

**"Do Not Consent to Do Evil"**  
**(Proverbs 1:10)**

Introduction: The book of Proverbs was written "TO GIVE PRUDENCE TO THE NAIVE, TO THE YOUTH KNOWLEDGE AND DISCRETION" (1:4). It is therefore a book which is particularly useful in the raising of your children. But it is not only for your children, but for you who are adults as well. Solomon continues, "A WISE MAN WILL HEAR AND INCREASE IN LEARNING, AND A MAN OF UNDERSTANDING WILL ACQUIRE WISE COUNSEL" (v. 5). The lessons which the book of Proverbs teaches us are the things which we should have learned growing up, things which are necessary to know for life. Maybe some of you here know what the book teaches. But many of us here, whether raised in covenant households or not, may never have had this kind of instruction. Perhaps our parents didn't study the book of Proverbs. Or perhaps they did, but never practiced it. For one reason or another, each of you here this morning need this book, for it teaches you how to live in a way that will glorify and honor God.

This morning our passage addresses one of the major problems which you as Christians have to face in this world. It is one which is particularly concerning to those of us who are parents. That is the problem of peer pressure. Some of you children here this morning may not recognize this word, but most of you will understand what I mean by it. It is that pressure you feel when your friends come to you and try to influence you to do something. Maybe they try and talk you into something which isn't necessarily bad, such as coming outside to play a game with them. Or maybe they try and get you to do something wrong, something which is sinful, such as stealing something, or vandalizing somebody's house. Or maybe they don't try and get you to do anything. But because they are doing something, you feel pressured to do it as well. It is called "peer" pressure, because it comes from those who about the same age as you, from those who are your friends or schoolmates. It is called "pressure" because they try and influence you to do something which you would not have done if they had left you alone. Peer pressure can be good or bad. It is good when your friends influence you to do good things. But it is very destructive when they entice you to sin. We use "peer pressure" most often in a negative sense because your friends will more often than not want to do bad things. And we, as parents to whom the Lord has entrusted the oversight of your souls, are very concerned about that. We want to help you avoid anything that will lead you astray, off the path of life. We know that what the apostle Paul said is true, "DO NOT BE DECEIVED: 'BAD COMPANY CORRUPTS GOOD MORALS'" (1 Cor. 15:33). And we want to do everything that we can to keep you away from those who will influence you to commit sin, lest their evil habits become your's as well.

All of us are affected in one way or another by peer pressure. But from what Solomon tells us this morning, this is not a new thing. Since the Fall of man, the godly have had to wrestle with those who try and tempt them to do evil. But Solomon also tells us this morning what you must do to overcome this bad influence from others. And what he is teaching us is,

***When the ungodly try and persuade you to do evil, you must fear the Lord enough to turn away from them.***

***First realize that you will be tempted to do evil in this life by wicked men, and secondly, you need to fear the Lord enough to turn away from evil.***

- I. There Are Many Things Which Sinners Will Do to Try and Entice You to Commit Sin.**

- A. Don't Ever Forget that It Is the Nature of Man to Run Toward Evil.
1. Man, in the garden, was by nature pure, and wholly inclined towards purity and holiness.
    - a. God had made man in His image, in order to have fellowship with him.
    - b. He endowed man with a true love for holiness and virtue, and that is what Adam and Eve delighted in.
    - c. They delighted in walking with God in the garden. They delighted in hearing His Word. They delighted in doing His will in everything that He told them.
    - d. The garden of Eden, like heaven, was a world of pure and holy love between God and His creatures.
  2. But man, since the Fall, is wholly inclined towards evil and not good.
    - a. The sin of Adam and Eve utterly destroyed their moral likeness to God's image.
    - b. They no longer delighted in the things of God, but they feared Him and sought to hide themselves from Him.
    - c. And this curse fell upon all men. The sad commentary on the human race now is, "THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE; THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD; ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE" (Rom. 3:10-12).
- B. And Because All Men After the Fall Are Now Evil by Nature, You Must Expect that that Is What They Will Seek for Themselves and For You.
1. They will want to sin themselves, and they will give you many reasons why you should as well.
    - a. You especially who are young here this morning, but also you who are older, need to realize that those who are of the world will only want to do the works of their father the devil. Jesus said to the Jews, "YOU ARE OF YOUR FATHER THE DEVIL, AND YOU WANT TO DO THE DESIRES OF YOUR FATHER. HE WAS A MURDERER FROM THE BEGINNING, AND DOES NOT STAND IN THE TRUTH, BECAUSE THERE IS NO TRUTH IN HIM. WHENEVER HE SPEAKS A LIE, HE SPEAKS FROM HIS OWN NATURE; FOR HE IS A LIAR, AND THE FATHER OF LIES" (John 8:44).
    - b. You cannot assume that anything the children of the world want to do is good, rather, expect that they will try and lead you into evil.
      - (i) This is what Solomon is warning his son of in our text this morning. He says, "IF THEY SAY, 'COME WITH US, LET US LIE IN WAIT FOR BLOOD, LET US AMBUSH THE INNOCENT WITHOUT CAUSE; LET US SWALLOW THEM ALIVE LIKE SHEOL, EVEN WHOLE, AS THOSE WHO GO DOWN TO THE PIT; WE SHALL FIND ALL KINDS OF PRECIOUS WEALTH, WE SHALL FILL OUR HOUSES WITH SPOIL; THROW IN YOUR LOT WITH US, WE SHALL ALL HAVE ONE PURSE'" (Prov. 1:11-14).
      - (ii) Solomon does not use a subtle example, where you might debate about whether it is right or wrong, but uses a very striking one. It is very clear from Scripture that to take another's life unlawfully is a terrible sin.
      - (iii) But though that prospect may seem revolting, the more alluring facets of the proposition are there as well.

They tell him, "If you do this we will all be rich; we will fill our houses with much spoil." And, "if you cast your lot with us, we will all be equal sharers of the goods."

- (iv) Solomon wrote, "AMAN OF VIOLENCE ENTICES HIS NEIGHBOR, AND LEADS HIM IN A WAY THAT IS NOT GOOD" (Prov. 16:29).
- (v) This is what Balaam did when he counselled Balaak to stumble the children of Israel by providing them with the opportunity to commit sexual immorality (Num. 31:16).
- (vi) This is one of the reasons why Jesus condemned the Pharisees, because not only did they commit evil acts, but their disciples were even worse. He said, "WOE TO YOU SCRIBES AND PHARISEES, HYPOCRITES, BECAUSE YOU TRAVEL ABOUT ON SEA AND LAND TO MAKE ONE PROSELYTE; AND WHEN HE BECOMES ONE, YOU MAKE HIM TWICE AS MUCH A SON OF HELL AS YOURSELVES" (Matt. 23:15).
- (vii) Paul, in Romans 1, tells us that the wicked who know that their practices are worthy of death, "NOT ONLY DO THE SAME, BUT ALSO GIVE HEARTY APPROVAL TO THOSE WHO PRACTICE THEM" (v. 32).
- (viii) Yes, the devil will do everything in his power to motivate his children to entice you to evil. And the only thing that restrains him, and them, the only thing that keeps them from going more headlong into these things than they do, is the common restraining grace of God.

2. There will even be those within the church who will seek to entice you to do evil.
  - a. Paul said to the Ephesians elders at Miletus, "I KNOW THAT AFTER MY DEPARTURE SAVAGE WOLVES WILL COME IN AMONG YOU, NOT SPARING THE FLOCK; AND FROM AMONG YOU OWN SELVES MEN WILL ARISE, SPEAKING PERVERSE THINGS, TO DRAW AWAY THE DISCIPLES AFTER THEM" (Acts 20:29-30).
  - b. And remembering that even true believers still wrestle with sin, we may even be tempted to lead one another astray.
  - c. For this reason you must always be on your guard, whether in the church or without.
3. "'My son' -- said the wise son of Sirach -- 'if thou come to serve the Lord prepare thy heart for temptation' (Ecclus ii.1)" (Bridges 5).

## II. But the Scriptural Command to You this Morning Is, Do Not Consent! Fear the Lord and Turn Away from Evil!

- A. You Must Never Allow Yourself Any Freedom When It Comes to Sin.
  1. Sin is like a spiritual leprosy, when, once it has infected any area of the body, will spread to the whole.
  2. Sin is something that you are to leave no room in your life for. Paul wrote, "BUT PUT ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND MAKE NO PROVISION FOR THE FLESH IN REGARD TO ITS LUSTS" (Rom. 13:14).
  3. As we saw in our reading of the Law this morning, even if those nearest and dearest to you try and entice you to sin, you must not consent. "IF YOUR BROTHER, YOUR MOTHER'S SON, OR YOUR SON OR DAUGHTER, OR THE WIFE YOU CHERISH, OR YOUR FRIEND WHO IS AS YOUR OWN SOUL, ENTICE YOU SECRETLY, SAYING, 'LET US GO AND SERVE OTHER

GODS' . . . YOU SHALL NOT YIELD TO HIM OR LISTEN TO HIM; AND YOUR EYE SHALL NOT PITY HIM, NOR SHALL YOU SPARE OR CONCEAL HIM" (Deu. 13:6, 8).

- a. Ahab married the idolatrous Jezebel, daughter of the king of the Sidonians, and went and served the Baals (1 Kings 16:31).
- b. Solomon took to himself many foreign wives. And the sad commentary of his life was that, "WHEN SOLOMON WAS OLD, HIS WIVES TURNED HIS HEART AWAY AFTER OTHER GODS; AND HIS HEART WAS NOT WHOLLY DEVOTED TO THE LORD HIS GOD, AS THE HEART OF DAVID HIS FATHER HAD BEEN" (1 Kings 11:4).
- c. If those who are the closest to you in life, if even your own wife, should seek to lead you astray from the Lord, you must not listen to them. You must not give your heart over to sin.
- d. If you consent in your heart to do the evil suggested even for a moment, but do not actually do it, you have already sinned.
  - (i) Hadn't Eve already sinned in her heart before she reached out and ate of the forbidden fruit (Gen. 3:6)?
  - (ii) Hadn't David already fallen when he lusted after Bathsheba, even before he had his messengers take her (2 Sam. 11:2-4)?
  - (iii) Achan confessed that before he took those things from Jericho which were under the ban, that he first "COVETED THEM" (Josh. 7:21).
  - (iv) If you consent to any sin, you are already guilty, even if you do not carry out that sin.
  - (v) You must never allow the snares of Satan to capture your heart.

B. But You Must Fear God, and Resist the Devil, For He Will Flee From You.

1. Consider what the consequences of your actions would be if you did not fear the Lord and turn from sin.
  - a. David's sin with Bathsheba cost him the life of his son who was conceived by that union, and the peace of his household.
  - b. Achan's sin of taking the things which were devoted to destruction ended in the destruction of his whole household.
  - c. Adam and Eve's sin resulted in their own expulsion from paradise and the comfortable presence of God, as well as bringing a curse upon the whole human race.
  - d. Sin always has serious consequences, whether physical through sickness or death, or spiritual, through the searing of the conscience or the hardening of the heart against righteousness.
  - e. Solomon warned his son, "MY SON, DO NOT WALK IN THE WAY WITH THEM. KEEP YOUR FEET FROM THEIR PATH, FOR THEIR FEET RUN TO EVIL, AND THEY HASTEN TO SHED BLOOD. INDEED, IT IS USELESS TO SPREAD THE NET IN THE EYES OF ANY BIRD; BUT THEY LIE IN WAIT FOR THEIR OWN BLOOD; THEY AMBUSH THEIR OWN LIVES. SO ARE THE WAYS OF EVERYONE WHO GAINS BY VIOLENCE; IT TAKES AWAY THE LIFE OF ITS POSSESSORS" (Prov. 1:15-19).
2. But you must not only think about the consequences of your actions in this life, you must also live in view of eternity. You must look ahead to see what the results of your actions will

be in the future.

- a. If you are a Christian here this morning, then sin could shorten your life on earth, and rob you of the true joy of serving Him here longer for a full reward. The more you sin, the more time you will need to recover from its effects, and the less time you will have to bear the fruits of righteousness.
  - b. You should also seriously consider that any sin you allow in your life as a general rule may indicate a much more serious problem. You may in the end be shown to be a gospel hypocrite. You confessed that you knew Christ, but on the basis of your actions, He will say, "I NEVER KNEW YOU."
  - c. For those of you who are not Christians here this morning, be warned that every sin you commit in this life increases the punishment that awaits you. It would be better for you to be dropped into hell now, if you never come to Christ, for every one of your sins is heating hell that much hotter for you!
  - d. I counsel you to fear the Lord. Turn from your sins now. Come to Christ in faith and embrace Him with all your heart! And you will find a Savior that has died in your place to release you from the eternal consequences of all of your sin.
3. But don't consider only the consequences of sin, but also consider the victory which the saints of God enjoyed because they trusted in the Lord and turned their hearts from sin.
- a. When Joseph was tempted day after day by Potipher's wife, he said to her, "HOW . . . COULD I DO THIS GREAT EVIL, AND SIN AGAINST GOD?" (Gen. 39:8, 9). And he did not consent. Yes, he was thrown into prison because Potipher's wife falsely accused him of trying to rape her. But he avoided being thrown into the fiery furnace by God by not lying with her. And God also highly honored Joseph by making him second only to Pharaoh in Egypt.
  - b. Consider also Job who lost all of his possessions, his dear children, and his health. He was sorely tempted by the devil and by his wife to curse God and die. And yet we read, "THROUGH ALL THIS JOB DID NOT SIN NOR DID HE BLAME GOD" (Job 1:22). He did not consent to do evil. And what was his end? We read in the epistle of James, "BEHOLD, WE COUNT THOSE BLESSED WHO ENDURED. YOU HAVE HEARD OF THE ENDURANCE OF JOB AND HAVE SEEN THE OUTCOME OF THE LORD'S DEALINGS, THAT THE LORD IS FULL OF COMPASSION AND IS MERCIFUL" (5:11).
  - c. And when you set your heart on honoring the Lord and giving Him glory and do not consent to do sin, you will in the end be blessed with the faithful and receive a full reward.
4. You will never be able to eliminate all temptation from your life. You couldn't if you wanted to because much of it is outside of your control. But what God does expect is that you continually resist it steadfastly in the Spirit.
- a. You must agree with the Law of God and confess that it is good (Rom. 7:16) and turn from evil.
  - b. You must be like Timothy and run from these things to

embrace the things of God. Paul wrote, "BUT FLEE FROM THESE THINGS, YOU MAN OF GOD; AND PURSUE RIGHTEOUSNESS, GODLINESS, FAITH, LOVE, PERSEVERANCE AND GENTLENESS" (1 Tim. 6:11).

- c. You must seek to distance yourself from anyone or anything that would tempt you to sin, whether it be the TV, or a place that you shouldn't go, or even if it be close friends, or family members. Whatever it is in your life that entices you to sin, you must cut off its influence and cast it from you.
- d. Remember, that if you fall into sin, you have only yourself to blame. God does not tempt you or anyone to evil (James 1:13-15). And the devil can only tempt. He cannot make you do anything against your will. When you sin, it is because you want to sin. Its because you have given your consent to it. And you are the one whom God will hold accountable for it.
- e. People of God, both covenant children and adults, realize that temptations will come. Be ready for them. Purpose in your hearts now that you will not sin. "PUT ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND MAKE NO PROVISION FOR THE FLESH IN REGARD TO ITS LUSTS" (Rom. 13:14). Don't say in your heart, "I will resist so far, and then I will give in for God will forgive me." When you think like that you have already given the consent of your heart to sin. You have already made provision for it. Don't let the devil have a foothold in your heart. Close up those holes. Cement them in with holy desires and holy affections, so that when the devil comes, he will slide right off. Purpose in your hearts to keep yourself for God, and for God alone. You have covenanted to be His, so give yourself fully to Him. Amen.