

Fidelity and Faith

Proverbs 20:6 – 7

I. Intro

- A. King Solomon recognized as author of book of Proverbs; Solomon known for great wisdom – wasn't from a lot of formal education or personal study, research – Solomon's wisdom came from God per Solomon's request of God (found in **1 Kings 3**)
- B. Today's passage shows us Solomon's gift, given to him by God, for discerning truth about people and administering justice; Solomon's wise counsel for determining the sincerity and intents of people's hearts
- C. **READ Proverbs 20:6 – 7**
- D. Definitions:
 - i. faith - Hebrews 11:1 (NIV)
1 Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. (Rest of Hebrews 11 giving examples of faith); [Webster] – belief and trust in and loyalty to God/fidelity to one's promises
 - ii. fidelity – the quality or state of being faithful
- E. Continue bringing messages on family; today focus on this one area in our culture where fidelity and faithfulness – being practiced, modeled, and taught – can have a major impact in society and in the church
- F. Several weeks ago, going through Baptist Faith and Message statement of beliefs for SBC and we discussed SBC statement of belief on family, mentioned that according to latest stats 1 out of 2 marriages ends in divorce with average length of marriage being only 7 years
- G. Study by George Barna (very well-known and respected pollster among Southern Baptists) discovered that “Baptists have the highest divorce rate of any Christian denomination, and are more likely to get a divorce than even athiests or agnostics
- H. **Fact:** The longer the trend towards infidelity continues in marriages, the fewer examples of fidelity there are for children to learn from
- I. Survey of 186 couples found main factor in long-lasting marriages was resolve to stay committed ... to make marriage a high priority (**REFER v. 7**)
- J. 5 principles to follow to help us avoid, overcome temptation of infidelity and unfaithfulness

II. **1** – Faith Principle

- A. F.A.I.T.H. acrostic – Forsaking All I Trust Him; as believers in Christ, God's Word tells us we have victory over temptation through our faith
- B. 1 John 5:4-5 (**NLT2**)

4 For every child of God defeats this evil world, and we achieve this victory through our faith.

5 And who can win this battle against the world? Only those who believe that Jesus is the Son of God.

- C. **Only one relationship where every person can have all their needs met – personal relationship with Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior; as a person looks to Christ to meet all their needs, then out of overflow of that “love” relationship we can relate to others as we should**
- D. **Only through our faith in Christ can we overcome the temptation to fall into sin of infidelity and unfaithfulness**

III. **2 – Fight Principle**

A. **1 Peter 5:8-9 (NIV)**

8 Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

9 **Resist him, (How?) standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.**

(None of us is alone in this battle)

B. **Ephesians 6:13 (NIV)**

13 Therefore put on the **full** armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to **stand your ground**, and after you have done everything, to stand.

- C. **For too many Christians we use our faith more as a reactionary response – but faith in Jesus Christ is meant to be proactive**
- D. **Statement: *The best defense is good offense***
 - i. **Applied to marriage and family: if I’m continually working and seeking to be proactive when it comes to how I relate to my spouse and my children I will not find myself falling into destructive patterns of relationships; Key is – it takes work**
- E. **Question: So why do so many marriages and families fall apart? Because those involved stop working at it – they give up**
- F. **First questions asked when counseling a couple whose marriage on the verge of ending is – “Are you willing to WORK/FIGHT at saving your marriage?”**
- G. **So far – it’s through our faith we have victory over sin and, because of our faith in Christ we have all the tools needed to fight against temptation to sin**

IV. **3 – Flight Principle**

A. **1 Thessalonians 5:22 (NIV)**

22 Avoid every kind of evil. (KJV) 22 Abstain from **all appearance** of evil.

- B. **Avoid any situation that even APPEARS to be inappropriate**

C. 2 Timothy 2:22 (NIV)

22 Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

D. Some evil desires of youth (not age reference but a level of maturity); think of verse only in sense of sexual desires, but more:

- i. Desire of eyes**
- ii. Desire of flesh**
- iii. Desire for acceptance**
- iv. Desire to achieve**
- v. Desire for recognition**
- vi. Desire to act and act now**

E. Not the “desire” itself that’s evil, God created in us the capability to have desires, but it’s when the desire causes hurt or damage that it becomes evil

F. So, through our faith we have victory over sin and, because of our faith in Christ we have all the tools needed to fight against temptation to sin and, we must avoid even the appearance of sin

V. 4 – Fellowship Principle

A. Simple principle to follow – it’s all about doing certain things together in marriage, in family, in church family, in all relationships; pray together, worship together, study together, grow spiritually together

B. Husbands, encourage your wife to build friendships with godly women

C. Wives, encourage your husband to build friendships with godly men

D. Parents, encourage you children/youth to build friendships with other godly children/youth

E. 2 Corinthians 6:14 (NIV)

14 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?

F. Again, through our faith we have victory of sin and, because of our faith in Christ we have all the tools needed to fight against temptation to sin and, we must avoid even the appearance of sin and, we must not associate with those whose lives are still controlled by sin but “*spur one another on toward love and good deeds*” (Hebrews 10)

VI. 5 – Face the Future Principle

A. Always be mindful of the consequences of your actions

B. Galatians 6:8 (NIV)

8 The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

C. For the final time - through our faith we have victory of sin and, because of our faith in Christ we have all the tools needed to fight against temptation to sin and, we must avoid even the appearance of sin and, we must not associate with those whose lives are still controlled by sin but *“spur one another on toward love and good deeds”* and lastly, let’s always for the sake of our marriages, our families, our church, all our relationships, strive to sow those things that will please the Spirit for God for His honor and glory