



[Ecclesiastes 7:26](#)

(26) And I find more bitter than death the woman, whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands: whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her.

King James Version

From his own life, Solomon vividly provides an example of temptation that requires wisdom to face and overcome. He describes a woman whose heart is “snares and nets and whose hands are fetters.” It seems he writes of this woman in [Proverbs 7:1-27](#).

[Jesus](#) testifies, “For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks” ([Matthew 12:34](#)). In this case, the temptress' very heart is snares and nets, which she uses with consummate skill to accomplish her purpose. Notice her flattering secrecy. It is as though she is letting him in on something nobody else has access to. She makes it seem as if she deliberately sought him to the exclusion of all others. She puts her all into the part, an actress playing in a dangerous drama. She continues to use alluring salesmanship, emphasizing enjoyment and safety, since her husband would be away for a long time. This fellow is trapped from the beginning, as it seems he deliberately took the path right past the place where she frequently plied her trade.

What principles are at play in this illustration to provide wisdom in facing temptations beyond the use of a prostitute? The temptress stands as a type of the enticement of any unlawful desire burning in the mind as that desire seeks fulfillment. Notice how many tricks the prostitute employs to play on her customer's desire.

In another situation, that desire might be for drugs. Some are greatly vexed by the desire to smoke, while others have a keen yearning for alcohol. Others crave great quantities of food or certain foods that are not healthy for them. These days, through its easy availability on the Internet, pornography is a strong temptation. Perhaps the possibility of winning is the lure that draws some to gamble. Some desire to skip work or school. Many drivers hanker to drive much faster than the law allows. Sometimes it is a

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desire to put off a distasteful chore that needs doing.

Whatever the desire, the enticement's purpose is to induce some form of pleasure. It is like a siren's song, increasing the pressure by offering one reason after another why it would not be so bad to fulfill that desire just one more time. All too often, the lusting person becomes progressively more willing to fulfill his desire until he caves in. He can no longer endure the sacrifice of denying himself.

In reality, we argue ourselves into surrendering and fulfilling our desire. Like the young man in Solomon's illustration, we deliberately walk in temptation's direction. Despite the Bible's counsel regarding wisdom's value, when we give in, it has done us little good to that point, if at all.

In an overall sense, Solomon found what we might label "the overwhelming, general sinfulness of mankind." Worded another way, he found that sinfulness is not rare and not hard to find. In fact, it is everywhere, universal. Conversely, it is righteousness, purity, and wisdom that are hard to find.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

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