

The Seventh Commandment

This Commandment deals with the most intimate area of our earthly existence. **God is not against sex.** He created it! But He has established the proper use of His most powerful natural gift to us. **The ability to create new life and a new living being is to be used within the confines of marriage** where every child born can receive the love and protection of a father and a mother within a family unit. To safeguard His purpose, God has issued this Commandment for the welfare of us all.

"You shall not commit adultery."

Exodus 20:14

The Hebrew word for 'adultery' refers specifically to **a man having sexual intercourse with another man's wife or fiancé.** There is another Hebrew word which encompasses a broader range of sexual transgressions which translates to fornication or harlotry, actions which are also condemned by God. But that the word 'adultery' is used in this instance shows that God is especially guarding the institution He ordained in the Garden ~ the marriage of one man and one woman. **Any sexual relationship outside of this union is outside the will of God.**

Under Penalty of Death

The old proverb advises, '**Let the punishment fit the crime.**' If the severity of the punishment is indicative of the severity of the crime, then adultery is a serious crime indeed! Read it below.

*'If there is a man who commits adultery with another man's wife,
one who commits adultery with his friend's wife,
the adulterer and the adulteress
shall surely be put to death.'*

Leviticus 20:10

- Underline with whom the adultery is committed.
- Circle the guilty parties.
- Underline their punishment

Why did God institute such a severe and final punishment for the act of adultery?

Jesus reminded us that the covenant of marriage is more than a legal procedure. In **Matthew 19:3-6**, Jesus taught that in marriage, **God joins one man and one woman** in a union that is **inviolable** by any man. To break this bond is to defy the action of God Himself, and that earns the severest punishment for the violator!



MEMORIZE!



Leviticus 20:10-23

The litany of forbidden sexual sins is long, perverse and incredible. It does boggle the mind what dark deeds man is capable of.

Matthew 19:5-6

5 and (Jesus) said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?
6 "So they are no longer two, but **one** flesh. **What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.**"

Adultery of the Heart

As in murder, it is possible to violate this Command without doing so literally. Jesus expands the sphere of this command to encompass the hidden passions of the heart.

- 27 "You have heard that it was said,
'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY';
28 but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her
has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Matthew 5:27-28

- Circle how Jesus said one can look at a woman.
- Circle where Jesus said that person 'has already committed adultery'.

Why does Jesus expand the seventh commandment to encompass the heart? _____

What significance does this have? _____

Spiritual Adultery

In Scripture, the act of adultery can transcend the physical into a spiritual act of unfaithfulness toward God as His people violate the covenant that binds them to the Almighty. God spoke through the prophet Jeremiah concerning the northern kingdom's (Israel) unfaithfulness, and foreshadowed a similar fate for the southern Kingdom of Judah who did not seem to learn from her northern sister's experience. Here, God utilizes the Hebrew words for adultery (sexual relations with a married person) and harlotry (all manner of sexual sin) in the same passage.

'And I saw that for all the **adulteries** of faithless Israel,
I had sent her away and given her a writ of divorce,
yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear;
but she went and was a **harlot** also.'

Jeremiah 3:8

Is it possible for the Christian Church to commit spiritual adultery against God? _____

If so, how, or if not, why not? _____

As believers, we must guard our hearts from both physical and spiritual temptations that seek to draw us into unholy relationships in violation of this Commandment!

Nipping It in the Bud

In the previous lesson, we learned that evil proceeds from the heart (Matthew 15:19). Like murder, the act of adultery does not spontaneously happen, but is nursed in the dark recesses of our passions until it emerges full blown in an act of sin. It is best to nip it in the bud while still an infant thought, for even then, God sees it as evil, and it is best dealt with likewise!

Apostasy Foretold

Both our LORD and the apostle Paul foretold a time when 'many will fall away' and abandon the faith, even delivering up the faithful to arrest and execution.

Matthew 24:10 &
2 Thessalonians 2:3