

Seduction

(scripture reading **Amos 2:4**)

Today I want to talk about Seduction. I don't mean by doing so to make any accusation against the church here or anyone in it in particular. But I do hope to challenge each of us to take the subject more seriously than we each might be taking it. There are some matters for which I am very concerned about the Church as a fellowship within the United States.

Define it:

The word seduce stems from Latin root words meaning literally "to lead astray" or "to lead apart" The three most common meanings involve persuading someone to do something against their better judgment:

1. Engaging in sexual relations
2. Engaging in any behavior the person would not ordinarily do (especially if doing so represents disobedience or disloyalty)
3. Being won over to support a proposition not previously supported.

Synonyms: **Lure (thesaurus category)**, Tempt, Entice, Allure, Bait, Attract, Goad, Incentive, Spur, Decoy, Trap, Entrap, Snare, Deceive, Wander, go astray

Hebrew words found in Scripture (4)

H8582 taah - to err, wander, go astray, stagger, deceive, seduce,

Isaiah 53:6

**‘All of us like sheep have gone astray,
Each of us has turned to his own way;
But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all
To fall on Him.**

H6601, H6601b pathah - lit "open" simple, silly, naïve, seduced, enticed, persuaded, allured

Exodus 22:16

¹⁶“If a man seduces^{H6601b} a virgin who is not engaged, and lies with her, he must pay a dowry for her to be his wife.

H5496 suth - entice, incite, mislead

1 Kings 21:25

²⁵**Surely there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do evil in the sight of the LORD, because Jezebel his wife incited him.**

Greek words found in Scripture (4)

G4105 planaō (G635 apoplanaō) direct H8552 wander, go astray, deceive, stumble

Matthew 18:12 - 13

¹²**“What do you think? If any man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go and search for the one that is straying?”**

G1185 deleazō (G1388 dolos, H4820 mirmah) beguile, lure, bait, decoy, deceive, deceit

1 Peter 2: 22 , quoting **Isa 53:9** (describing Jesus)

²²**... nor was any deceit found in His mouth...**

These are words which represent universal meanings; The words are different in different languages, but the idea they represent is present everywhere. We see parallel words with common meanings behind each in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, French, and English.

Seduction (or luring, or deceit, or leading astray) is the theme I want to share with you today.

When one is **seduced**, they are being led to do something that they know not to do.

The first story of Seduction was between the serpent and Eve. (Gen 3:13)

She told God “The serpent deceived me, and I ate”

We might as well make the point while we are here – God acknowledged that she was deceived, but – Eve still had to bear the consequences of what she did.

I think that every child resents his parent’s warnings – Each of us said something to our parents like **“Why are you assuming I will do something wrong just because you did”** (We may not all have said this out loud, but thought it many times.)

The sad fact is that seducers prey on the young. Just like the lioness who looks for a young antelope that wanders away from his mother.

Victims of seduction don't become victims because they are young. They become victims because they believe it can't happen to them. This false belief, more than anything, makes them easy to catch.

And... parents don't want to see their children living with the consequences of doing something that they will regret the rest of their lives.

Warnings to the young to avoid seduction are found the book of Proverbs. This one is peppered throughout.

Prov 15: 20, 31-32

²⁰A wise son makes a father glad,
But a foolish man despises his mother.

³¹He whose ear listens to the life-giving reproof
Will dwell among the wise.

³²He who neglects discipline despises himself,
But he who listens to reproof acquires understanding.

Proverbs 10:1, 12:1, 13:1, 15:5, 15:20, 15:32

Take it from someone who knows – and “young” is relative, Archie Dabney keeps reminding me I am young and from his perspective I still am – if you are being enticed to do something that you know your parents would not want you to do DON'T DO IT !

Proverbs has many other admonitions to avoid seduction. Here are just a few.

Proverbs 1:10-19 Being enticed to join evil men in wrongdoing

Proverbs 11:2, 27:1-2 - Being proud, boasting in one's self

Proverbs 14:12 trusting on one's own counsel

Proverbs 6:6-11, 12:24-28, 24:30-34 Having lazy and wicked ways

Proverbs 10:2 – seeking ill-gotten gain

Proverbs 11:1 False business practices

Proverbs 11:12 Despising one's neighbor

Proverbs 11:26 being un-generous

Proverbs 11:28 trusting in riches

Proverbs 12:4-23 pursuing foolish things speaking rashly

Proverbs 13:24, 23:13-14 spoiling one's child

Proverbs 20:1, 23:20-21, 23:29-35 drunkenness

Proverbs 23:29 - 35

²⁹Who has woe? Who has sorrow?

Who has contentions? Who has complaining?

Who has wounds without cause?

Who has redness of eyes?

³⁰Those who linger long over wine,

Those who go to taste mixed wine.

³¹Do not look on the wine when it is red,

When it sparkles in the cup,

When it goes down smoothly;

³²At the last it bites like a serpent

And stings like a viper.

³³Your eyes will see strange things

And your mind will utter perverse things.

³⁴And you will be like one who lies down in the middle of the sea,

Or like one who lies down on the top of a mast.

³⁵"They struck me, *but* I did not become ill;

They beat me, *but* I did not know *it*.

When shall I awake?

I will seek another drink."

Proverbs chapters 16- 20 contrast those who do "what they can get away with" instead of doing what you know is right.

But the one most often mentioned Seduction is the one most often thought of in our familiar culture; that of sexual seduction. Chapters 5 and 7 are completely devoted to this topic, and the subject is reprised many times in the rest of the book.

Proverbs 5:1 - 6

¹ My son, give attention to my wisdom,
I incline your ear to my understanding;

² That you may observe discretion
And your lips may reserve knowledge.

³ For the lips of an adulteress drip honey
And smoother than oil is her speech;

⁴ But in the end she is bitter as wormwood,
Sharp as a two-edged sword.

⁵ Her feet go down to death, Her steps take hold of Sheol.

⁶ She does not ponder the path of life;
Her ways are unstable, she does not know *it*.

Proverbs 7:6 - 23

⁶ For at the window of my house
I looked out through my lattice,
⁷ And I saw among the naive,
And discerned among the youths A young man
lacking sense,
⁸ Passing through the street near her corner;
And he takes the way to her house,
⁹ In the twilight, in the evening,
In the middle of the night and *in* the
darkness.
¹⁰ And behold, a woman *comes* to meet him,
Dressed as a harlot and cunning of heart.
¹¹ She is boisterous and rebellious,
Her feet do not remain at home;
¹² *She is* now in the streets, now in the
squares,
And lurks by every corner.
¹³ So she seizes him and kisses him
And with a brazen face she says to him:
¹⁴ "I was due to offer peace offerings;
Today I have paid my vows.
¹⁵ "Therefore I have come out to meet you,

To seek your presence earnestly, and I have
found you.

¹⁶ "I have spread my couch with coverings,
With colored linens of Egypt.

¹⁷ "I have sprinkled my bed
With myrrh, aloes and cinnamon.

¹⁸ "Come, let us drink our fill of love until
morning;

Let us delight ourselves with caresses.

¹⁹ "For my husband is not at home,
He has gone on a long journey;

²⁰ He has taken a bag of money with him,
At the full moon he will come home."

²¹ With her many persuasions she entices him;
With her flattering lips she seduces him.

²² Suddenly he follows her
As an ox goes to the slaughter,
Or as *one in* fetters to the discipline of a
fool,

²³ Until an arrow pierces through his liver;
As a bird hastens to the snare,
So he does not know that it *will cost him* his
life.

I wish this were only a message for the young, but it is not, nor is it only for sexual seduction.

Each of us are targets of Seduction.

The Seducer may be some malicious person who is intent on gaining Power, Wealth or Sexual Favors.

The Seducer may prey on the very young, the very old, or anyone who either thinks he is safe or does not know that he isn't.

The Seducer may be, and often is, someone who has themselves been seduced. Someone who has gone astray, who doesn't yet realize the consequences, and who invites us to join them.

The Seducer may be YOU ! We seduce ourselves.

Have we ever sat or stood in front of the mirror and admired our appearance ?

Have we ever spruced up a prize possession and stepped back just to admire that we own it ?

Have we gone over our financial accounts and felt a feeling of satisfaction at the wealth we own?

Have we ever stood with our fellows – whatever group it be – even us together here this morning – and thought “WE” are better than “THEY” ?

Have we ever sought to justify ourselves for doing something or holding a position that we know is not right ?

Each of us can become the Seducer of Ourselves when we convince ourselves of something of which we know better.

And sadly, Seduction is not only an individual thing.

God's people are seduced away from the relationship with him that he meant for us.

The Hebrews demonstrated the pattern from 1 Sam 8 when they cried out “Give us a King!” through all the days of the nation till God sent this message through the Prophet

Hosea 4:12

¹² My people consult their wooden idol, and their *diviner's* wand informs them;
For a spirit of harlotry has led *them* astray,
And they have played the harlot, *departing* from their God.

And they continued to seek a worldly kingdom even when God sent his Son to save them.

Matthew 23:37 - 39

³⁷“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.

³⁸“Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! ³⁹“For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’”

The early church followed the same path. This spiritual adultery has been replayed over and over again even today. This was prophesied by Peter and others. Consider 2 Peter 2:**1-19**

2 Peter 2:13-14

¹²But these, ... are stains and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, as they carouse with you,
¹⁴having eyes full of adultery that never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed

Jesus pronounced the condemnation of those who cause his innocents to be lead astray.

Matthew 18:5 - 6

⁵And whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me; ⁶but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to **stumble**, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

So many times God's people have turned back to him only to be seduced again by the way of the World, seeking the same things for the church that worldly institutions seek.

What happened since 1846, when Tolbert Fanning stood up in opposition to Christians participating in the Mexican American War and the period of the Civil War when Alexander Campbell stood up to Abraham Lincoln and David Lipscomb stood up to Jefferson Davis? What happened since then and when I was a young man when we didn't even discuss the subject.?

What did we trade for swallowing the "just war" propaganda?

If it was wrong for Israel to make alliances with and serve human Governments in exchange for protection and favor; Why is it ok for us to do so now?

I see the efforts in the Church to organize it into a Religion following worldly denominational patterns, which either establish new traditions or preserve old ones, with the result of division within God's people. What would the Apostle Paul say?

I see churches creating Celebrities and establishing events to bask in their glory.

What would God say if he picked up a book that had a Christian celebrity's name in big letters on the outside and his Son's name in little ones on the inside?

What about the establishment of Academies, Schools, Colleges, and Universities which start out teaching the Scriptures but gradually appoint themselves the Magisterium entitled to interpret and re-interpret the Scriptures. What would Peter say if he found men redefining the meaning of the words of Scripture he suffered to deliver?

What would Jesus say if he were here seeing churches?

Doing what is haute and popular,

Doing whatever attracts the biggest crowd, or raises the most of money,

Glorying in superficial religious services, little more than entertainment, instead of cultivating spiritual growth and service.

How can these things be? How can we allow ourselves as a brotherhood to be seduced ?

The greatest deception of all is seducing ourselves to believe that we cannot change within ourselves or change what has too long gone un-challenged within the Church.

Jesus did not live and die as a man to make it easy to accept the status quo.

Jesus died so that we might walk in the Light. Walking in the Light means spending time with each other disclosing ourselves so that we are not avoiding or hiding what is within us.

So where does this message find you this morning?

Perhaps you are one who has not become a Christian. If you have not begun the walk in the Light of Salvation, none of this matters to you. Nothing matters until you are born again.

The Church stands ready, as always, to help you throw off your burdens and put on Christ in baptism.

Perhaps you are one who has been seduced and dragged back into the cares of the World by the things the writer of Proverbs warned against, or other seductions all your own.

We who suffer from your same weaknesses are here to bear you up.

Or, Perhaps you are one who has stood by watching the seduction of the body without acknowledging it or doing anything about it. Throw off the seduction of believing you can't do anything about it.

The Church stands ready to help you in your struggle.

Please come.

[Scripture quotations taken from the NASB](#)