

Continuous Exercise

Strengthening Your Purity – Count the Cost – Proverbs 7

Doctors like us to exercise.

I try at times, but it doesn't seem to do anything. Then my doctor tells me that it has to be a consistent thing. I thought I was being consistent. I tried for a whole week!

Exercise is something that we all should do because it will benefit our quality of life. It is not something we will see immediate results in, but it will have long lasting effects. When I consider ten years from now, I want to be able to keep up with my boys in sports and outdoors stuff. When I think about twenty-five years from now, I want to enjoy wrestling with my grandkids without feeling too sore. When I think of thirty years from now, I want to still be caring for my wife and enjoying our home.

Continuous exercise is one way to accomplish those goals, but it is hard to see all that in the here and now. It is hard to count the cost when the reward is so far off, but counting the cost is vital. What I decide to do in the moment will affect my future.

Why is counting the cost so important?

Why is counting the cost sometimes hard to do?

We want the end result in the here and now. We want instant results. We want to be able to exercise one day and be fit the next. We want to invest in the morning and be rich in the evening. It is instant gratification.

This is the exact opposite of what the father is teaching his son in Proverbs 7. This father is teaching his son the importance of strengthening one's sexual purity. He gives his son principles to live by and an example to heed. The father comes to the end of this lesson and now challenges his son to consider the cost. It is not about what you can get now, but what you can give later.

The young man in verse twenty-two follows the woman into her bed chamber and they enjoy a passionate night of sex. He does not realize, as the father explains to his son, that he is like an ox being led to the slaughter or a bird to the snare. In both examples, it is his life that he loses.

How does immorality steal someone's life?

"Now therefore, my sons, listen to me, and pay attention to the words of my mouth. Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways, do not stray into her paths."

Proverbs 7:24-25

“Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.”

1 Corinthians 6:18-20

The young man loses his virginity, his reputation, his righteousness, and possibly his life among other things. Immorality was punishable by death. This woman was married and the husband could have them both stoned. Also, there is the quality of life. This young man will always deal with this affair. It will affect his marriage in that it lessens the sanctity of marriage. It will play a part in his parenting and raising of his own family. His quality of life has been damaged.

Verse twenty-three explains that he did not take into account what a lack of sexual purity would cost him.

The father explains to his son the importance of this lesson. In twenty-four and twenty-five he tells his son to listen his words and then provides some powerful reminders of the potential of losing his sexual purity.

He first tells his son, “Do not turn your heart aside to her ways!” This is a reminder to keep in the Word. The father is telling his son not to let himself be led into the desires and passions of her way. He is telling him to keep his heart fixed on God’s Word. Like David, we need to be like the deer panting for God’s Word. The father is saying, “Be intentional about what your heart is fixed on!”

Why is it important to be intentional about our focus?

The father then tells his son to guard against being led astray. The first is intentional; the second is unintentional. Think of it this way. The father is explaining to his son that he must be offensively going after God and defensively protecting his purity. It is being aware of the need to be offensive and defensive.

Read verse twenty-six and explain why we need to defend our sexual purity.

Too many people have damaged and destroyed their sexual purity. The father explains that we need to be offensive about our relationship with God, but defensive about our sexual purity, because too many good people have fallen. The Hebrew word for “numerous” helps us to understand that it is not just immature people who have damaged their sexual purity, but even strong or mighty men. In other words, anyone can fall.

It always comes as a surprise when someone who is a spiritual leader falls. It comes down to these two things. They may have been offensive about their relationship with God, but did not make a point to defend their sexual purity. Maybe they thought being offensive was enough, but they were mistaken.

We must count the cost because our lives are at stake, but there is a greater motivation to stay pure. Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 6:18-20 that sexual immorality is the only sin that is against one’s own body. We were bought with a price and our bodies are not for our own self-centered use.

We must work at strengthening our sexual purity.

*"If we confess our sins,
He is faithful and
righteous to forgive us
our sins and to cleanse
us from all
unrighteousness."*

1 John 1:9

- We must strengthen ourselves in God's Word.
- We must learn the lessons of life from a safe place.
- We must commit to do right before the time for decision comes.
- We must not play with the fire of sexual impurity.
- We must not think that sin will be invisible in the darkness.
- We must understand the path to destruction.
- We must count the cost.

Have you spent time defending your sexual purity? In what ways can you better strengthen your sexual purity?

One final note, the father never tells the son that sex is not good. He never paints a picture that physical intimacy is dirty or disgusting. Physical intimacy is meant to be enjoyed according to God's rules. The author of Proverbs is the author of Song of Solomon. Sex feels good, but it is designed by God for a husband and wife to enjoy. This father is explaining how to protect intimacy in marriage and what happens when the intimacy between a husband and wife is taken out of that relationship. Sexual purity is not something that you protect until marriage, but something you defend your entire life.

If you have damaged or destroyed your sexual purity, there is still forgiveness of sins. 1 John 1:9 promises that if we confess our sins, God will forgive us and help us to live righteously. Determine today that you will strengthen your sexual purity. Commit today to play offensive and defense.

You may be laughed at and ridiculed for your commitment to sexual purity, but when you consider the cost, I would rather listen to a Father who knows best, than a world with a terrible track record.

I need to exercise to strengthen my sexual purity.

Let's hit the gym!

What do you need to do in response to this lesson?
