

**"Am I an Adulterer?"**

**The Sanctity of Sex – Exodus 20:14; cf. Deu. 5:18**

**"Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery" (the 7<sup>th</sup> Commandment)**

**INTRODUCTION** – If there is a sin in the Bible that is committed the most, it has to be the sexual sin. Sexual sins include all kinds of sexual activity outside of marriage, including the sins of adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bestiality, paedophilia, etc. These sins are the products of the sin of idolatry. They are rampant and global. This transgression is found in every society of all ages. It is rampant in the most advanced society like New York or even the deepest, darkest and most primitive jungle. The educated and the uneducated, the young and the old commit this sin. The law has to curb this aspect of sinful nature to protect the young. This is getting harder and harder with modern technology spreading this transgression worldwide with the click of a mouse. Even policemen have been caught and punished and jailed for this transgression against children but the moment they get back out into the streets, they commit this same sin again.

Pastors have also succumbed to this transgression. They commit adultery with their own members while helping them through "discreet" counselling. In the guise of "doing God's work" or "helping them spiritually", they have brought so much shame to the cause of Christ that many churches struggle to find pastors who meet the biblical and godly criteria. They either carry on without a pastor or make do with a derelict pastor who committed adultery with a member of the congregation!

The 7<sup>th</sup> Commandment is a very important commandment to obey in today's climate of sexual promiscuity! It must be taught, understood and practised by everyone in the church, from the youngest to the oldest. To be ignorant of the dangers of breaking this commandment would render one vulnerable to the wolves in sheep's clothing found in the world as well as in churches today!

**I. 7<sup>th</sup> Commandment Explained** – This commandment warns against all sexual sins and especially the sins of pornography, fornication and adultery. The sin of fornication is a sexual transgression committed by a person who is not married whereas the sin of adultery is committed by someone who is married. In the days of Christ, this commandment had been so distorted that a person is said to have broken this commandment only if he or she is caught in the act. This legalistic interpretation was categorically condemned by the LORD.

Men are more prone to committing sexual sins. There are many passages and verses in the Bible warning the man against committing this heinous sin which is the worst of all the carnal sins. If a man commits murder, he is the sinner and not the victim. But the sins of fornication and adultery cause two parties to sin. Hence, it is the worst of all the sins of the flesh. **1 Corinthians 6:16-18**, *"What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body."*

There is no justification for the sin of fornication or adultery. If a believer has committed this sin, he must repent. It is not an unpardonable sin. God will want him to repent of this sin before he

returns to the Lord. **Revelation 2:20-21**, *"Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not."* Psalm 51 is the penitential psalm written by King David when he sinned against God by committing adultery with Bathsheba. He blamed no one. The genuine repentance is seen in his acceptance of the consequence of his action and he admitted that he had sinned. He did not look for any scapegoats to take the blame for his sin.

- II. **7<sup>th</sup> Commandment Applied** – This commandment includes a man who takes advantage of a virgin. **Exodus 22:16-17**, *"And if a man entice a maid that is not betrothed, and lie with her, he shall surely endow her to be his wife. If her father utterly refuse to give her unto him, he shall pay money according to the dowry of virgins."* This was the law in Israel to regulate the sexual behavior of the people in Israel. If the marriage is not acceptable to the girl's father, then the man has to make financial compensation for his transgression. The man enticed the girl into the sexual relationship and the girl has to be single and not betrothed for this law to apply. Betrothal in the Bible is more significant than the present day engagement. An engagement is a private covenant made between two persons who vow to keep themselves pure for one another till they get married. If they break up, there is no legal implication to consider. Whereas the betrothal in the Bible has legal implications whereby the groom has to go to the courts at that time to apply for an official annulment. With this done then the parties are free. Therefore if the girl is betrothed and enters into a sexual relationship, then the penalty is death by stoning (cf. Deu. 22:23-24).

Deuteronomy covers the many different cases for the application of this commandment when it is violated. The sin of adultery and fornication is dealt with in Deu. 22 casuistically.

**Deuteronomy 23:17-18** (KJV), "There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel. **18** Thou shalt not bring the hire of a whore, or the price of a dog, into the house of the LORD thy God for any vow: for even both these *are* abomination unto the LORD thy God." (also Deu. 22:13-30).

In the New Testament this commandment had to be brought back to its original intent. Just as the 6<sup>th</sup> Commandment was distorted and had to be fixed, the Lord had to do the same and fix Commandment number 7. Jesus says in **Matthew 5:27-32**, *"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."*

The sin of fornication and adultery begins with the heart. If the person repents every time he sins with his eyes, the sin of adultery in action would always be avoided. But when the sinner sins with his eyes and his heart again and again, it is only a matter of time when he will commit the actual act. The consequence of the latter is far more grievous. Internet pornography, filthy and lustful magazines, movies, etc are all modern temptations that have caused many simple men to fall. The method employed by the strange women to lure simple men into this sin is vividly described for us in Proverbs 7.

**III. 7<sup>th</sup> Commandment Enforced** – God’s witnesses throughout the ages from family [Adam to Moses -- before the nation of Israel] to nation [Moses to Pentecost – beginning and time of the national witness] to church [Pentecost to the Present – ecclesiastical witness] have all been categorically warned by God of the importance of guarding the sexual purity and life of every believer. There is no exception. Jesus himself said that this was from the very beginning even before the Fall of Man. This standard remains especially in the lives of all who witness for Christ.

**Matthew 19:3-6** (KJV), "The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? **4** And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female, **5** And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? **6** Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." – Divorce must never be found in the lives of truly born again believers. They must forgive and learn to work things out no matter what the trials might be. God is the ONE who joined them together.

**1 Corinthians 6:9-11**, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." – Fornicators, adulterers, and homosexuals will not inherit the kingdom of God if they remain as fornicators, adulterers or homosexuals. This is a transgression that must stop after salvation. Some of the believers in the church in Corinth were such sinners but after salvation they were transformed.

**Galatians 5:19-21**, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." – Sexual sins including other sins were the sins of the old man. Now that he has been transformed by the blood of Christ he is a new creature in Christ. These old sinful manners are gone forever from his life. He has no justification to commit these sins and hold on to them by making excuses that he cannot help himself!

**Revelation 21:8**, “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.” – The Bible makes it very clear here that these sinners will find themselves in the Lake of Fire for eternity.

**Matthew 19:7-9** (KJV), "They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? **8** He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. **9** And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except *it be* for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery." – When a believer commits the sin of adultery he will be counselled to repent and return to his wife. If he refuses then the wife will be counselled to separate from him to give him time to repent; and if there is no repentance then she will have no choice but to divorce him. Any divorced man, who had committed adultery, and remarries another woman, will be committing adultery, Jesus warns. Also, any man who marries a woman who was divorced because of unrepentant adultery will also be charged with committing the sin of adultery, even after her husband has remarried another! The believer has a heart of flesh not a harden heart.

## **APPLICATION**

Do not treat this lightly. It is a sin that reveals to us whether we are genuine believers or not! Keep yourself pure and holy before God as servants of the Most High God. Such a sin when committed by God's servants must result in removal from office for life. A pastor who commits any sexual sin will not be allowed to be a pastor ever again. The name of Christ is at stake! Please read 1 Timothy 3:1-7 for the qualifications of an elder.

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What do you think Potiphar's wife looked like? Based upon her seduction of young Joseph in Genesis 39, can you discover the biblical teaching on how to protect yourself from the sin of sexual temptation?
2. When two persons marry as unbelievers, and then they become believers, will their marriage be seen as less Christian than the marriage of two believers in a church? Since they were married as unbelievers and did not marry in the Lord and did not make the Christian marriage vows, are they still bound by the teachings for Christian husbands and wives as demanded by God in Ephesians 5:22-33?
3. Is it acceptable for the pastor to counsel a woman outside of the church premises like in a coffee house in a busy shopping centre? A woman invites the pastor out for a private counselling session because of the confidentiality of the matter. She says that she does not want the pastor's wife to know. It is between pastor and member of the church. Is it all right for him to go?

4. What would you say to a theologically trained pastor who says to you that medical science today has proven that homosexuality is not a sin because it is a medical condition that a person is born with? He is like a man who is born left-handed as opposed to the majority who are right-handed. The Bible only condemns the ACT of homosexuality but not homosexuals. Therefore, he can be a genuine Christian and remain a homosexual in his heart as long as he does not commit the act.
5. What would you say if a preacher tells you that he is searching through the internet to find data on pornography in order to teach the sinfulness of pornography? Then he screens a 5-minute video of the nature of what pornography is during one of the home fellowship meetings since the topic he preaches from was "the sinfulness of pornography"! What would you do if you were in that living room of the home when this was screened during the message?