

Proverbs 7:7

And beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths,
a young man void of understanding,

Stupid boy! Grow up! Do not let a whore use you like that! Do not let her destroy your life! Do not go near her! Get away, now! Your soul, body, and reputation are at stake!

Solomon used these words to begin his lengthy parable about the seduction of a young man by an adulteress (7:6-23). He identified the character of the victim as a simple person, a youth, and a young man without understanding. Mature and wise young men will not fall for a whorish woman as easily, for they understand the danger and avoid her.

What is a simple person? If we trust the Oxford English Dictionary, it is a person who lacks ordinary sense or intelligence, more or less foolish, silly, or stupid. Solomon used a vulnerable youth for his parable, because he had observed many foolish and stupid young men ruined by profane women. His goal was to grab the attention of his son (7:1,24).

What is a youth? It is a person between childhood and adulthood. If childhood ends at puberty and adulthood begins at 30, then it is the 18 years between the ages of 12 and 30 (Num 4:3; I Chron 23:3; Luke 3:23). Solomon observed that both childhood and youth were vanity (Eccl 11:10). As a wise man, he had no regard for the age of 18 as meaning anything. Any man that has lived to the age of 30 knows that he was an infant at 18.

What is a young man void of understanding? He is a male before adulthood that has not grasped the seriousness of life, the consequences of sin, or the dangers of women. He thinks life is a daily opportunity for pleasure without any punishment for foolish choices. He has no fear of God, so he makes all choices and decisions by feelings and lusts.

Such young men are incredibly dangerous ... to themselves! They need fathers that will keep them away from temptation, that will train them in righteousness, and that will warn them of the severe consequences of sexual sins. Young man, are you a stupid fool, or a sober and wise man? Father, have you taught and trained your son for life, or not?

Paul warned Timothy about youthful lusts, when hormones are raging and the mind and soul are weak (II Tim 2:22). David asked God to forgive him the sins of his youth, when he had fallen to temptation (Ps 25:7). You should be a child in malice – harboring no grudges, but a man in understanding – letting wisdom determine conduct (I Cor 14:20).

How can a young man save himself? “Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word” (Ps 119:9). Especially Proverbs (1:1-5)!