

Intro:

Last time we talked about the characteristics of Sir Simple. We noted the following:

1. Being simple is not a sin, but a phase in one's growth toward maturity
2. Simplicity is a stage in one's growth; but one cannot remain simple just as one cannot remain an adolescent
3. Simplicity is not remedied by time, but by choice
4. While simplicity is normally a malady of the young, every age has its pitfalls
5. Simplicity is a condition fraught with dangers
6. Simplicity, while a dangerous malady, is not an incurable one

Today we are going to look at how Sir Simple came to fall into sin. I think you will find this description quite enlightening.

Remember that we are talking about two ways of life in this discussion. We are not just talking about sexual morality or immorality, although that subject certainly is covered by this discussion.

Our text today is Proverbs 7

I. Chapter outline

- A. Prologue (1-5)
- B. Drama (6-23)
- C. Epilogue (24-27)

II. Observations¹

- A. Sir Simple did not fall because he was **simple**. (7.7)
 1. Sir Simple is one of several simple ones
 2. Sir Simple is the only one in his crowd who is seduced by Madame Folly
 3. Sir Simple falls because he is sinful — he is inclined to sin, and he chooses to follow his inclinations

¹ Title and many major points taken from Robert L. Deffinbaugh, *The Way of the Wise: Studies in the Book of Proverbs* (Biblical Studies Press, 1996), www.bible.org Title from p. 24.

B. Sir Simple was caught because he **sought** Madame Folly.

1. Madame Folly often wanders about looking for victims (11)
2. In this case, she is at home and Sir Simple is wandering (8, cf. 9.14)

“I do not think he was near her house by accident. It is my opinion that he wandered toward her house purposefully, knowing where she lived.”²

3. Sir Simple may well have *lingered* about her house, to ‘see what he could see’

I think Sir Simple knew about Madam Folly because she was the talk of the town. He lingered about her house because he wanted to get a look at her, to see what sin was really like. I doubt very much that he planned to sin, or even wanted to initially, but he was looking for a thrill.³

Delitzsch believes that Sir Simple loitered about the corner of Madam Folly, waiting and watching for her. He says, “On the street he went backwards and forwards, yet so that he kept near to her corner (i.e. of the woman who he waited for), i.e. he never withdrew himself far from the corner of her house, and always again returned to it.”⁴

Deffinbaugh tells the story of a man who was offended about what he saw going on near a rock concert. “There was a body of water nearby and the man indignantly declared that he was repulsed by the fact that a number of young people were bathing nude, and that he knew this was so because he had been watching them for hours — with binoculars.”⁵

- Was Sir Simple *actively* seeking sin?

² Deffinbaugh, 27.

³ Deffinbaugh, 27.

⁴ Franz Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Proverbs of Solomon*, trans. M. G Easton, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, n.d.), 159.

⁵ Deffinbaugh, *Way of the Wise*, 27.

“Many of us may prefer to be pure, but would like to be propositioned first, before we say no.”⁶

- What Bible admonitions can you think of that warn and rebuke Sir Simple here? (Make no provision for the flesh)

C. Sir Simple was **seduced**, but not **deceived**.

1. Madame Folly is not deceptive in her approach

a. She is dressed like a harlot, but she is not one (10)

Why does she dress this way? Because that is what Sir Simple was looking for.

b. She greets him with a kiss (13)

c. She reveals she is eager to drink the cup of love (18)

d. She tells him she is married (19)

2. Sir Simple knew exactly what he was getting into — because in his heart, it is what he wanted.

Don't answer out loud! Can you think of sins where you set yourself up to be seduced? [All the while saying to yourself, 'I'm not going to do it.']

Who are you lying to when this is happening?

D. The sin of Sir Simple was not **sudden**, but **sequential**.

1. In a certain sense, Sir Simple's fall does seem sudden (22-23)

2. However, Sir Simple's decision is merely the end of a long sequence of bad decisions

a. He walked to the wrong neighbourhood

b. He did so at the wrong time of day (at night)

c. He did not flee when Madame Folly propositioned him

d. He pondered her request

⁶ Deffinbaugh, 27.

“My point is that none of us should ever willingly put ourselves in the position of having to make a decision with Madam Folly standing before us on a lonely street corner in the middle of the night. Decisions made in these circumstances are exceedingly dangerous. Once we have determined to court sin, going as far as we can without getting caught, we are an easy prey for Madam Folly. How much easier it would have been for Sir Simple to have decided to go home and go to bed, than to ‘stand on the corner, watching all the girls go by.’”⁷

3. When did Sir Simple make his first mistake? Where did the sequence begin? See (24-27)

Verse 25: “Let not thine heart decline to her ways”

- a. Sir Simple has a heart problem
- b. Sir Simple despised the admonitions of his father (1-5)
 - 1) Guard wisdom as the apple of your eye (2)
 - 2) Allow the Word to master you (3, compare Dt 6.5-9, 20-25)

Not just follow your father, but make God’s word your own most precious possession
 - 3) Make Wisdom your ‘sister’ (4) [possibly in the sense that the bride of Song of Sol. is the bridegroom’s ‘sister’]

This is a committed relationship, no ‘stranger in the night’.
- c. When did Sir Simple fall? Not v. 22, but v. 1-5

What provisions does God give to you to make wisdom your own, your intimate friend?

Conclusion:

Jas 1.13-15 Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.¹⁴ But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.¹⁵ Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.

⁷ Deffinbaugh, 28.

“I have been impressed with the fact that the first nine chapters of Proverbs are almost entirely devoted to extolling wisdom and exhorting the reader to pursue it as the most valuable treasure one can acquire. Diligence and discipline are required to obtain it, but it is worth every effort. Why is so much time and effort spent to establish this point? Sir Simple has reminded us that we are inclined not to regard wisdom as highly as we must if we are to talk in the way of wisdom. Sir Simple disregarded wisdom because it was not that valuable or important to him. We disregard the Word of God and our relationship with the Lord for the same reason. No one is willing to make the sacrifices wisdom requires without first regarding it as worth the effort.

“This also serves to rebuke those of us who would seek to promote the Gospel by minimizing its cost. In one sense, salvation costs men nothing, for we cannot contribute anything to it by our works (Eph. 2:8-9). But while our salvation is free, it was not cheap, for it was obtained at the cost of the shed blood of our precious Lord. Becoming a Christian is no simple matter of giving mental assent to the fact of the Gospel. To be saved, men must not only believe certain things about Him, they must believe in Him, as God’s only provision for the forgiveness of sins and the gift of eternal life. Becoming a Christian involves much more than a once-in-time decision, as important as that is. Being saved is choosing to walk in a new way. It involves repentance — the forsaking of sin, and following the Lord Jesus as His disciple. When we minimize the cost of discipleship, we imply that being saved is not all that important. I find the Book of Proverbs stressing both the value of wisdom and the need for diligence and devotion on the part of those who would be wise. Let us never diminish the value of our salvation, nor imply that following the Savior is a matter of minimal commitment and cost.”⁸

⁸ Deffinbaugh, 30.