

TEN: Free to Obey

A Christian Looks at the Ten Commandments

HONORING MARRIAGE

Exodus 20:14

Exodus 20:14 NKJV “You shall not commit adultery.”

INTRODUCTION: I told you that last week’s commandment was the least understood. This week’s commandment is in a contest with the ninth commandment for being the least obeyed. One of the reasons for this is that those who disobey the commandment, “You shall not commit adultery,” usually also disobey the commandment, “You shall not bear false witness!”

1) What does the seventh commandment reveal about God?

- **God is the Definer and Designer of marriage.**

Marriage is not the invention of man.

It is not mere social convention.

God instituted the first marriage on the same day He made man and woman in His own image.

- **Marriage is the covenant bond between one man and one woman.**

- **Between one man and one woman.**

- Homosexuality was, is, and always shall be an abomination to God.

Leviticus 18:22 NKJV You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination.

This truth is repeatedly affirmed in the New Testament.

- God loves LGBT people as much as He loves me, but God neither loves nor excuses their sin, any more than God loves and excuses my sin or yours.
- Gays and lesbians may live together in a legal union which they and the government call “marriage,” but God does not call it that.
- The Almighty Himself designed and defined marriage, and it was and always will be a covenant bond between a man and a woman.

- **And it is designed to be a lifelong covenant bond.**
 - God never desires that it should be broken.
 - God permits the dissolution of a marriage in only two cases:
 - ✓ Unrepentant infidelity
 - ✓ When an unbelieving spouse refuses to live with their newly converted spouse.
- **The sexual relationship is God's gift to a couple united in marriage.**
 - To give physical expression to the intimacy of the "one flesh" bond that exists between the two.
 - To produce godly offspring.
- **Any sexual relationship or practice outside of the marriage relationship is labeled in the Scripture as adultery, fornication, or perversion.**
- **God is the Protector of marriage.** We see this clearly in the life of David as the story is told in 2 Sam. 11-12.
 - It is interesting that the Holy Spirit notes that what David did wrong began from his not doing what was right. The sin of omission gave birth to the sin of commission. When as king, David should have led his troops into battle, David stayed home.
 - While home in the lap of luxury, David went to his rooftop from which he could peer down upon the other houses of old Jerusalem. From this vantage point David saw Bathsheba bathing. Had David seen her by accident and turned away, temptation would have fled; but David gazed, noting that she was "beautiful to behold."
 - The lust of his heart quickly yielded to action. He inquired who she was, and even after finding she was married to one of his loyal soldiers out fighting Israel's battles, he had Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, brought to him. He lay with her and sent her home. He thought that Uriah and the nation would never know.
 - When Bathsheba sent word that she was pregnant, damage control and cover up became the order of the day. David ordered Uriah home from the battle front, assuming he would sleep with his wife and hopefully his adultery would be hidden. But Uriah refused to spend the night at home while his countrymen remained in battle; therefore, David's cover up did not work.

- He then sent Uriah back to fight the war with a sealed letter to Joab, the commander. The letter instructed Joab to put Uriah in the heat of the battle and then tell the other troops to withdraw so that he would be killed. This Joab did, and Uriah was killed by David's murderous plot. After being allowed a period of mourning, David brought Bathsheba to the palace to become another one of his wives. The NKJ translation of 2 Sam. 11:27 says, in what seems like understatement, "But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord." The Hebrew is much stronger. A more literal translation would read, "But the thing that David had done caused God to tremble in grief."
- Men may not know, but God always knows. God told the prophet Nathan and sent him to David. This is the same prophet through whom God pronounced the Davidic Covenant that promised that the Eternal King would sit on David's throne. This time Nathan told David a touching story recorded in

2 Sam. 12:1-15 NKJV Then the Lord sent Nathan to David. And he came to him, and said to him: "There were two men in one city, one rich and the other poor. "The rich *man* had exceedingly many flocks and herds. "But the poor *man* had nothing, except one little ewe lamb which he had bought and nourished; and it grew up together with him and with his children. It ate of his own food and drank from his own cup and lay in his bosom; and it was like a daughter to him.

"And a traveler came to the rich man, who refused to take from his own flock and from his own herd to prepare one for the wayfaring man who had come to him; but he took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him."

So David's anger was greatly aroused against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the Lord lives, the man who has done this shall surely die! "And he shall restore **fourfold** for the lamb, because he did this thing and because he had no pity."

Then Nathan said to David, "You *are* the man! Thus says the Lord God of Israel: 'I anointed you king over Israel, ... Why have you despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in His sight? You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword; you have taken his wife *to be* your wife, ... Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.' Thus says the Lord: 'Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes and give *them* to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. For you did *it* secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.' "

So David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord."

And Nathan said to David, "The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die. However, because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also *who is* born to you shall surely die." ...

- Without realizing it, David pronounced judgment on himself: death and fourfold restitution.

- **God in His mercy put away the death penalty, but He detailed the fourfold restitution required of David.**
 - **Death of the child**
 - The child conceived in adultery died shortly after birth.
 - Following this event we have one of the comforting passages of Scripture concerning the death of a child. David said, “I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.” Since we know that David is in heaven, this indicates that his infant child also went to heaven.
 - **Adversity in your house**
 - David had children by many of his wives. Having multiple wives not only caused indescribable turmoil among his wives but among his children as well. One of David’s sons, Amnon desired his half-sister Tamar.
 - Amnon tricked David into sending Tamar to Amnon’s house where he raped her. When David heard what had happened, he was very angry; but he apparently did nothing.
 - **The sword will not depart**
 - Absalom was another son. He said nothing concerning the attack on his sister and pretended it did not matter to him. But two years later he set a trap for Amnon and killed him and then fled to Hebron, the city of his grandfather.
 - **Your wives will be taken**
 - After his grief for Amnon subsided, David grieved over Absalom’s absence from Jerusalem. When Absalom finally returned, he was well liked by the people. He began telling the people how much better he would do things if he were the king. The Scripture says that “he stole the hearts of the men of Israel.” Here is a picture of a disloyal schemer who undermines the Lord’s anointed behind his back.
 - Soon the behind the scenes disloyalty became open rebellion, and Absalom had himself proclaimed king in the city of Hebron, the town in which David was first crowned King of Judah!
 - David fled the city of Jerusalem with his family and his most loyal supporters. He left ten of his concubines to tend the palace.
 - When Absalom entered Jerusalem, he went to his father’s palace and raped the ten concubines, demonstrating to all in the city his utter disrespect for his father, God’s anointed King.

- As God often does, He confounded the wicked and caused Absalom to follow a foolish plan of attack against David. It backfired, and in the midst of the battle, Absalom's long hair got entangled in the limbs of a Mulberry tree. His mule ran out from under him, leaving him hanging in the air. Joab came along and killed the rebel, restoring David to the throne.
- But David's heart was not glad. His kingdom was back; but his son, whom he dearly loved, was gone.

God said, "The child shall die, adversity shall arise from your own house, and the sword shall not depart, and your wives shall be taken by your neighbor in the sight of all." God spoke, and it happened.

God is the Protector of marriage.

2) How does God want this portion of His character to show in our lives?

- **We reflect God's character by affirming God's truth about marriage.**
 - We live in a broken world.
 - We all have brokenness in our lives, in our relationships, and in our families.
 - We do not fix the brokenness by denying it is broken. When the glass is broken, saying, "Some glasses are made that way," only gets your lip cut. It doesn't fix the glass.
 - Whether we are personally involved or only distantly touched by adultery, fornication, perversion, or divorce, the beginning place to deal with these breakdowns in God's perfect design is to affirm God's design.
 - That does not mean we reject those we love who are themselves caught up in the brokenness. If you have a child who is gay, you can and should still love them. But you do not help them by denying the truth of God's Word.
- **We reflect God's character by seeking to live within God's design in the power of the Holy Spirit.**
 - By not living together prior to marriage.
 - By not entering marriage with the idea that divorce is our escape plan.
 - By doing whatever it takes to make a marriage last and work.
 - By refusing to let temptation linger, but looking quickly for God's way of escape.

- By refusing to be a source of temptation to others by the way we talk, act, or dress.
- By being steadfast in our fidelity to our mate and to God.
- By working on our marriage relationship to keep it fresh and strong.
- **We reflect God's character by repenting and confessing sin when we fail to live according to His design.**
 - When we fail, either in committing adultery or in not upholding God's standard for a lifelong covenant of marriage, we must do what David did.
 - David is called a man after God's own heart not because he was sinless but because his desire to walk in fellowship with the Lord was so great that sin brought quick repentance. Such was the case with his sin with Bathsheba and against Uriah. Two Psalms record David's journey through repentance and confession: Psalm 51 and Psalm 32.
 - Psalm 51 is David's prayer of repentance.

Psalm 51 1 Have mercy upon me, O God, According to Your lovingkindness;

According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, Blot out my transgressions. 2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin.

3 For **I acknowledge my transgressions**, And my sin *is* always before me.

4 **Against You**, You only, have I sinned, And done **this evil** in Your sight-- That You may be found just when You speak, *And* blameless when You judge.

- Notice how David said to God, "You are right. I am wrong. I admit my sin is evil and is against You."

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And uphold me *by Your* generous Spirit. 13 *Then* I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners shall be converted to You.

- After repenting and confessing, then we re-affirm God's standard and start living by it to reflect God's character in our lives.

3) What does the New Testament say that helps us understand this commandment better or how to live it out day to day?

- **The New Testament clearly and unequivocally affirms God's design of marriage and His standards for the use of sex.**

Hebrews 13:4 NKJV Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

- **The New Testament tells us that a Christian should only marry another Christian.**

2 Corinthians 6:14–15 NKJV 14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?

15 And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?

- How can light and darkness have fellowship together?
 - Young adults and teens, there are few things a Christian can do that will more forcefully hinder their walk and growth with the Lord, than to marry an unbeliever.
- **Jesus said, as with all sin, the sin of adultery is at first a heart condition.**

Matthew 5:27–28 NKJV

27 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.'

28 But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Matthew 5:8 NKJV Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God.

CONCLUSION:

There are five kinds of purity in the Bible.

1. **Original – God alone**
2. **Created – Angels, Adam and Eve (no man now)**
3. **Positional – Purity that is given to those in Christ**
4. **Practical – Living out the positional**
5. **Ultimate – what is given to the saints when we are made like Him**

Can't have 1 and 2. 4 and 5 come only after 3.

That is what Jesus came to do. To give us purity through our relationship with Him.

Prov. 20:9 NKJV Who can say, "I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin"?

But Jesus came to make a trade. Our sin for His righteousness.

2 Cor. 5:21 NKJV For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.