

# AFFAIR PROOFING YOUR RELATIONSHIP

Ps. Waweru Njenga – 26 Feb 2017  
Cheaters Series  
Sermon Notes



Hey Mavuno, We've been going through **CHEATERS**: a sermon series on conversations about infidelity. We started with a panel of love doctors on week one and began to see how cheating in relationships in our city is such an epidemic. We said that **infidelity is a heart issue, with physical consequences**. As such **we must all guard our hearts** since no one **is immune**. On our second instalment, we spoke about the 12 steps to an affair. We said **affairs don't happen by accident**, but are as a result of a **progression of choices** we make. We said we have to **stop and back up** if we are walking down this path to save ourselves and others the pain affairs cause. Last week we spoke on how to survive an affair, because it's possible. The sermon notes are available online, and the audio bundle will be available for sale at our info desk next week.

Today we will finish by talking about Protection from affairs. How do you keep your relationship safe from infidelity? There's an answer to that question, so let's lean in together.

Adultery defined is **taking the most sacred expression of intimacy in marriage and giving it to someone else**. It's giving what only belongs to my spouse to someone else. This is always preceded by loss of priority. A distraction. A leaning away.

## Why are affairs so common?

- a. **Our culture glamorizes infidelity.** Today, many people will encourage you to do it and will even cover for you as you do. This is why you need friends that encourage you to do the right thing. Adultery and divorce always run in groups. You cannot separate the two

We first must understand that the scriptures confront our culture. Jesus said to the Jews, in **Mark 7:12-13 Living Bible**: *"and so you break the law of God in order to protect your man-made tradition. And this is only one example. There are many, many others."*

In other words, The Bible has to define the world we live in FIRST. Our culture then must submit itself around the word.

- b. **Our close proximity to the opposite sex.** We used to be separate by our work, but now it's much different, we physically work together, and the internet has broken down distance and walls of interaction.

Adultery destroys families and people's lives. **We need to get that into our hearts and heads**. It always does.

## Redemption & Restoration

Now, is it possible for redemption to take place in the face of infidelity? I believe so. Here's how;

- i. **True repentance:** Redemption must always begin with true repentance. Not blaming anyone or trying to justify your sin but taking full responsibility for your deeds and actions.
- ii. **Honesty in responsibility.** Part of the healing process is to answer questions, be honest and truthful in detail. You can't say you don't want to talk about it. Tell them how you ended up in the affair.
- iii. **Forgiveness.** Women tend to forgive more easily than men. Because for men it's a blow to their ego. Yet Men should be as forgiving as women and give grace if there is to be any redemption.
- iv. **Accountability**-All adultery happens in an atmosphere of dishonesty. You lie about where you are going and what you are doing. And recognizing that, you must then be willing to come to the open about your future behaviors.
- v. **Earn trust back** – Prove you can be trusted. Do the right thing every day. You can't expect your spouse not to expect you to prove yourself. You will carry this for a long time in your life.
- vi. **Build strong foundations in your marriage**

### Three keys to building an emotionally strong marriage and staying away from affairs

#### 1. Make a covenant decision to never turn your heart away from your spouse.

##### *Hebrews 13:4-6*

*Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral. <sup>5</sup> Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you" <sup>6</sup> So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?"*

This text is very connected. It talks about God's commitment to us, and how that is likened to the commitment made in marriage.

God is saying he will never forsake us. He'll never turn his heart away. You can be with someone, yet your heart is turned away from them. **This is the first step towards all unfaithfulness.** We turn away on the inside when we hear a seductive voice, an offer better than our spouse or an accusation against them. The devil will always accuse us to our spouses, and introduce offense towards them. We could all find reason to turn our hearts from our spouses. *But that's not covenant commitment!* **Covenant says, I WILL NEVER TURN MY HEART AWAY. NEVER.** We must say I'll NEVER turn away, even when I feel offended. Marriage is built in the dark places of life. You never have love like that of a person who had a reason to turn their heart away but didn't.

When our hearts are turned away, we are then vulnerable to emotional affairs, because we become **emotionally disengaged**

**How do you know your relationship with another is turned into an emotional affair?**

- a. When most meetings and conversations are kept secret from your partner
- b. When you say and do things with someone you would never do in front of your spouse
- c. When you plan and arrange private talk time with them
- d. When you share things with them you don't with your partner.

There's a level of appropriateness that has to exist in interaction with opposite sex members. When we interact in ways we shouldn't with them, we open a window towards them, and at the same time build a wall towards our spouse because **we must hide the interaction**

This is known as the principle of windows and walls. Here's how you know it's in your relationship.

- a. Do you avoid telling your partner how much time you spend or talk with the other person?
- b. Do you tell this person more about your day more than your partner?
- c. Do you talk to them about your marital dissatisfaction?
- d. Is there sexual attraction, spoken or unspoken between the two of you?
- e. Do you ready your appearance to see them?
- f. Would you feel guilty if your spouse saw you together?

### **To get out of the emotional affair**

- a. Stop flirting
- b. Stay out of high risk places. Alone/in conversation with this person/in contact with them
- c. Tell someone you respect and that can hold you accountable.
- d. Break off the relationship totally
- e. **Turn your heart back to your spouse and relationship**

Don't turn your heart away. That's when you're most in danger.

## **2. Be sensitive to your spouse's emotional needs and meet them**

The truth about needs in marriage is that only God can meet ALL of your needs. However, as a spouse, you can meet the following, considered to be critical for a healthy relational life.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>i. Men's basic needs are</b></li> <li>a. <i>Honor</i></li> <li>b. <i>Sex</i></li> <li>c. <i>Friendship</i></li> <li>d. <i>Domestic support</i></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>ii. Women's basic needs</b></li> <li>a. Security</li> <li>b. Open and honest communication</li> <li>c. Non sexual touch</li> <li>d. Leadership</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

However, the MAIN need for men is **RESPECT** while for women it's **SECURITY**

Affairs happen when a selfish man and a dishonoring woman offend each other, don't meet each other's needs, hearts turn away, and then become vulnerable to other people who meet these needs.

## **3. Guard Your Heart**

1. **Boundaries are your safe zone.** Keep and maintain proper relationships with others of the opposite sex. Decide upfront to stay away from potential risk. Exes, flirts and friends.
2. **Submit to accountability:** You MUST have relationships that help you avoid sin because we begin to slide down when we become too proud to admit we are broken and vulnerable.
3. **Define your source of enjoyment:** Add to your marriage, that which intrigues you about others. Fun? Laughter? Touching? Support? Whatever you want to have, you can have in your marriage, if you put it there.

## Summary

How do we keep affairs from happening?

- a. **Commit to never turn your heart away.**
- b. **Commit yourself to loving your spouse and meeting their emotional needs**
- c. **Guard your Heart**

Any marriage can be resurrected. No matter what happens, and this only happens when we are truly committed to make it so.

God made marriage. He made it to succeed, so your marriage can be successful

## **Ministry.**

- a. For a commitment to guard and protect our relationship from affairs.
- b. **For salvation & healing from relationship pain.**

## **Resources**

1. Peggy Vaughan, author of *The Monogamy Myth: A Personal Handbook for Recovering from Affairs*
2. After the Affair: Healing the Pain and Rebuilding Trust When a Partner Has Been Unfaithful By Janis A Spring.
3. How to Help Your Spouse Heal From Your Affair by Linda J. MacDonald