

Friends That Will Ruin You: Proverbs 1:10-19 Explained

Scriptures for Today

Proverbs 1:10-19

My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. 11 If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause: 12 Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit: 13 We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil: 14 Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse: 15 My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path: 16 For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood. 17 Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird. 18 And they lay wait for their own blood; they lurk privily for their own lives. 19 So are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain; which taketh away the life of the owners thereof.

INTRODUCTION

Let me ask you a question. How many of you can think of someone whose life was completely changed by the people they chose to spend time with? Maybe they started drinking. Maybe they got involved in drugs. Maybe they ended up in jail. Maybe they walked away from church. Maybe they destroyed their marriage.

Now let me ask you another question. Did they wake up one morning and say, "Today I'd like to ruin my life." Of course not. Nobody plans to destroy their own life. It always starts much smaller. It starts with one invitation. One conversation. One friend. One bad decision.

Imagine standing at a fork in the road. One road is narrow. One road is wide. One group says, "Come with us." The other road looks lonely. Which road do you choose? That's Proverbs 1 verses 10-19 that we're going to look at today. Today Solomon isn't warning his son about lions. He's warning him about people.

I. THE FIRST WORD IS "MY SON"

Proverbs 1:10

My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.

Before Solomon gives a warning, he reminds his son of something. "My son." This is important. We need to care for the people here just as they are family. "My son. My daughter. My friend. Dad. Mom."

This isn't a judge speaking to a criminal right there. This isn't a police officer giving orders. This is a loving father protecting his child. He's giving him advice and that son can either take the advice or leave the advice.

Notice he doesn't say, "If sinners threaten you." He says, "**If sinners entice thee.**" That's important. Sin doesn't usually knock on your door and say, "Hi, I'm here to ruin your life." Sin smiles. Sin flatters. Sin promises. Sin invites.

Imagine a fisherman. Does he throw a bare hook into the water? No. He hides the hook so the fish doesn't see the hook. The fish doesn't bite the hook. The fish bites the bait. The fish never sees the hook. He only sees the worm. If he saw the hook, he would never bite. That's temptation. That's how it works. The devil never shows you the hook. He only shows you the bait.

Nobody advertises the hook that's going to get you. They advertise the bait. The invitation always sounds exciting. It never sounds destructive. For example, think about a typical beer commercial. What do they show you? They don't show the drunk driver wrapped around a tree. They don't show the broken marriage. They don't show the man losing his job because he showed up drunk. They don't show the liver disease or the addiction. They don't show the child wondering why Dad never came home. They don't show the DUI or the jail cell.

What do they show instead? Friends laughing around a grill. A beautiful beach. A football game. A fishing trip. Attractive people. Music. Smiles. Everybody looks happy. Why? Because they're selling the bait—not the hook.

That's exactly what Solomon is warning about here. Sin never advertises the consequences. It advertises the pleasure. It says, "Come with us." It never says, "Come destroy your life." That's why Solomon says, "**Consent thou not.**" Notice he doesn't tell his son to argue. He doesn't tell him to negotiate. He says, **Don't agree with them.** Sometimes the most spiritual word you can say is one simple word: "No." **Sin always promises more than it delivers.**

II. LISTEN TO THEIR SALES PITCH

Proverbs 1:11-14

If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause: 12 Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit: 13 We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil: 14 Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse:

Now listen to these sinners. Take a close look at what they say. Notice something. They never mention consequences. They only mention excitement. "Come with us." Isn't that how temptation works? Nobody says, "Come with us and ruin your future." Nobody says, "Come with us and destroy your marriage." Nobody says, "Come with us and end up addicted."

They say, "Come with us." Imagine a teenager getting into a car. His friends say, "Come on. Don't be scared. Everybody's doing it. It'll only be one time." How many lives have been ruined by those words? One invitation. One night. One decision.

Notice something else. Count how many times they say, "US" and "WE" and "OUR." Do you see all those times? Us, We, Our. This is how you get talked into doing things that are evil. Sin loves company. People often feel safer doing wrong when they're surrounded by others doing the same thing.

But ten people going the wrong direction don't suddenly make it the right direction. Imagine ten blind people walking toward a cliff. Does having ten of them make it safer? No. "But we've got a big group of people going the wrong way. If enough join us, maybe it could be the right way." No, they will simply go right over the edge together. **Sin always promises more than it delivers.**

Notice verse 14 there. "Cast in they lot among us; let us all have one purse." They are saying: "Join us. Become one of us. We'll all share in whatever we get." They are trying to make crime sound like friendship, brotherhood, and easy money. Notice they don't say: "Come help us rob people."

They say: "**Cast in thy lot among us.**" In other words: "Be on our team. Join our group. You'll belong." Then they say: "**Let us all have one purse.**" That means: "Whatever we steal, we'll split it. Everybody gets a share. You'll make money too."

Great illustration: Imagine a group of teenagers saying, "Come hang out with us. We'll all pitch in. We'll all make money. Nobody gets left out. We're like family." That sounds great until you discover they're selling drugs, stealing cars, or committing crimes together.

Or a workplace example: Imagine someone at work says, "Nobody reports all their income. We all do it. You'll make more money. Come join us." They aren't just tempting you with money. They're tempting you with belonging. That's what makes peer pressure so powerful. People don't just want the money. They want acceptance. They want to be part of the group.

Satan knows people have a deep desire to belong. That's why temptation so often comes wrapped in friendship. The sinners don't say, "Come ruin your life." They say, "**Come be one of us.**" They promise acceptance before they ever mention the sin. Sin never introduces itself as destruction. It introduces itself as friendship, excitement, and opportunity.

III. THEY NEVER TELL YOU THE PRICE

Proverbs 1:15-16

My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path: 16 For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood.

Notice the command. Don't even start walking with them. Why? Because the first step is usually the easiest one to stop. The hundredth step isn't. Have you ever noticed people rarely wake up one day addicted?

They don't wake up one morning in prison. They don't wake up divorced. Those things happen one step at a time. That first step is the most dangerous step. Just try a little. "Hey, this little taste isn't going to hurt you. It's just a sip."

Imagine standing at the top of a snowy hill. One small push doesn't seem like much. But halfway down, you can't stop. It's like a snow ball that starts small but just keeps rolling. It starts small, it gets rolling fast, and grows and grows and grows until you've got a huge problem.

That's why Solomon says, Don't take the first step. The easiest sin to quit is the one you never start.

IV. THEY ARE REALLY SETTING A TRAP FOR THEMSELVES

Proverbs 1:17-19

Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird. 18 And they lay wait for their own blood; they lurk privily for their own lives. 19 So are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain; which taketh away the life of the owners thereof.

This is one of the greatest reversals in Proverbs. These sinners think they're trapping someone else. God says they're trapping themselves. Imagine digging a pit for someone else that you're planning on trapping. Working all day. Sweating. Planning.

Then walking backward and falling into your own hole. That's exactly what sin does. The devil always convinces people they're getting away with something. God says, No! You're setting your own trap.

Verse 19 says greed takes away the life of the one who possesses it. Think about Judas. He loved money. Did money give him life? No. It destroyed him. Think about Achan. Think about Gehazi. Think about Ananias and Sapphira. They thought they were gaining something. Instead, they lost everything. **Sin always promises more than it delivers.**

CONCLUSION

Let me ask you one final question. Who is influencing you? Who gets your attention? Who has your ear? Who are you walking with? Because every one of us is following somebody. The people you walk with today will help determine where you stand tomorrow.

That's why Solomon doesn't simply warn his son about bad decisions. He warns him about bad friends. Because bad friends make bad decisions seem normal. The invitation always sounds exciting. The bait always looks good. But hidden behind the bait is the hook.

So, the next time someone says: "Come with us. Everybody's doing it. Nobody will know. It's only one time. What's the worst that could happen? Live a little." Remember Proverbs 1. Remember the fish hook. Remember the beer commercial. Remember that sin never advertises the hook. It only advertises the bait. And remember this: **Sin always promises more than it delivers.**

Ask yourself before you make a decision, Where does this road end? Remember that sin never introduces itself as destruction. It's a deception that makes you think it's going to be good. More friends, more excitement, and more opportunities. But that's a trap. Remember the fish hook.

Let's pray.