way", but I am sure his opinion has changed by now:

*And now, the end is here  
And so I face the final curtain  
My friend, I'll say it clear*

*I'll state my case, of which I'm certain  
I've lived a life that's full  
I traveled each and ev'ry highway  
And more, much more than this, I did it my way*

Sinatra's song ends with these woeful and arrogant words:

*For what is a man, what has he got?  
If not himself, then he has naught  
To say the things he truly feels and not the words of one who kneels  
The record shows I took the blows and did it my way!*

Have you, friend, done it your way; or have you conformed your soul to the image of the Lord who made you?