

Welcome to this Sabbath, brethren.

We understand that spiritual knowledge, spiritual understanding, and true wisdom can only come from God because it is powered by God's holy spirit. Man, of and by himself, cannot see spiritually. God's spirit is what communicates spiritual knowledge, spiritual understanding, and it (God's holy spirit) empowers the ability for someone to be able to live wisdom, live love out to the benefit of others. It's God that works in a person, in a person's life to do spiritual works, and the part we have in this is to choose to yield to God's spirit.

The title of this sermon today is *Understanding the Proverbs*, and this will be *Part 1*. The purpose of this sermon is to see the Proverbs so that we may apply spiritual understanding into our life, so that we can live the very Proverbs that are written here by Solomon.

God inspired Solomon to write these very Proverbs. Now, many of them are often taken on a physical level and they are not considered as spiritual in nature, but the reality is that they are spiritual in nature *for* God's people. Because only God's people can see spiritually, and therefore, when the world reads the Proverbs they apply the physical application (to the best of their ability) to that particular Proverb. But the reality is that we, brethren, can apply the spiritual reality of the Proverbs.

And we'll pick up the Proverbs, because we have been through Proverbs before in many early parts of the sermons. God has provided us with the understanding of those particular Proverbs in spiritual understanding, and understanding the aspects of the spiritual reality of some of the Proverbs. Well, today we're going to start in Proverbs 9:10.

Now, the reason we're going to go through these Proverbs is to begin to see what we can do in our own lives, how we can apply this spiritual understanding of the Proverbs into our life so that we can adjust our thinking. Because we understand that the natural carnal mind, of and by itself, is selfish by nature, and because of our calling we have been given the ability (through the power of God's holy spirit) to be able to change the way we think, which is that human reasoning of working out what is right and wrong, the best way to conduct ourselves based on our own understanding, based on our situation, the way we think. Well, God's given us the power to change that thinking so that we can apply the Proverbs into our life according to the way God sees it, the way God says to live our life.

So in **Proverbs 9:10—The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding**, so this "fear of God," we understand from other Proverbs. "The fear of God," or the respect of God, "is the *beginning* of wisdom." Now, we understand also that "wisdom" *is* God's thinking. Now, that's what we strive to be. We strive to *be* like Jesus Christ. We desire to have the mind of God, the mind of Christ *in* us, which is that ability to live love, the ability to think like God, the ability to live the way that God states we should live. So this "fear" or "respect of God" is the respect for God's word. We understand that the whole Bible is God's thinking, it is God's Word. Now, if we show "fear," the "fear of the LORD," the "fear of Yahweh Elohim," we will respect who He is. He is the Creator. He is the Almighty God, and therefore, we should learn to fear Him, to show respect to Him. Now, if we live this respect we will respect what He tells us in His word.

So *that*, this respect or this beginning to look to God for the answers, look to God for the way that we should think, the way that we should live our life, "is the beginning." It's the starting point "of wisdom." So it's something that will be given to us from God, because this respect for God's word is the very beginning. So once we show this respect—in other words, we're going to stop and listen to what God has got to say about any particular matter—it is simply the *beginning* of this ability to understand where God is coming from, the "why" of life, the meaning of life. It's the beginning of wisdom. It's the *beginning* of being able to live love out to the benefit of others. So it's only the start. This respect for God *has* to be the beginning.

Now, the problem with mankind is that they don't "fear God." "There is no fear of God in the land." People don't consider God in their thinking. They do not show respect towards God's word by applying it into their life, or what God has got to say about any particular matter. And a clear example of that is the fact that man has established his own holidays, and God in comparison has established *Holy Days*, times to worship God. Well, man, because he doesn't *fear* God, has established his own days, hence, Sunday worship, Easter, Christmas, and the various holidays that they have which they call "religious" days. But they are based on man's thinking, on man's wisdom, but they're not based on *God's* wisdom because there is no fear of God. "There *is* no fear of God in the land," and therefore, mankind cannot begin to live wisdom. It's absolutely impossible, because this Proverb is saying that "the fear of God is the *beginning* of wisdom." Well, because mankind does not fear God, therefore, there is no wisdom in the land.

The only wisdom that exists is in the Church of God—PKG. Now, other hearers that may not be *of* God would mock at that and say they are living a life of wisdom. Well, they are living a lie, because they are fighting this very Proverb. Because this Proverb is telling us very clearly that the very beginning of learning to live love out to the benefit of others is that we have to show respect to God's word. We have to learn to "fear" or respect God, and if we respected God we would actually listen to what God has got to say, and therefore, we would *heed* what God has got to say.

Verse 10—and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. Now, this is an amazing scripture, because "the knowledge of the Holy One," the knowledge of one God, Yahweh Elohim, "*is* understanding." Well, brethren, the Church of God—PKG has understanding, therefore, because of this, because we believe one God, and in 2005 God established in His Church the separating point from Churches of God, from where God is working, the Church of God—PKG. God made it very clear during the Feast of 2005 where He is, and therefore, we have the understanding. We have the knowledge of the Holy One. We have the knowledge of the Almighty God, Yahweh Elohim. One God, one faith, one belief, one truth—there's not two—there's only one way to worship God. There is only *one* faith, *one* true Church of God. There's only *one* place where God *is*.

Now, this is amazing because we have this knowledge of the Holy One, and that is understanding. So brethren, we can say we have spiritual understanding because we understand the truth that God placed in the Church during the Feast, during one of *His* Holy Days, one of His High Days, during that period of worship of the seven days, and then on the eighth day, the Last Great Day when the revelation of Melchizedek was given to the Church. We have understanding.

Now, *anybody* that does not believe there is one true God, the God that *we* worship (that was revealed to us by the power of God's holy spirit during that year of 2005 on the Roman calendar), they do not have understanding *if* they do not believe in that very truth, in that very doctrine. So for anybody to say that they have spiritual understanding or spiritual knowledge of God and they do not believe that

particular truth that was placed in the Church at that time, they're deceived and they do not know themselves. Because this Proverb makes it very clear that they do not have spiritual understanding. So the very beginning of wisdom, and this beginning of spiritual knowledge, is the understanding that God will give us.

So this fear of God, this respect for God's word, the respect for what God did in 2005 through an apostle *is* the beginning of wisdom, and it *is* the very knowledge, and it *is* the understanding that we have, that it all has come from God. So this respect for God's word, what Jesus Christ has placed in the Church, if we respect that, it is actually wisdom and it is the foundation of our understanding, because it all is based on spiritual understanding.

Verse 11—For by me, and this is the fear of God, which is this wisdom of God... **For by me** (this wisdom) **your days will be multiplied**. So if we have this knowledge and understanding, because we fear God, we have this wisdom, because we fear what God says, we respect what God says. In other words, we're listening to what God has said. We listen to what God places in the Church. We listen to sermons on the Sabbath because they *are* inspired by God's holy spirit because it is God that feeds His Church. It's no individual person; it's God that feeds His Church. It is *God's* Church! Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church and God provides what is necessary for the edification of the Body. If it requires correction, God does it through Jesus Christ. If it requires edification, God does it through Jesus Christ. He might use a human instrument, but it is God that does the works. It is God that provides spiritually. So at any time we hear or we "see" something spiritual, it is a gift from God to us. It is no credit to the individual. It is all based on God's word.

Now, this Proverb is saying, "By me," by this wisdom, by this fear of God, "your days will be multiplied." Now, physically we know that we've been allocated seventy years, and if we get that far, based on today's society because of the pollutions, we've done really quite well in comparison to the way man used to be. Because of the pollutions of the world and the pollutions of the foods, if we get to seventy, well, we've done quite well. But God has said a life of seventy years, and if by strength we could add to it because of the way we have lived our life and because of the way we have looked after our health, we may get a few more years. But God allocated seventy years to mankind, and some don't make it because of various things like accidents and the ways of man and food and diet, and many other things, while others have an extension and go on in a period of time. And a lot of that can do with regards to physical life, but also if God has a purpose in that person's life to learn a particular lesson, or particular lessons, life may be protected by God on a physical level for a spiritual purpose, not a physical one.

Well, if we were to apply the ways of God into our life (the earlier the better), God is saying that we will have a longer life **and years of life will be added to you**. So this is on a physical level, that if we are to listen to God, to *apply* what God says through His word, we actually will have a better life. We'll have a longer physical life – potentially – based on, depending on what we have done prior to our calling.

Well, we can look at this, also, on a spiritual level. So if we fear God, we know it is the very beginning of coming from a calling to begin to respect God's word and trying to apply it into our life by the changing of our thinking, by this transformation. Well, God says if we do that, life will be added to us. So here it is, "years of life will be added to you," well, years of life, because it's spiritual. *IF* we apply the principles of God into our life by the power of God's holy spirit and we live a life of obedience, and "endure to the end" in obedience to God, submitting and yielding *to* God's authority in His Church through Jesus Christ and the government structure that He has set up, *and* God's spirit, yielding to God's spirit in our life, God

says that He will give us years of life. And this is pointing to something spiritual—spiritual life in Elohim, life-everlasting in Elohim.

Now, it's hard for us as humans to even begin to comprehend what it is to live a life of life-everlasting, or eternal life, because we come into thinking physically. And the natural carnal mind cannot comprehend eternity. For example, Yahweh Elohim has eternally existed. Now, the natural carnal mind has not been given the power to actually understand that, because that's just the way that God made it. It's no advantage to us. And at this particular point in time, we cannot comprehend what it is like to have life eternal, life-everlasting, what it is like not to have to sleep, not to have to eat, all of these physical things. We just can't comprehend it. We might have some aspects of it, but it's only minute to the reality of actually living that, what it's like to live forever in a way of being which is in the life of being God, being Elohim. We just can't really comprehend it.

How it is that we can all exist, and what will we be doing? Well, there's lots happening. We know aspects of what will be happening during the Millennium and during the 100-years, but we really don't understand what will be happening after the 7,100 years once evil is gotten rid of completely. What will happen for eternity? What will we be doing? I'm sure it's going to be exciting and I look forward to that day, personally, that I will be changed (at some point in time) because of one aspect I've learned about myself, which is I don't want to be selfish anymore and I don't want to sin. To be able to live a life where you don't offend others, where you don't *sin*, where you don't *hurt* others, would be a great joy. Because the desire within us, brethren, as members of the Body, is that we don't want to sin. We don't want to hurt others, we *don't* want this selfishness, and we want to get rid of it all. So to have this life, years of life added to us, is what we desire. Not necessarily of something on a physical level, because at certain ages we become tired and we suffer on a physical level, and we often don't see the advantage of it by just continual physical suffering. But we desire a spirit life in Elohim. We desire to be brought to glory because God's purpose and plan is "to bring many sons to glory." And that's what we desire, to have life-everlasting, life forever.

Verse 12—If you are wise, you are wise for yourself, so there's a big advantage in this. We can look at this physically, that if someone who says they are wise, "you are wise for yourself." There's a big advantage to it because wisdom will provide protection from evil. Well, this on a spiritual level, "If you are wise," using God's holy spirit, which is the truth of how wisdom is given. It's only... to be wise is to have God's thinking, "you are wise for yourself." There's a big advantage in that because there's a protection in it, there's a spiritual protection and a physical protection as well. ...**and if you mock**, so if we are to mock, which is the opposite to wisdom, **you alone will bear it**. We will bear our own guilt. We will have our own accountability in this matter.

So this Proverb makes out there's two aspects to life. One is a way of living wisdom – which is a big advantage, to that, because there's protection in it. But if you don't live wisdom, and you live the opposite, which is "you become a mocker, you alone will bear it," you will pay the consequences.

On a spiritual level, *if* we apply the principles of God that He has given to us, if we apply the wisdom... Now, one aspect of wisdom is Sabbath keeping. There's a *great advantage* to us to keep the Sabbath. Now, often it can be seen that there's a big disadvantage because of the world's system, but on a spiritual level, if you are wise, if you apply the principle of observing the Sabbath from Friday sunset to Saturday sunset and apply the spiritual principles of the Sabbath, which is physical rest, spiritual rest and spiritual food, to consume that spiritual food, to absorb God's thinking (which is all of His word), if we read it, if we listen to sermons, if we meditate, if we pray about it, "you are wise for yourself." There's a

great advantage! Why? Because it will lead to life-everlasting. There's a big advantage in doing it – not only on a physical level by resting the body, but on a spiritual level because we will be *feeding* on God's word, which will lead to life.

And "if you mock," so if we do something opposite to that and don't rest on the Sabbath, don't keep the Sabbath holy, separate, don't listen to sermons, don't absorb God's food and not act wisely, "you alone will bear it." We will bear our own guilt. We are accountable for ourselves. Nobody can make us keep the Sabbath. Nobody can make us do *anything*. We can choose the way we live.

Now, the choices of life have consequences. We can live one particular way and there's a penalty for it. Or we can live another particular way, but it doesn't mean to say there's not a penalty from Satan's system to it. We alone will bear our decisions. But to use wisdom and to keep the Sabbath and to obey God's word, it's a wise decision because it leads to life, whereas the other one, "being a mocker" or a scoffer, "we alone will bear it," and the wages of that is death. "The wages of sin is death." So brethren, we are all accountable individually for our choices, for our decisions in life, and we can never turn around and transfer the responsibility for decision making to somebody else.

I remember a particular phone call — and I got myself in a bit of trouble because of this, because it was my wrong use of words that caused this particular problem — where someone rang me up once and said they wanted to do a particular thing. And I used the words along the line, "You can do what you want." Now, my intent wasn't to turn around to say, "You can do anything you want and there is no problem with it." It was really trying to say, "Well, you can do what you want..." I was trying to communicate, "Well, you can choose to do one way or the other, but it *is your responsibility*, it's up to you to choose. It's not my decision to choose. You can do what you want. You can choose whichever way, because you will pay the price for the decision... has nothing to do with me."

So, my wife clearly told me after the phone call that I was wrong in saying that, because I wasn't clear (as I'm often accused of, not being clear in giving direct accountability). Because what I thought I'd said versus the way the person interpreted it was completely different. So, in time, the phone call came and the discussion came up and they said, "But you said that it was okay," because that was the interpretation of what I had said about saying, "You can do whatever you want." It was interpreted as, "Well, you can do whatever you want. It's no right or wrong. Just do it." Well, that wasn't what I had intended, therefore, it blew up in my face a little, because that's not what I had said, but that's what was interpreted.

So from that I have learned to be a little wiser, to be a little bit more clearer about the right and wrong of God's word, that you can either obey God or not obey God. There's only two choices in life. You can either submit or yield to God's spirit, or you can submit and yield to your own human reasoning. Now, how to discern those things is a personal choice, and the only thing that a minister of God can do is give direction by pointing the person back into God's word.

So the outcome of this particular Proverb is that we alone will bear it. Whatever decision we make, whether we decide to be wise or we decide to be *foolish*, we will bear the consequences. And to be wise (it is a big advantage to it), it is *for ourselves*; it's for yourself.

Verse 13... Now this covers various aspects, and the seductive woman (or the woman) can be a church. So we're going to look at this on a physical level and also on a spiritual level. Now, the world would look

at this totally as "A foolish woman," but they wouldn't look at it as a church. Because the Bible makes it very clear that the woman referred to in scripture is often referred to as the Church or a church.

Proverbs 9:13—A foolish, so what's a foolish person? And this is saying, "A foolish woman," but what's a foolish person? Well, the reality is that anybody without God's holy spirit is foolish. Now, that may sound rather hard and cruel and judgemental, but the reality is there's only two ways of life. We're either wise—and to be wise means we have God's holy spirit living, dwelling in us and we're yielding to it—or foolish. A foolish person is somebody without God's holy spirit yielding to their own natural carnal mind. Therefore, there is two ways; we're either wise or we're foolish. It's black and white, two clear ways. So a foolish person is somebody without God's thinking.

The proverb goes on... **A foolish woman is clamorous**. Now, that word "clamorous" is "to murmur," which is "to complain, roar, cry aloud, rage, make noise, be loud." So this is referring now on a physical level: "A foolish woman is loud." They're a murmurer. **She is simple**, "She is naive," **and knows nothing**. So they don't know anything about the spiritual aspect of the way that God is.

So, **A foolish woman is clamorous**. She's a complainer. She's a murmurer because God's not in the picture. **She is simple**, she is naive of God's way and this is referring to physical. She's just naive about life **and knows nothing**. She doesn't know the what, the how, or the why of anything. Now, if we look at that on a physical level we can say, well, there's a particular woman, she's very foolish because she's being obnoxious. She's very loud, she's very naive about life and how to conduct herself, and she doesn't know anything about standards or morality.

But we can look at this also on another way. False religion knows nothing of God. So this foolish woman, this foolish church, is loud, is clamorous. And it is, because false religion is. If you look at all the broadcasts that go on, on false religion, particularly on a Sunday morning where you have all the religious programs, normally in the cheapest time of TV, because religious programs are allocated because of funds and nobody *really* wants to watch it, so they're allocated from 2:00am in the morning to a particular time in the morning. And generally you have a Catholic mass going on sometime on a Sunday morning as you flick through the channels and you have other people getting up and speaking. Well, they are "the foolish woman." They are clamorous. They're making a noise. They're rather loud because they're on every Sunday morning. "But she," the churches of the world, "are simple." They're naive to God's way. They know *nothing* of God, *absolutely* nothing!

I remember a particular conversation within the Churches over here in Australia, where the person, they came up and had said to me that "once a upon a time" I had said that they had to unlearn everything, and now they'd been in God's Church for a while, how true that was, that it is very hard if you've been educated all your life in the ways of Protestant living, or Catholic living, or whatever religion is outside of God's true Church, how hard it is to unlearn all that stuff, all that garbage that's been poured into your brain, all the ways of behaving, all the ways of thinking, that needle in the record, in the groove, and the grinding continually. It is very hard "to jump the needle out of the groove." Now, false religion pours out this muck and this garbage every single day of the week, but particularly on Satan's day, Sunday. The first day of the week, they're out there.

So false religion knows *nothing of God*. They are truly naive. They don't know God's plan of salvation. They don't know that they are deceived by Satan and *are of Satan*. Isn't that incredible to understand? That we understand it. Now, somebody listening to this is going to be in an uproar: "How can this person get up and say that the churches of the world are deceived and *they are of Satan*." Because it's Satan's

system, because they haven't been called out, they can't see spiritually. They haven't been called to see spiritually. They can't understand it.

Now, I can look back at my particular time when I grew up in the Catholic Church. My mother was a Catholic. My father was an atheist. But my mother was quite religious in the sense of going to church on a Sunday. And there was a period of time when I was younger that I was dragged to church every Sunday morning. And as I got older and left home, at the age about of 12-13, I left home and went away to a boarding school, well, I ran into the same problem. Because guess what? Every Sunday we had to go to mass, and we had to go to confession once a week, and we had to go and do the rosary and benediction and all these different things during the week. So I was caught up in this false system, this "foolish woman," this simple naive system that knew *nothing*! Well, I was caught up into it. And when I left school at the age of 16 I was happy to flee it! I was happy to flee it! And I used to go to church now and again because I had to go to mass on a Sunday morning because of all my sins during the week, and I knew that if I went to confessional that the father there would forgive me. Now, I was actually stupid, naive, and simple, and knowing nothing. But that's what I did because that was the religion that I was brought up in.

And it wasn't until, as I got older, that I actually left a lot of that and lived a life based on my own human reasoning, until the day that I was actually called, when I started to come out of it. Now, it's been a long journey to come out of that and to admit that I was naive, that I was simple, that I was caught up, and that I knew *nothing...like, nothing, absolutely zero* about God's way. And there's still hangover's within my own personality (within my knowledge) based on falsehood. And I understand that and I accept that. Because to come out of all of the ways of the world within one's thinking, it takes time...it just takes time.

So the religions of this world are caught up in Satan's system and they are deceived. They are "foolish women." They are naive and *they know nothing*! They are out promoting themselves and their false ways. They're clamorous. They are loud, and they make a noise to be heard, all for the purpose of *getting* a following, "converting" people (so to speak).

So what does this woman do? What makes her foolish and naive? **Verse 14—For she sits at the door of her house, on a seat by the highest places of the city.** If we look at that on a physical level, it's referring basically to somebody that is about to commit adultery or fornication (whichever way), but it is sin before God. So "she sits at the door of her house," on a physical level, "on a seat by the highest places of the city." Now, why would somebody do that? Well, firstly, they are to look important. The other part is they are to be obvious. They have to be able to be seen, to be noticed.

And verse 15 goes on and explains a little bit more why they do it. Well, let's just look at verse 14 and look at it in relation to false religion. "For she," false religion, all of the churches of the world other than the Church of God—PKG, "sits at the door of her house," —why?— "on a seat by the highest places of the city." Well, does that ring a bell? We go into some country towns along with our journeys we're travelling, and the first thing you can see is always the steeple or the pinnacle of a church. It's at the highest places. Now, why is it that in every country town, whether you go through Europe, whether you go through Australia, and many other countries, why is it that false religion has established itself on the highest point within that town? Normally, it's on a hill. So why is that? Well, it's to be *seen*! It's to be *obvious*! It's a place to *look to*! They know what they're doing because it's about their adulterous relationship with Satan... only they don't know it. They do not know they're having an adulterous relationship. They're in fornication with this world because they're not having a relationship with God.

Because if they were having a relationship with God, they wouldn't set themselves up on the highest place within a city. They just simply wouldn't because God's way is one of humility, of lowering, of not one of self-importance. It's not about being obvious. It's the complete opposite. It's about humility of thinking, *non-promoting of self, non-promoting of the way of life to others to get a following*. It's not that way.

So we can see here that this Proverb is saying, "Well, she," the adulterous woman, the false religions, "they sit at the door, they sit at the highest place of the city..." Why? **Verse 15—To call to those who pass by, who go straight on their way.** Now this is one way. Here we have somebody that is looking to acquire somebody, to catch that person, to catch the man and to have him commit a sexual relationship, to trap him. But on a spiritual level we can see it is "to call," and that word "call" is "to proclaim," "to proclaim to those who pass by, who go straight on their way." So false religion is set up on a high hill to call, to proclaim that, "We are the ones that are true. We are the true religion." And anybody who is going by that way, "she calls out to them," through these broadcasts, because of being obvious, it looks like it's religious. She is there to *tempt* those who are striving to walk straight in life.

So many are being caught up in false religion. Most people are born into it and just simply live it because of the natural carnal mind, you just go with the flow.

Well, brethren, there is a danger for us as well. "She," false religion, now, whether it's any part of the Churches that are scattered, or true false religion, they are there to tempt, to strive to tempt, to guide a person to walk a different way of life. So those who walk straight in life—who is that?—well, somebody that is called or somebody that is awakened into the truth *is* required to walk straight, which is according to God's word (to live wisdom), in life. That's what we are called to do. But false religion, Satan's system, what he has set up as deception, "She," false religion, "is trying to draw them *into sin*." Now, that's exactly what it is. For anybody to leave the truth, they have been drawn back into sin. "She" is seeking (false religion, deception, not the truth), she (anyone who promotes that, any church that promotes not the truth, anything that's not true), she is seeking an unlawful relationship with anyone who will listen.

Now, that should be a big warning to us in the sense of understanding this Proverb, brethren. That false religion, anyone that is deceived, anyone that is not of the Church of God—PKG is trying to get a following. They are trying to draw a person away from following the truth, into an unlawful relationship with *anybody* that will listen. So that's the danger.

By going into false religion or going into things that aren't true, we are starting to listen, to absorb, to consume error. Now, a lot of people have fallen because they *think* they are strong enough to look at or to listen to error, to listen to lies. They think they're strong enough on a spiritual level. But the reality is that we're not as strong as what we think. Because it's only God's thinking that gives us strength. It's only God's thinking *in us* (if we yield to it) that gives us strength. Now, if we don't yield to it, we're foolish and weak...we're foolish and weak.

So the moment we go into false religion or false doctrine, or any articles that pull down God's way of life, we are being weak, we are giving into "this call to those who pass by, who are trying to go straight on their way." And the moment we go into those things—although we think we're strong—we've given an ear to it or we've given our eye to it, which means we've given our *mind* to it. Now, Satan desires us to look, to look to these false religions, to look to error, to look to cause *doubt* in the mind, because that's where it starts, doubt. "Well, maybe..." "Well, potentially..." "Well, possibly..." Well, any of that

thinking will cause us to stumble and it will cause us "to pass by the way" and to listen to the "call of the clamorous woman," the foolish woman.

All doctrines that are outside of the truth are foolishness! They're foolishness to God. God says, "Foolishness comes from the minds of man." Man's thinking is foolishness to God, because it is. Because without God's holy spirit, we only act foolishly. That's the only way we *can* act.

Verse 16—Whoever is simple... What's somebody who's simple? Someone who lacks God's holy spirit. They are naive on a spiritual level. This is physically, **Whoever is simple, let him turn in here; and as for him who lacks understanding, she says to him...** so let's look at that physically. Somebody is there promoting something in relationship of a sexual relationship, and whoever is "simple," well, he will turn aside, "he will turn in there," and "he who lacks understanding," he lacks understanding about what he's really doing. What is the outcome of this? What is this outcome of committing this fornication or this adultery? What is it? Well, it's going to be a problem, but they don't understand it because they *lack* understanding about the consequences of sin and what it will do to relationships, let alone what it will do to the individual, to the man who turns aside, just because of a sexual relationship. He has *no* understanding on a spiritual level, let alone on a physical level. It's just temporary pleasure in sin.

So let's look at this on a spiritual level. "Whoever is simple," whoever is naive, who lacks God's spirit, "let him turn aside here," so she calls and he will turn aside. Well, the person turns aside to false doctrine; they change direction in life. So one person is walking straight, following God's way, now they turn aside. They *turn*...they turn. Because repentance is "think differently." Well, they're thinking one particular way, going down one particular path, but they turn aside. They think differently than the way God has shown them, which is wisdom, and understanding, and knowledge, all based on a spiritual principle. Now they're turning aside to something *physical*. They've turned aside to error, because false religion wants a person to turn aside, to change direction from the way they are walking. And if a person "lacks understanding," on a spiritual level, which is this inner thinking about God's way, what will happen? Well, it'll cause harm to the person, which is, it leads to spiritual death.

She says to him, **verse 17—Stolen water is sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.** So there's two aspects to this "stolen waters." Well, it's something that is illegal. To steal something is something of breaking God's law. Now, the stealing of these waters "is sweet," because there is this temporary pleasure in sin, this temporary pleasing to the self, or pleasing *of* the self. It's sweet, there's a delight in it, because we've *got* something, because we've taken something to ourselves; therefore, it's sweet. There's this temporary pleasure. It's the building up of self. "I got away with it. I've stolen this water." Well, here it is, of course, this is a woman. It's talking about a sexual relationship, it's an unlawful relationship, it's "stolen water," and "it's sweet." There is a temporary pleasure in it. "And bread eaten in secret," something that is hidden, "is pleasant." Because if you've stolen it, you've stolen the water and we've taken the bread and we go off by ourselves and we eat it quickly, there is a delight in it because nobody knows anything.

But the reality is that God knows *everything*. God's aware of everything. "Bread eaten in secret..." there is no such thing as eating bread in secret, and "stolen water" is *not* sweet. The natural carnal mind likes to think it is because it's trying to please itself, because of its selfishness. And this "bread eaten in secret is pleasant," it's a deception. It's a lie. There is no delight in eating bread in secret because *nothing* is in secret, and anything taken to self is not pleasant, it's not sweet, it will lead to death.

So on the physical (another way of saying this), "Steal off with me," with this adulterous woman. "I'll show you a good time. No one will *ever* know." Because that's the deception of the natural carnal mind, that we think we can get away with things because nobody *sees* it (on a physical level). "I'll give you the time of your life! Come and have sex with me in a secret (a secret place), because it will be exciting and no one will *ever* know. Come and *enjoy yourself!*" So that's the physical aspect of it, that it's about an adulterous relationship, a woman drawing a man into this relationship. And because he's naive and stupid and he doesn't see the consequence of it because it's all about self-gratification, he will pay a penalty. But he can't see it at the time; it's all exciting at the time.

On a spiritual level, "Leave the way of God, the way that God has taught you," taught you and me, "the straight and narrow path that leads to life." If we leave it, it will cause us pain and sorrow. And we can't do it in secret. As many of people have tried to live a life of sin within the Church in secret, well, God is not mocked. God will reveal that sin in time. Now, often people live a lie, being hypocrites and living a lie, pretending to be something that they're not, but God knows, and in time God reveals it. Hence, their sin is revealed and it will lead them out of God's Church, out of this relationship, because they weren't actually in a relationship with God anyway. They were just pretending. They were just "stealing off in secret," doing their own thing for six days of the week and presenting themselves as "being of God" one day a week.

Another way of putting this on a spiritual level: "Come over here for a quick look at this error and taste these things of other doctrines," of this false woman. "If you taste them they'll be exciting, set you 'free' so you can please yourself. You can lean on your own understanding. No one needs to know unfaithfulness to God. Nobody!" Well, see, that's the deception on the spiritual level, because God does know. Because if we are to go and taste these things, they *are* exciting sometimes!

I remember a time in God's Church where a particular person in another country got into *The Book of Enoch*, which is all garbage, all lies, all deception, and it is of Satan. That's the truth of it. It is *not* God's word. *But* somebody started to taste it. They were tasting these *doctrines* of Satan! They tasted them, they *were* exciting, because they *thought* there was new knowledge and new truth in it, but the reality is it was vanity. Because this taking of this excitement about, "Oh, look at this new thing! This is something new!" It was simply taking to self. It was all about pride. It didn't come through an apostle into God's Church. It was something of the world, and it *is* of the world. *The Book of Enoch* is of the world. But people get excited by it and they feel they're free because they have this "new truth," they have this "new understanding," and they please themselves. And they think, "Well, nobody needs to know of this unfaithfulness to God." But guess what? In time, God reveals it all. God reveals unfaithfulness, that stolen waters are *not* sweet, and bread eaten in secret is *not* pleasant. It is *not* a delight! So anything to do with spiritual matters, we need to be very careful, brethren. We need to stay with God's word. We need to go back to verse 10. We need to demonstrate the *fear of the LORD!* And how do we demonstrate the fear of the LORD? Well, the first thing is we *fear* God, we *respect* God's word, we don't put our head in the *trash can!* We don't taste, we don't eat, of forbidden bread. Its craziness! It's insanity! So if we feared God, we wouldn't touch *anything* to do with false religion.

There is *nothing* out there that can be given to us on a spiritual level. Absolutely nothing from *anybody!* Only the truth stands in God's true Church! That's where it comes from. So to understand these Proverbs, brethren, is a great blessing, a great *spiritual* blessing from God. The fact that *He* is demonstrating His word to us, revealing the spiritual intent of these particular Proverbs, *that* in itself is a great blessing. The blessing is to understand the Proverbs, to understand them on a spiritual level.

Verse 18—But he does not know the dead *are* there, so this person who goes off and has this unlawful relationship (because of this woman on a physical level), he doesn't know that it will lead to death. ...**That her guests *are* in the paths of hell,** which is "the grave," because it will lead to death.

So physically we can look at this one way: This sexual relationship (this *unlawful* relationship, this sin, the transgression of God's law) will cause you great harm and lead to broken relationships, mental stress, and in the end, death, because it was given once to man to die. Everybody will die. Everyone from Adam and Eve, from the time of Adam and Eve, every human born has died (other than those that are alive today). They've all died. That included Jesus Christ because *all* have died. We're not going to live forever! We're all temporary. We're all passing through. So to go out and have this sexual relationship, it will cause great harm to us physically and also spiritually. It's in the mind! It will damage the mind because of deception.

Because anybody that has a sexual relationship outside of what God has ordained there is a harm on the mental level. It damages the mind. Now, most men can relate to this. Although they may not have committed a sexual relationship (a physical one), they've often done it in the mind, and in doing that, it will cause great harm to *them*, because it will change their thinking, and it will lead (and can lead) to broken relationships, because of this perverted thinking.

Now, the internet today promotes this unlawful relationship, because people should come to understand—which they don't, but we should in God's Church—that we should know that "the dead are there." Now, what's that referring to? Well, today if you go onto the internet and go onto all these particular sites that promote unlawful relationships in the mind (because of sexual perversion) "that all her guests," everybody that does it, "are in the depths of the grave." We're heading for death on a spiritual level and we are dead. We are dead to God.

So we should know, because here it says in the Proverbs, "He does not know that the dead are there." Well, we know. We know that going out and having this false relationship, this relationship with false doctrine, with the religions of the world (with the woman, which is anything to do with false religion, perversion), we should know that that's where death lies. That's where death *is*! We should know that it *is* going to harm us. And anybody that is a guest of that, anybody who invites themselves into it, makes a decision based on their own judgements to go and have that relationship "*are in the depths* of the grave." It will lead to physical death, but it leads to spiritual death. And if we go too far with some of those things it *may* lead to an unpardonable sin, because of decision, of willful, deliberate decisions to please the self and *not* please God. That's where it can lead.

So this relationship on a physical level can lead to mental stress and anguish and it causes broken relationships because it's impossible to have a good relationship if somebody is committing adultery. Because when a man commits adultery it is very hard for the woman, in that relationship (if they were husband and wife) to ever trust him again, and vice versa. If a woman ever has a relationship outside of their God ordained relationship (which is marriage) it is very hard for the man to ever trust her again. He will always have these doubts. Any interaction with another person, the thought comes into the mind, "What's really going on? I've been deceived once, I'll be deceived again." Vice versa with the woman, that if the man does it she always thinks, "What's going on. He's flirting. Where's this going to lead to? He's done it once, he's going to do it again."

Now, on a spiritual level this tasting of false doctrine can carry you away and lead to your spiritual death. So, brethren, we should be very careful not to taste false doctrine, because it *can* carry us away

and it *can* lead to our spiritual death. Because examining or exploring any false doctrines is sin. It is actually sin, and "the wages of sin is death." So we should be on guard at all times not to allow any falsehood to come near us. We should flee those things. We should shun those things. We should show wisdom and fear God, fear God's word and the understanding that He's given to us through an apostle—through Jesus Christ, through an apostle—to the Church. So we should taste of those things, truth, and we shouldn't taste falsehood.

Now we are to come into the knowledge of how Satan works. That's part of what we are being taught to do. We can see from this, how does Satan work? Well, he works through temptation. He tempts us. We understand the effects of following "her" call, or "his" call. We can use wisdom and keep walking on a straight path of *righteousness*. We can yield to God's holy spirit. We can yield to God's way of life. Today's "clamorous woman," today's "foolish woman," someone without God's holy spirit, sits in every computer connected to the internet, therefore, we should walk straight by. We have to be so careful about what enters our mind.

I know Johnny uses the term, "the battle for the mind," because that is true! It *is* a battle for the mind, and this "clamorous woman" (on a physical level) is seeking to devour, to destroy a person. Well, guess what? False religion is seeking *to devour, to destroy*, because Satan is the destroyer; he is seeking to destroy us on a spiritual level.

She cries out, "Look at me! Come over here. Spend more time with *me*." That's the temptation. So we can see that on a physical level. We can picture the woman in the doorway. We can see the man walking by, straight in his path. She cries out, "Look at me!" Now, the moment he glances over he's in big trouble...he's in big trouble, because men, generally, are weak when it comes to women and sexual matters. Men are weak; it's built into the man to be naive on a spiritual level. And it takes a lot of self-control, a lot of fighting in the mind to look away, but, generally, men look. She cries out, "Look at me! Come over here!" Now there's a big problem, because now this is temptation. "Come over here!" Then the mind begins to race. "Spend more time with me...or spend *some* time with me." ("The stolen water is sweet.") "It's going to be pleasing." ("The bread eaten in secret is pleasant.") "It's going to be a delight."

Well, we can look at that; it's the same with false doctrine. The churches of the world cry out, "Come over! Have a look! Look at me. I'm right up on this high hill. I'm very great. Look at all these people that are coming here! This is the only way! Look at this wonderful service, and look at all the gowns and all the jewels and all the gold! Look how great it is! They have to be right, surely? There's so many of them, they have to be right. This little group over there, they can't be right. They can't be the *only* ones with the truth. Come over here. Spend some time with me. *Look* at what *I'm* doing! Look at *my* doctrines! Look how easy it is!" In reality, these are just temptations to view evil, and these temptations are there.

The computer, which is temptation to view evil, is at our fingertips. And it requires a battle...it requires a battle. And it requires this fear of God, because this "fear of God is the *beginning* of demonstrating wisdom." If we respect God, who says to shun these things, to flee them (if we do that), well, we will have this knowledge. We will have this understanding of God's way. And God tells us simply to flee these things.

So what is a wise person going to do? Let's look at another spiritual principle. We'll continue with it in 1 Corinthians 6:15. Now, when we go through these things, brethren, it's *great* to have this knowledge. It's great to have this understanding on a spiritual level. To "see" these things, to understand the

Proverbs on a spiritual level, what a great blessing! But the reality is, *doing* this is totally different. Because we can have this knowledge about God's way. We can *know* that we shouldn't go near false doctrine. We can *know* we shouldn't go near "a woman that is clamorous" in the sense of something physical (or spiritual). We can know it, we can understand it, so we can understand where this adulterous relationship would lead, where this fornication or any unlawful relationship will lead. We can understand that. We can understand it on a spiritual level, that we can understand that going into false religion, looking at false doctrines...we can understand that it can destroy us, and it *will* destroy us unless we repent of it and change and look away. So we can understand it. *But* doing it is something completely different. Doing it and yielding to God's holy spirit is something different.

Well, that's what temptation's all about, because God has allowed Satan to exist, to live on this earth at this particular time during this 6,000 years for the purpose of strengthening those God calls and works with for His purpose. So there is an opportunity, when temptation comes, for us to yield to God's holy spirit, because when we're tempted there is no sin in the temptation. It's what we *do* with the temptation.

So here we have this opportunity to know all these things, but now the choice, the deciding to do a particular action, to flee these things, is totally dependent on our own personal choice. *Nobody* can make us do *anything*. We have to choose what we're going to do.

1 Corinthians 6:15—Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? So this is a question. Now, we're joined to Christ. We're joined to the Body of Christ. The Church of God—PKG is powered by God's holy spirit. So our members, what we are, we are *of Christ*, we're connected because of the power of God's holy spirit.

Continuing on in verse 15...**Shall I then take the members of Christ**, now, "the members of Christ" is someone that is clean and righteous, who has God's holy spirit. So they are "going straight on the way," **and make *them* members of a harlot/unclean and sin? Certainly not!** So we're not to be connected to harlotry, which is the religions of the world. Remember in Revelation it talks of "the mother of harlots," because all of the religions of the world have come out from the time when Simon Magus started up the Roman Universal Church, and in 325 AD (which we've been through in a previous sermon) we saw what doctrines they changed. They were not of God but of Satan. They changed the ways of God. They no longer had the fear of God. They *no longer* had the fear of God. And if they didn't have the fear of God and they didn't fear God, they can't have wisdom, they can't have understanding on a spiritual level, and they can't have *spiritual knowledge*. And that's why we wouldn't want to go anywhere near false religion, anywhere near them at all. So, would we become unclean and sin? Certainly not!

Verse 16—Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body *with her*? So we can look at that on a physical level, that anybody that goes into that relationship, anybody that yields to "the call" that has come from the woman and is "joined to a harlot *is one body with her*." They become one because they are joined in sin. They are joined in what *is* sin. **For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh."** Now, God said that, that in marriage "the two would become one flesh," which was giving the authority, the God ordained authority and legal use of a sexual relationship, which was between a man and a woman. It wasn't between anybody else, it was between a man and a woman only, and *only after* a God ordained marriage, which was where they had committed their lives together and they were now going to become "one flesh." And they become "one flesh" because of a sexual relationship that they can now have with each other and also the joining of the minds. They become joined in *thinking*. It's

about a spiritual relationship, what we *give* our thinking over to. We either give our thinking over to God's way or Satan's way, so we become joined.

So this scripture is saying, on a physical level, we join ourselves to a harlot; we become one flesh. Well, it's the same with regards to false religion or false doctrine. If we give ourselves over to it, we become "at one" with that doctrine.

Verse 17—But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit *with Him*. So there's this complete unity of spirit. So "he," all of us brethren, "that are joined to the Lord," we are joined to God through the power of God's holy spirit, we're yielding to this holy spirit. We've been called, we've been baptized, and we receive God's holy spirit which is now living and dwelling in us and flowing into our thinking...if we yield to that, we are of "one spirit with God," because we've got God's thinking in our life. We are now *fearing* what God says. We now have this ability to *live* wisdom. We have unity of thinking with God.

Verse 18—Flee (flee away from) **sexual immorality**. Flee away from every unlawful relationship in our thinking and actions. Now, we often think of "sexual immorality" as physical, because we look at things physically. And here it is saying, well, we're to "flee sexual immorality." We're to get away from any unlawful relationship. Just flee it! So that "enticing woman on top of the hill calling out"... *don't* look over. Walk straight. In actual fact, you're better off to *run*! Don't even glance! Don't even listen to the call! Block your ears! Get out of there as quick as you can!

Well, on a spiritual level, "Flee sexual immorality," because it's about a relationship with false religion. It's about a relationship, an unlawful relationship with false doctrine, and the best way to handle it is *flee every* unlawful relationship (which is to do with false doctrine) in our thinking and in our actions. Just flee! Walk straight ahead! *Don't* click on to that website to look at false doctrine. *Don't* click on that website where it's talking about God's people, where it's mocking God. Don't even go near it! Don't even turn it on! Stay with the Body of Christ! Stay in the relationship we were called to, which is a relationship with God...a relationship with God, a commitment that we made at baptism to be in unity with God.

Continuing on in **verse 18—Every sin that a man does is outside the body**, because sin places him outside the Body of Christ. He is cut off from God's spirit. So, "*Every sin* that a man/woman does is outside the Body," on a spiritual level. We no longer have unity with God. We're no longer part of the Body of Christ. We can't be, because sin cuts us off. **...but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body**, because it will destroy us. On a physical level, the decision that is made, to have an unlawful relationship, it is *against* our own body, it's against ourselves, because we will bear the wages of sin. We will pay for it individually. We looked at that Proverb previously. It's accounted to *us individually* to pay the penalty, not somebody else. He will pay the penalty for his thinking and he will pay the penalty in his flesh because it will corrupt the mind; it corrupts the spirit in man.

Sexual immorality *is* illicit or unlawful sexual relationships, and that comes to adultery, fornication, homosexuality (practiced), lesbianism (practiced), sexual intercourse with close relatives (as outlined in Leviticus 18), sexual intercourse with a divorced man/woman (as outlined in Mark 10). All these things are unlawful because there is only one lawful relationship within a marriage. And there is only one lawful relationship within a Church, the true Church of God. And that lawful relationship is with God the Father. Any unlawful relationship on a physical or spiritual level *is sin*.

In sexual sin we violate the purity of our own bodies, these bodies that are made for God to dwell in. Isn't that incredible knowledge to have? Isn't that incredible understanding of this particular Proverb,

that we can glean this type of thing out of it and then move into Corinthians to understand it? That sin that violates (all sin violates), it violates our own bodies. "This temple which we are," the mind, it violates it. And the body was made, this mind, the spirit in man within this mind, was made for *God* to dwell in. So why would we get into any unlawful relationship, whether physically or spiritually? These bodies that God sets aside are for a spiritual purpose only, and that spiritual purpose is that God may live and dwell in it. On a physical level, the *only* reason that we've been made this way is that we can have a relationship. A lawful one is only found in marriage, to become one with one another—husband and wife.

Verse 19—Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the holy spirit which is in you, which you have from God, and you are not your own? And that's an interesting question. Do we understand this on a spiritual level? Are we wise enough to come to understand that we have to be on guard all the time and we have to *flee* certain things in life? We have to learn to *flee* these things.

So verse 19 says... "Do you not know," do we not know, "that our body is the temple of the holy spirit"? This is the place where God will dwell, "which is in you." So God's thinking *is in us* and we have to learn to yield to it. Now, the world doesn't have opportunity for this. The world and the false religions and those not called into this relationship with God, their bodies are not currently the temple of the holy spirit, because God doesn't dwell there. But their bodies can be a temple in the future when God calls them for that purpose.

Continuing on, "which you have from God," so we've received the holy spirit *from God*. That's where God's spirit comes from. So if we understand this sermon today, it's because God is granting it, "and you are not your own," we've been purchased! We have been purchased. We were created *by* God for the purpose of entering Elohim as a spirit being. So we are not our own, we never were. Now, when we were born we grew up our life thinking we *were* our own, we could use our own reasoning and that we would just do the best we could (and it's *always* at the expense of somebody else), but we would live our life to our advantage (which is based on selfishness), *but* once we are called, once we have been baptized and we receive the gift of God's holy spirit which is in us, and we have that opportunity now to choose to yield to God, we're not our own. We've been purchased by the sacrifice of God the Father, which was Jesus Christ. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ paid for us. We've been purchased. We should live a new way of life.

So, how arrogant and how stupid it is for *any* of us, brethren, to yield to the call of any false religion, "the call of any clamorous woman," any "foolish woman..." physically or spiritually? How stupid it is! Because we've been *purchased* for another purpose. We've been purchased by God for the purpose of God living and dwelling in us so that *He* can do His work (righteousness) *in* us out to the benefit of others, to the benefit of His creation.

If we could come to understand our purpose in life, our purpose of being in the Church, which is to allow God to live in us, to allow God to work His work in us, to yield to God, there's great motivation and great *encouragement* from that if we can just understand what God is doing *in* us, that we are to yield, we are to submit ourselves, we're to humble ourselves so that God can achieve His work. And if God can achieve His work in and through us, the reward for what God is doing in us is life-everlasting. We will actually, in the end, learn and be living wisdom all the time, because we'll be spirit and we'll have the thinking and the mind of God.

Verse 20—For you were bought at a price, so God purchased us. He redeemed us by Christ's death.**therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.** So our body and our spirit are God's. They belong to God because we've been purchased; therefore, we should glorify God by the way we live. We should live wisdom. And we have this spiritual understanding; therefore, we can give God the glory. How do we give God the glory? By *living* the truth, by *living* God's way of life, by not looking, by not listening to "the call of the clamorous woman" or the "foolish woman." Not listening. Don't even go there! No point on a physical level or a spiritual level. No point at all. We are to live God's way, and hence, we will glorify God's way because our body and our spirit (the spirit in man) is not ours. It actually belongs to God because we've been purchased.

We must walk in God's way of life and not pollute our spirit, our thinking. We should flee *anything* that might tempt us. We are to flee sin in our thinking. So let's just avoid "the foolish woman," physically and spiritually.

1 Corinthians 10:12—Therefore, let him who thinks he stands, and that word "stands" is "set or established." So we think we are "set" and we're "established" in the truth because we're part of the Body of Christ, the Church of God—PKG. So we can think that, that we're "safe," we're "set," we're firm, we won't go astray. Well, God is telling us here—warning us—**take heed**, and that word "take heed" is "beware, look out" – why? – **lest he fall**. And it can apply to men and women. "Therefore, let him/her who thinks he stands," who thinks he stands in the truth ("I will *never* leave God's Church, I would *never* do that, I can't *imagine* ever leaving God's Church"), well, God is saying, "Take heed, beware, look out." Because? There's temptations around the corner in ways that we least expect. There could be a doctrine coming up that we may not agree with because of our natural carnal reasoning. So, "Beware, look out lest" – why? – "lest he/she fall," falls down spiritually. And that is sin.

To fall down spiritually *is* to sin, this unrepentant sin that we could have because of leaning on our own understanding. So, God has warned us that even though we think we stand there are things we must do, and the first thing is we're to "take heed," to be aware that these things are around there. So, if we (on a physical or a spiritual level) "hear the voice of the foolish woman calling out to us," what should we do? Flee as fast as we can! Don't even *look*! Don't even *think about* the temporary pleasure of sin, the temporary pleasure of looking into false religion or what some idiot is saying (without God's spirit), that criticizes God's Church...is being an idiot, is being *foolish*. They're using their natural carnal mind. *Why* would anybody criticise the Eternal God, Yahweh Elohim?

Now, you'd have to be an idiot! You'd have to be an idiot. You'd have to be a *fool* to criticize God, the Creator! *Why* would you do it? Well, because of ignorance, because of the natural carnal mind and it's pride and selfishness. So we are to take heed, brethren, lest we fall.

If we think we would not give into sexual sin, give into temptation to have an unlawful relationship (physically or spiritually), don't be too sure that you can resist sin. Don't be too sure that we *can* resist the sin. We fall into sin because of pride. So we need to be on guard about the temptation. Once we see the temptation, that's the time to make a right decision. Don't be naive and self-confident, because the moment we're naive (by listening to the call or turning the head to the side, by even going down that path), we are being *self*-confident. So we're not to be naive, and don't be self-confident. Well, self-confident is that very word, *self*-confident. We're relying on our self. We need to be *Godly*-confident. And how are we Godly-confident? By going to the fear of God.

Now, we know other scriptures that talk about "the fear of God is to *hate* evil." Well, that hating of evil has to be within ourselves. We have to hate what is in our minds, the natural carnal mind. We have to *hate* what we *think*, the *way* we think.

Now, we all sin...we all sin. And the Church of God is about sinners, but they're all *repentant* sinners. They are working on themselves. They are fighting themselves, and they're *not* self-confident. Because, we have no confidence in the self. I know that you know that we are selfish, therefore, we have no confidence in the flesh, and that's a good thing. I, personally, have no confidence in the flesh, although I rely a lot on myself when I shouldn't. I know that I have to fight that. I know that I say and do things that *aren't* of God, and I know it all comes from self-confidence or self-reliance and I am being very naive and I'm not fearing God enough. And the whole purpose of life is to learn to fear God, to overcome the self-confidence, and to destroy it and put it down and to become Godly-confident, to trust in God's word. What God is saying in the Proverbs, what God is saying in His word is, "Trust in Me. Live this way of life." And the way you begin to live this way of life is? To fear God. And "the fear of God is that *beginning* of wisdom." It's the *beginning* of learning to "see" the way God thinks. It's the very beginning and it's exciting.

Now, we only have an aspect of God's thinking in our life. We have an aspect. And God provides us through the posts that we "see" God's thinking in a matter, and it comes from Christ, to an apostle, and we "see" spiritually...and it's exciting. And we're not that naive to think that we could work it out, that we could work all these things out. Because we know (we're not confident of ourselves that we can "see" it), we're confident that God will provide His holy spirit to us so that we can "see" what is being written, the *intent* of what is being written, the *understanding* of what is being written.

So, brethren, we are not exempt from temptation. Each and every one of us will be tempted at different times, and these temptations can take many forms and can come in many ways. But let's not be naive to think that we just "stand" and everything is going to be fine. We should "take heed lest we fall," we fall into sin, we give into that temptation and we yield to selfishness, we yield to the broadcasting that goes on in our minds from Satan.

We could fall flat on our faces as easily as anybody else. So we should often just consider this very fact. We often can look out and see the world and see the evil of the world and see how they are living sin, and it's just getting worse and worse. Well, we should be aware that we, too, can live sin very easily, and often we live a sin without knowing it until God reveals it to us many years down the path. So, we have pride, just like the world has pride, only we're aware of our pride, We're aware of the way we think. There are times when we fall down, we *stumble*, because of sin. Well, the answer is that we can repent, that God gives us the ability to see the sin *and* we can choose to repent.

We should forget self-confidence, it's basically useless. Anything to do with self is useless. We need the strength of God, God's spirit dwelling in us to overcome the temptation, to overcome the sin. God's spirit reveals sin to us and we must learn to *yield* to God's spirit. We're to fight the sin, and that's the purpose of life.

Verse 13—No temptation, and this "temptation" is "enticing to sin," because often people say, "no trial." Well, it can be that, but this "no temptation," this "temptation" is "the enticing to sin," which goes on in the mind, **has overtaken**, and that word "overtaken" really isn't there, **has taken you except such as is common to man**. So there's been no test or temptation to sin that comes our way that is beyond the course of what happens to others or what others have had to face. So there is *nothing* that goes on

in our life, there is no temptation that you or me could face that hasn't already happened since the time of Adam. And we know that man has been tempted and tested, has been enticed to sin his whole life. And guess what? Jesus Christ also was enticed to sin, and we read that in Matthew 4, when Satan came. And what was he doing? It was about a test and a trial, but what is that test and trial? It's not a physical thing, it's a spiritual thing. It's enticing to sin. Now, we're all enticed to sin every single day of our life. And often, we sin without even recognizing it because of this "needle in the groove," because of the pattern of responses.

So, no test or temptation to sin has come your way which is beyond the course of what others have had to face. There has been nothing that has been happening to us that others haven't already faced in this world.

...but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted, which is "tried or tempted to sin" that is **beyond what you are able,** something you're not able to handle. Now, that is a choice. We can handle these sins if we yield to God's holy spirit. There is no enticing to sin that is going to come on us that is beyond what we are able to handle, brethren. Nothing! It's a matter of whether we yield or not. Nothing can happen to us if we're close to God. And if we're yielded to God's holy spirit, well, nothing could overtake us. So, God is faithful to provide us the way, the way through this, which is reliant on Him, which is to fear God and rely on His word and live wisdom rather than to give into this enticing.

...but with the temptation, or this "enticing to sin," God, **will also make a way of escape,** a way to flee **that you may be able to bear it,** you're able to endure it. How? By the power of God's holy spirit.

We can escape spiritual temptation *if* we are willing to flee it. If we do fall down and sin, the way of escape is repentance. So, we can escape the *penalty* of the sin (if we do fall, if we do stumble), which is we can repent and God will forgive us.

So this scripture here is talking about "the enticing to sin." So there is *nothing* that can happen to us, there is no "enticing of sin" that is not common to man, but God is faithful that when we are tempted to sin by our own selfishness, we *are* able to bear it, brethren, because there is no temptation (there is no enticing to sin) that God has not given us a way to escape, a way to flee it, that we can bear this, we can bear this temptation. Because of? Repentance. And we can *bear it* because we can *yield* to God's holy spirit. We can *live* wisdom, we can *fear* God, we can fear to sin, we can fear to go against God by sinning. And if we do fear God, we will not sin. We will yield to God's holy spirit. We'll resist it.

Now, that would be great if that was possible every day of our life. But the reality is we do yield to our selfishness, we do yield to temptation, and only Jesus Christ has not *yielded* to this enticing to sin. He's the *only one* that has *ever* succeeded and found the way to escape by the power of God's holy spirit—because it was God's spirit living and dwelling in Him. Now, we won't. We have a way of escape, which is we can yield to God's spirit and not sin, but if we do stumble, we have another way of escape and that way is repentance.

Verse 14—Therefore, my beloved brethren, flee from idolatry, "escape, seek safety by flight, get out from," don't go near anything that could lead us into an unlawful relationship, lead us into sin, lead us into this enticing. Because when the enticing comes, we have a choice. We know we're being enticed, brethren, we know. We know within ourselves that we shouldn't be going down this path. Well, when we're enticed, let's just flee by yielding to God, by crying out to God.

Fleeing potential sinful situations is wisdom at work. I'd like to repeat that. Fleeing potential sinful situations is wisdom at work, which is what we went through in the Proverbs.

Turn to **1 Timothy 6:9**—**But those who desire**, and that really is "set their intent," it's their sole purpose. So it's their purpose. "But those who desire," those who have set their intent, it's their main focus in life **to be rich fall into temptation**. So anybody that desires, has set their minds, this is what they think about all the time, this is their sole focus (is to be rich), which, what is it to be rich? It's about acquiring to self. It's about *self*-protection. It's about building a wall around self, which is money. It's about wealth. Now, when their sole focus is *that* they fall into temptation. So now they're going to fall into this *enticing*. They're going to be tried. They're going to be examined, because of their thinking, because what is going to happen is they're going to be enticed to sin, **and a snare**, so they're going to fall into this, they're going to fall into this "enticing to sin, and a snare." And what's a "snare"? It's a trap. It's a spiritual trap.

So if you look at what a trap is, or a snare is, when it comes to something physical, it's a bird trap. For example, where somebody would build a trap and they'd have a net that's there and they put something on the ground that would tempt or draw or call out to the birds, because they'd see it and they would be drawn to it. Now, with ducks, if you set a snare for a duck what happens is that a hunter will get in the reeds with his gun and his camouflage and he will call out to the bird by blowing the whistle (which is a duck sound), which is a call.

So here it is, someone that is setting their desire on being wealthy, of surrounding themselves by thinking they're going to build something up to make the self better (which is all a vanity) they will fall into this enticement to sin, "and a snare" which is this spiritual trap, because it's going to catch them out, **and into many foolish and harmful lusts**, into many desires and cravings, **which drown men in destruction** (in ruin) **and perdition** (utter destruction). So this sole focus about *self*-wealth or getting for self will cause many other harms to come along. Because you find that the wealthy become bored with their wealth and they tend to test out or experiment in other things. Why? To seek more pleasure, more desires, these harmful lusts. So they're drawn into things. And what will it do? It will lead to destruction, it will lead to ruin and perdition, which is *utter* destruction. Because it says, "they drown men in destruction," which is ruin, "and perdition." Well, "perdition" is "utter destruction, total destruction." You can't come back from it.

If we only focus on acquiring money or wealth, we set a spiritual trap for ourselves. Because? We're letting the mind go a particular way. Because it's not wisdom. Because it's not the fear of God. The fear of God means that we respect God's word. And what does God's word say? *Not* to focus on acquiring wealth, because God will provide what is necessary on a physical level and on a spiritual level.

So if we have anything that we desire, we should be desiring God's holy spirit, the gifts of God's holy spirit *in us* to live out to the benefit of others. So if we ask God for God's spirit, for example, love, to love others, it's not about self, it's not about building the self up to look better, "Oh, look at that person, don't they show a lot of love!" Well, it's not about that at all, it's about God. It's about God's spirit. If we desire love (God's holy spirit, agape, to live and dwell in us) it's about us living it out to the benefit of others. But all the glory for it goes to God because it is God living in us out to the benefit of others and it has nothing to do with our self-glory; it's *all* about God. All the glory for anything spiritual done by anybody has to go to God.

And if we look back at the miracles that the early apostles did, all the glory was to God. It was all done for the magnification of God, to magnify who Jesus Christ was.

So in life our single focus *has* to be about God, living wisdom. We want to have this fear of God. So if we have a focus in life, let's have a focus of fearing God, of listening to God. What does God got to say about how to live?

So this single focus that man has about money and acquiring for self is idolatry (because they're putting something before God, before the fear of God) and will lead to death (physically). But for a member of the Body of Christ, if we've got the wrong focus, it will lead to spiritual death.

Verse 10—For the love of money, which is this wrong focus on getting for self, getting money, **is a root**, (is a main cause) **of all kinds of evil**. So this "love of money," this wrong focus, this wrong intent that we have "*is* a root." It's just one of many evils. It's a cause of many things because this wrong thinking will cause us to go off in many different directions. **...for which some have strayed**, this enticing has happened. This enticing to get wealth, to get for self, they've been seduced by it, because it's like that woman calling out, "Come over here." You know, "the stolen waters." Well, it's the same, "Come over here. Do *this* to get money. Do *that* to get money." And many have strayed *because* of it, and they've been seduced and they've been enticed because of sin **from the faith**. So they've been enticed *from it*. They've been seduced. They've gone astray "from the faith" **in their greediness** (their desires), **and pierced themselves through with many sorrows**.

This desire for money brings spiritual trouble. As time goes on in a person's life they lose their faith completely because of a wrong focus. The outcome will be that they will regret it bitterly at some point in time during their life.

So what is this faith, brethren, that we can stray from? Well, faith is "we believe God and we live what we believe." So we are "of the faith," we are "of the Way," and therefore, that is our single focus. And our single focus is the fear of God. The fear of God, *that* should be our single focus in life. We fear God. We will obey Him. If we fear God, we'll hate the evil within ourselves. Now, if we do those two things we are learning the beginning of wisdom and we will have knowledge and understanding of God and His ways, which the Church does. We have wisdom, we have knowledge and understanding, and we *understand* the Proverbs because of what God has given us. We *understand* and have understanding of Proverbs on a physical level, but also on a spiritual level.

Now, this spiritual understanding has *not* been given to mankind...hasn't been given to mankind. But we, by the mercy of God, have spiritual understanding.

Verse 11—But you, O man of God, flee these things, so we are to flee these things. We're to flee this enticing. We can see it. We know. We're to flee from this wrong desire. Having the wrong desire, we should learn it. We should know it. We should "see" it. We should flee it. That's what it says, "But you, O man of God," which we are. We're members of the Body of Christ. We have God's spirit living and dwelling in us. This is the place where God dwells. God pours His spirit out into the mind. We can yield to it. Well, if we're yielding to it, what will we do? We will "flee these things." We will flee *any* unlawful relationship. We will flee *any* spiritual unlawful relationship (in the sense of false doctrine). We will run from it. Another way of putting this is, "Run for your life, from a physical focus on worldly things that are temporary." I'd like to repeat that, also. We are to run for our lives—because it is our life, it's our spiritual life that's at risk here—we're to run from anything where there is a physical focus, on anything

worldly (anything of the world, anything of Satan's system), because all of these things are passing! They are temporary. They're going to pass away. The only thing that's going to survive is the fear of God. The only thing that's going to survive all of this is wisdom.

And what should we do if we flee these things of Satan's system, of fornication and the love of money? What should we do? These unlawful relationships once we flee them, what should we do? **...and pursue righteousness, Godliness, faith, love, patience, and gentleness.** So we are "to pursue." We are to "follow after." We're to suffer persecution for these things, which is righteousness... What is "righteousness?" The thinking of God in us. We live righteousness when we allow God's spirit to live in us, to flow out to the benefit of others, because God is righteous. Of and by ourselves we are nothing. There is no righteousness. "Godliness." What is "Godliness?" God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us out to the benefit of others. "Live faith." What is faith? We believe God. We have the *fear* of God. We respect God. "Love," which is God's thinking in us. "Patience," which has to come from God because humans aren't patient. But God's patience is Godly. It desires no ill will and it is patient, desiring others to change. "Gentleness." It's a way of thinking. It's about thinking about others in a loving and gentle way, which is desiring the best for them. So we should set our minds on the things that are spiritual.

We are to have a focus on developing the mind of God, living wisdom. We are to have a mind that is one of? Fearing God. So to fear God is to hate evil, and "to fear God is the beginning of wisdom."

Verse 12—Fight the good fight of faith. Well, that's what we should be doing, brethren. We're to fight for this way of life, and one way is to flee fornication, to flee anything false, anything that puts God's ways down. Just flee it. Get rid of it. Have nothing to do with it.

...lay hold on eternal life. So if we're to "fight the good fight," and we are to flee sexual immorality or any immorality, any false relationship that is not one with God in spirit and truth, we will be what? "Laying hold on eternal life," which is what God has promised us. By having a right focus (which is spiritual), we will be "laying hold on eternal life," or "life-everlasting." That's the promise.

...to which you were also called. That's what we were called for. Why were we called in the Body of Christ? To enter Elohim, God's purpose in life, God's purpose in life for us. We were created physical for the purpose of entering Elohim, to be given life-everlasting, "to which you were called," **and have confessed good confession in the presence of many witnesses.** So this "good confession," this is by example.

Now, how do we demonstrate or "confess the good in the presence of many witnesses?" How do we do it? Well, one is we *flee* sin...we flee sin. When we are enticed, we flee it. And that is our "good confession." Our "good confession" is the way we live, the way we live our life.

We'll have one final scripture, brethren, which I won't turn to, I'll just refer to, which is in Jeremiah. Jeremiah 51:6, it says, "Flee from the midst of Babylon," which is "flee, run away from spiritual confusion," and if we do, it says, "and everyone saves his life." So that is the outcome. We are to "flee from the midst of Babylon." We are to flee any spiritual confusion. Now, the only place for spiritual food, the only way to absorb spiritual food, is through God's Church. Outside of that, *why* would we eat garbage, brethren? *Why* would we eat it? *Why* would we consume it when God has told us over and over again that we are to flee Babylon? And if we do, we will save our life, our spiritual life. But the choice is ours. We're given the opportunity to flee, we're given the understanding about how to flee and what to do, but now the choice is ours.

So we'll pick up the sermon series *Understanding the Proverbs* and we'll look at *Part 2* next time.□