

The Seventh Commandment

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[0 : 00] We're continuing our series in the book of Exodus, so I invite you to open your Bibles to Exodus chapter 20.

This is chapter 20, and today we'll be looking at verse 14 from chapter 20.

This is 2014, slightly longer than last Sunday's text, hopefully not longer than last Sunday's sermon, but longer than the text.

You shall not commit adultery is our text today. This is 2014. Let's pray together. Dear Heavenly Father, we pray that as your word is open, that your spirit would be with your messenger now, that you would speak through him.

We pray also that your spirit would work in the hearts of all who are gathered here, that you would open our hearts, give us understanding, that you'd point us to Christ, bring conviction of sin, but also bring us assurance of forgiveness in our Savior, in whose name we pray.

[1 : 40] Amen. So our text, you shall not commit adultery. Obviously, we're dealing with the subject of adultery today. And so I really wanted to start just by talking to our kids very carefully at the very beginning.

So boys and girls, listen up. Attention. Boys and girls. Okay, attention. Okay, good. So today we're going to be talking about adultery.

And what I'm going to say in my sermon sometimes is physical intimacy. And what I mean when we speak about adultery and physical intimacy, what I mean is the kind of romantic love that mom and dad have.

And adultery would be if romantic love like that, and that could be holding hands or kissing, but if mom and dad did that with someone other than mom and dad, that's what adultery is.

That's my simple definition there for the kids. And we're going to get into a lot more detail about that, but I just want you to understand what we're talking about when we say physical intimacy. And adults, you can understand that as well.

[2 : 42] And I want to be clear that obviously it implies more than that that the adults can understand. And God's Word is not shy about this. God's Word is very positive about that. See Song of Songs if you're unsure about this, right?

It's in God's Word, but given the nature of our congregation, I want to be careful in how we talk about this today. I also want to remind you that adultery is a subject that applies to men and women.

It's not just one or the other. This is for all of us to hear and listen to. And under my introduction, really, the first point that I want you to get is that that physical intimacy we were talking about before is for marriage and only for marriage.

There's a quick summary of what we're speaking of in adultery. Physical intimacy is for marriage and only for marriage. So I want to start by discussing marriage a little bit different than what I've done with the previous sermons on the commandments.

I really want to build for us a positive view. What is marriage? And then we're going to follow the pattern we looked at last week of looking then next at the duties required before we look at the sins that are forbidden.

[3 : 51] So first, I want us to look at marriage and the marriage union. A couple of things I want us to see here.

First, I want you to see that marriage is a one flesh union of a man and a woman. One flesh. Genesis 2.24 really begins our understanding of this.

It says, therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife and they shall become one flesh. So there's something about marriage and even the physical intimacy that accompanies that, that mates a couple into one flesh, unites them together into one.

Marriage symbolizes that union. The couple united together, there's a complementary relationship. They fit together. They help one another. They're made for each other in a way that is unique in all human relationships.

Now, Ephesians 5, we really get a New Testament commentary on what does this one flesh union mean. And I think Ephesians 5 does better than anywhere else in God's word of saying, why does marriage exist?

[5 : 06] What is marriage for? And so I think if we understand the basis, we'll understand the problem of adultery. So Ephesians 5, this is a lengthy passage.

We'll flip through. Hopefully it's up there large enough. You can see it and we'll flip through in a few times and look at different parts of it. But Ephesians 5, verses 22 through 33. You're welcome to turn there if you'd like to.

We read there, Wives, submit to your own husbands as the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its savior.

Now, as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

In the same way, husbands should love their wives as their own body. He who loves his wife loves himself, for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body.

[6 : 40] And this is then quoting Genesis 2. Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. So Ephesians 5, what is it communicating to us?

It talks about the union, it even quotes that one flesh relationship that we see in Genesis 2. And the conclusion that Paul draws is quite unique. He says, I'm not even talking about marriage.

I'm talking about Christ and the church. Or at least I'm not ultimately talking about marriage. I'm talking about Christ and the church. So my conclusion, and you can argue with me if you think I took it too far, and maybe I've got union with Christ on my brain right now.

But guys, I believe marriage exists to teach us or to point us to union with Christ. Paul talks about how we are united, and he keeps talking about Christ and the church.

[7 : 46] Christ is united. He's head of the church like the husband is the marriage. And we're to love each other, the spouse and the relationship, as Christ loves his church and as the church loves its Savior, as it loves Jesus Christ.

And so marriage exists to teach us, to point us to union with Christ. To further the argument, I think this is also why there is no marriage in heaven. You know, there's several times Jesus' question about, well, whose wife will someone be in heaven?

Jesus says, you don't get it. There's going to be no marriage in heaven. Why is there no marriage in heaven? I think this is the answer. Marriage exists to point us to our relationship, our union with Jesus Christ.

The love, the joy, even the joy of physical intimacy. All that points us to the greater joy we will have in Jesus Christ. And so one day in heaven, we will be in the presence of God, fully united to Jesus Christ.

Even though we know Christians are united now, we will see the consummation of that relationship. We will be in the presence of our Savior. And we will know joy that the best of marriages only gave us a glimpse of.

[9 : 00] But marriage pointed us to this. And so when we get to heaven one day and we're there with Jesus Christ, there will not one of us who will say, can I go back to what I had before? You know, Jesus, you're okay, but I really like my husband better.

Guys, there's not a wife in here who's thinking that. I don't care what you husbands think, right? There's no wife saying, you know, I really want to go back to him. Jesus, you don't really measure up to him.

Or vice versa for men that you would say, marriage was so much better than union with Christ. And so marriage, I believe, does not exist in heaven because of this.

Marriage is meant to point us to the relationship we have with Christ. It's meant to point the world around us to the relationship we have with Jesus Christ. The joys we have in marriage.

The way a husband and wife interact with one another points to Jesus Christ and his church, his people. I think if we stop there, you'd understand the problem with adultery.

[10 : 02] But I think this is really the building of the argument. Why is adultery such a problem? Because marriage isn't just about a man and a woman and their relationship. There are eternal realities, divine realities that are being communicated that we blaspheme God.

I'm getting ahead of myself, okay? We're going to get there. Okay, so marriage exists to teach us about our union with Christ. One day we're going to have the reality we would never want to return to the shadow.

Just as Christ now is our sacrifice, none of us are going around sacrificing bulls and goats anymore. It doesn't do it. We're covered by the blood of the Lamb. We don't want to go back to that.

Same reality with Christ. Also, you see that marriage is a covenantal union. Again, this points us to the relationship that Jesus has with his church.

God has entered into relationship with his people by covenant. I will be your God and you will be my people. And so there's this relationship that's made. Listen to Malachi 2, 14 through 15.

[11 : 08] But you say, why does he not? I'm just jumping right into the middle of the passage. But because the Lord was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant.

Did he not make them one with a portion of the spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth.

So here in Malachi, we have a strong argument for why adultery is wrong. It's the one flesh union, but it's expanded a little bit to say they're made one flesh by covenant.

Now, we've spent some time dealing with covenants. We looked at this in Sunday school. But a covenant is a bond in blood sovereignly administered. And that means there's a sovereign who initiates a relationship.

But the relationship is one that if you break the covenant, you die. And what do we say in our marriage covenant today? Till death do us part.

[12 : 14] And I think most of the time when couples agree to that, what they're saying is, the relationship is not going to end until we die. But I think there's more implied there in covenantal terms. It's saying, if I end this relationship, may I die?

This is a covenant bond I'm making. And death would be the penalty of breaking this. And so, again, we see the symbolizing of God's covenant with man.

That God has bound himself. Will God be unfaithful to his people? Never. Should we be unfaithful to our spouse? Never. We'd be sending the royal message about who our God is.

Here's a quote from Kevin DeYoung. He says, This means that marriage, by nature, design, and aim, is a covenant between two persons whose one flesh commitment is the type of union that produces offspring.

So this is the nature of that covenant. And the sign and seal of the covenant is that sexual consummation that happens. Now, thankfully, in our marriage ceremony, we publicly represent this with a kiss.

[13 : 25] But moms and dads, you understand that more is implied in that that consummates this relationship. That's the covenant union that then takes place. And I think sometimes we think of that physical intimacy for the purpose of producing children.

And he mentions here that it's that covenant relationship that is capable of producing children. But even though I would say children are very important. We just prayed about this.

They are a blessing from the Lord. But that's not the primary reason, I believe, for marriage or for the physical intimacy that is there in the marriage relationship.

I know that may sound a little crazy. We have the creation mandate, right? Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. So we know that's a purpose.

God intends that. It is a blessing. And it is good. You know that when I bring up controversial things, I like to defer to someone else that you can be mad at other than me. So J.I. Packer, this time, from his book, Keeping the Ten Commandments.

[14 : 30] He says, Children are born from their relationship, but this is secondary. What is basic is the enriching of the couple's relationship itself through their repeated knowing of each other as persons who belong to each other exclusively and without reserve.

So the place for sex is the place of lifelong mutual fidelity, i.e., for example, marriage, where sexual experience grows richer as the couple experiences more and more of each other's loving faithfulness in the total relationship.

So he's arguing that one primary reason, at least, for marriage is physical intimacy. And that physical intimacy exists for the building and nurturing a covenantal union and relationship in marriage.

So, again, I think as we build this, you see what's wrong with adultery. Or we can even say that physical relationship before marriage. What's wrong with having that kind of intimacy with someone other than your wife?

You're using it for the wrong purpose. It exists to enrich marriage, to teach us about our union with Christ. And so we can understand that physical intimacy outside of marriage is breaking the covenant and is a sin against God.

[16:02] Physical intimacy outside of marriage is breaking the covenant and is a sin against God. Adultery works against what God has designed.

It helps in no way. It's working against God's design. And so we see Joseph, for example, pointing this out to be a sin against God. Joseph, remember when he was tempted by Potiphar's wife?

Genesis 39.9. Joseph says, He is not greater in the house than I am, nor has he kept back anything from me except you because you are his wife.

How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God? Potiphar's been good to me. He's given me everything but his wife. As a good husband should. Right?

I can share things, but there's one thing I will never share, and that's my wife. And Joseph understands this and he says, How can I do this thing and sin against? He doesn't say Potiphar. He says sin against God.

[17:02] I think we need to understand that. And why? And I'll say what I said before. Because it blasphemes who God is. It blasphemes are you with Christ. It says this is how Christ loves his church.

He's unfaithful to her. And so it's a sin against God. And so what are the duties required? And I put this, again, thinking in positive ways. There's a principle of purity and fidelity.

And so God is calling us to be pure and faithful. God is calling us to be pure and faithful. And so marriage is a relationship of lifelong faithfulness.

Of lifelong mutual fidelity. Each of you being faithful to one another. Hebrews 13 verse 4 says, Let marriage be held in honor among all.

And let the marriage bed be undefiled. For God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. Let the marriage bed be held in honor among all. And let the marriage bed be undefiled.

[18:09] A lifelong mutual fidelity. So as we think about what is God calling us to? Faithfulness and purity in our relationship with one another. With people of the opposite sex.

Especially in relation to our spouse. So I didn't spend a lot of time with the Westminster Larger Catechism. Their list of sins is expansive.

The duties required, I just want to read through those and we'll probably move along. But here's what they list as some of the duties that are required as part of the seventh commandment. It says, The duties required in the seventh commandment are chastity in body, mind, affections, words, and behavior.

And the preservation of chastity in ourselves and others. Watchfulness over our eyes and all the senses. Temperance. Keeping of chaste company.

Modesty in apparel. Marriage by those that have not the gift of abstinence. Conjugal love and cohabitation. Conjugal love and cohabitation. Diligent labor in our callings.

[19:12] Shunning all occasions of uncleanness. And resisting temptations thereunto. So again, the large list of what are the positive responsibilities we have. This is what it lists.

Some of those I'd point out. It's just, he makes a distinction. If you're not married, you cannot involve yourself in physical intimacy.

And there's a positive responsibility. If you don't have the gift of abstinence that Paul talks about in 1 Corinthians, then you need to be married.

And then thirdly, if you are married, there needs to be conjugal love and cohabitation. You need to live with one another and you need to be physically intimate with one another. Now, I also want to express here, and I'll do again later, but we know, as we've seen with all the Ten Commandments, that this is a heart issue.

Jesus addresses it as a heart issue. It's not just about what you outwardly do. Just like murder, we saw, wasn't just about actually murdering someone. It's hatred in your heart.

[20 : 17] It's even reviling them or calling them names. And so, we understand that the same is true for us with this commandment as well. Jesus talks about lusting, and we're going to look at that some with the sins forbidden.

But I want you to understand there's a heart issue. And so, when we think positively, what does it mean to keep this commandment of not committing adultery? There needs to be a positive love within our heart for our spouse and for God that restrains us from wanting that which He hasn't given us.

We need to delight in what He has given us. And so, the positive encouragement would be, brothers and sisters, delight in your spouse. That's what God calls you to do.

Delight in your spouse. Listen to Proverbs 5, 18-20. Let your fountain be blessed and rejoice in the wife of your youth.

A lovely dear, a graceful doe. Let her breast fill you at all times with delight. Be intoxicated always in her love. Why should you be intoxicated, my son, with a forbidden woman and embrace the bosom of an adulteress?

[21 : 26] And so, there's a warning at the end. Why would you go that direction? But notice what precedes that. The positive aspect. Delight yourself in your marriage as a way of fighting against that temptation.

Why would you be intoxicated there? Be intoxicated here. And intoxicated, this may be the only place, maybe drunk on the Spirit or led by the Spirit in that way, but this is probably the only other place I can think of in God's Word where intoxication is put in a positive.

Get drunk on your spouse. And the way it's talked about in the New Testament, that drunkenness where it says, likewise, don't be drunk on alcohol, but with the Spirit, it's the Spirit that leads you, it motivates you, it guides you.

It influences how you live. Let your marriage be like that. Let your spouse be like that. And so again, positively, we are commanded to delight in our spouse.

Hebrews 13.4, let marriage be held in honor among all and let the marriage bed be undefiled for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. Now let's look at the sins forbidden.

[22 : 42] One hope that I had was that having gone through the meaning of marriage, that covenant unity, that union with Christ that symbolized, we ought not have to talk about the sins, right?

It ought to be clear that we should not be violating this. So seeing the purpose and dignity of marriage and the physical intimacy within marriage, we understand just how heinous, how sinful adultery truly is.

But nonetheless, sins and what's going on here, one thing to understand is the tearing apart of that single flesh. Matthew 19 says, he says, And so they are no longer two, but one flesh.

What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate. Now we often again repeat this in marriage vows. What God has joined together, let no man separate.

That includes the marriage partners and those outside the marriage. You have the positive responsibility to guard other people's marriages. The sin is, if you in any way violate that relationship, if you in any way bring separation into one flesh union, God has made them one flesh.

[23 : 54] Who are you to try to break that? And again, let's picture you with Christ. Can anything separate us from the love of the Father? Nothing in all of creation.

Nothing above the heavens, nothing below, nothing in all of creation can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus. That's what marriage ought to be like. Nothing in all of creation can separate this.

As we continue to consider the sins, I guess we never got there. Okay, the sins forbidden. As we continue to consider the sins forbidden, let's talk about the seriousness of this.

This, like we saw with some of the other commandments, is one that would require death in Israel. Leviticus 20, verse 10, it says, if a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

And so, no matter if you're the one initiating or receiving, if you participate in adultery, the penalty was death in Israel. I'm not arguing for that in our society.

[25 : 00] Remember, these laws we're talking about were civil laws and a theocracy. There's also part of me that thinks, if we did this in our land, would it not again teach us of just how important that marriage relationship is?

And let's be honest. I feel like we cannot turn on a TV show or a movie and see marriage honored in that way. Physical intimacy is everywhere but marriage and everywhere in addition to marriage.

But I want you to see that God sees this as a capital crime. Why? I think partly because it's a sin. And the wages of sin is death. And so, God sees this that way.

Even the idea of interfering with others' marriages. This is wrong. We don't get involved with their marriage. If we want to do anything, we encourage them. We, in any way, support that union.

But we never do anything that could bring separation to that union. And I said earlier, it's a matter of the heart. And I talked about what Jesus said. We'll look at that here. This is Matthew 5, 27-28.

[26 : 06] You have heard that it was said, you shall not commit adultery. But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in its heart.

And so, we see Jesus' again, not expansion, but Jesus' exposition. He's preaching on this commandment. And what does Jesus say this commandment is about? It's not just the physical act.

It's the lust within our heart that's there. A similar passage is Mark 7, 21-23. For from within our heart, excuse me, for from within, out of the heart of man comes evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting.

We've covered most of the second table of the law already. Wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and they defile a person.

And so, as we think about this sin and the others listed here, it's not a problem out there that we're trying to keep out. There's a problem in our heart that we desire these things. And so, as we look at that, that means, again, there's not one of us who have kept this commandment.

[27 : 17] All of us have lusted in our heart. All of us have committed adultery. I just want to pause, parenthetical statement here, and say, as we look at the New Testament, I personally believe that God allows for divorce in cases of adultery.

When Jesus says that, he's not meaning you committed adultery in your heart. He there means the physical act. Otherwise, he basically does away with the perpetuity of the continuance of marriage because if it's in the heart, all of us have committed adultery in the heart.

I just want to make that clear. And then I want to go a little bit further and say, that being said, in light of what we've seen, if it can be avoided, divorce should not be an option. I personally believe God allows for it, but we should never want that.

We should never pursue that. What we should want is for God to be glorified in the representation of our union with Christ in our marriage relationship. Now, going back, that was the end of my parentheses, okay, just wanted to touch on that.

Going back to what we said, what we were looking at is the idea that sin comes from within and that all of us have broken this commandment. This is Kevin DeYoung from the same book we were quoting earlier.

[28 : 36] It says, or he says, noticing that someone of the opposite sex is pretty or handsome is not a sin. The sin is when this noticing becomes desire, coveting, lingering, and lust.

And I think that is helpful for us to consider. What does this mean? Because inevitably, we can notice that people are good looking. And that's okay. But it ought to stop there.

When it goes beyond that, when we begin to desire that person because they're good looking, when we covet them, when we want what we don't have, when we linger on their good looks, it keeps being cycled through our mind.

Or when we lust for them, that then becomes a sin. And that's that distinction that we might make. Maybe if I want to relate to murder, it's not wrong to observe that there are some people who are bad people.

But it becomes a problem when we desire to kill them because they're bad, right? Or we hate them because of that. We can observe that. The gospel ought to encourage us to go to them with the gospel. To share with them the good news.

[29 : 43] And so, as we think about this, that means all of us have broken this commandment. Also, it means that lust applies to every one of us, not just those of us who are married. Or this commandment applies to all people, not just those who are married.

You can commit adultery before you're ever married. You did commit adultery before you were ever married. I said earlier, but lust has been just normalized in our culture.

That becomes what's expected, what you see and think is normal. And so, the goodness of that physical intimacy in marriage, that union that we have with our spouse has been warped.

And I think if we're going to rightly obey God's commandments as much as we can by the help of His Spirit, we need to reestablish that positive view that we saw at the first point. That marriage union, how good marriage is.

I want you to see as well that breaking this commandment, that idea of lust is really a form of contempt. It is a way of consuming others and a form of selfishness.

[30 : 52] So, lust often begins with the devaluing of another person for self-gratification. It may begin with their good looking, but then it begins to be something about we make them less than the person that they are made in God's image.

And how might you consume them like you would order something off Amazon? Just going to consume that. That's mine for the taking. And maybe that's just mentally.

Maybe it goes beyond that. But if we want to think about how do we do this, how do we avoid this sin, I think we have to see other people as, we have to avoid seeing other people as something to use or be used by us.

Other people don't exist for our use or our abuse. Maybe we need to think of this in terms of stealing. We're consuming something that is not ours. If we want to put it even on a divine level, God has not given to us.

We're discontent with what God has given us, whether that be singleness or the spouse that we're married to. And instead, we want something that God hasn't given to us. And He may well have given it to someone else.

[32 : 02] It's stealing. Whether we outwardly take it or not, we desire to have what God has forbidden for us to have. And that's wrong.

And I think that casual sex, that physical intimacy in the way that it's presented in our culture is really that using and abusing of another partner for what you get out of it.

The one night stand that's been popularized. What can I get from you and then forget you and not even know your name? You're just something else for me to use for my gratification. That is so far from what God has designed physical intimacy in marriage to be.

And don't devalue marriage. Don't devalue physical intimacy by drinking water from polluted fountains. By consuming that which God has not given you.

Jen Wilkins, Jen Wilkins writes, Lust itself is an act of contempt. Reducing someone to a source of sexual gratification and nothing more.

[33 : 08] If the sixth commandment prohibited regarding our neighbor as expendable, murder, the seventh prohibits regarding our neighbor as consumable. She goes on and says, We do not consume those we love.

We treasure and protect them as image bearers. And we're going to talk a little bit about that in the application. Positively, how do we fight against this? There's a positive way. Treasure and protect them as image bearers.

And so adultery cheapens the beauty of marriage and physical intimacy as God created them. God's made something glorious and we made it something cheap that we can just use and do away with.

And again, it ends up devaluing other people. Our spouse, people of the opposite sets. And if that's true, then we have to acknowledge that ultimately it's a devaluing or disrespecting of the God who made them.

God made them for a purpose and it wasn't for your consuming. Listen to 1 Corinthians 6, 13 through 20.

[34 : 16] Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food. And God will destroy both one and the other.

The body is not meant for sexual immorality. You catch that? God's saying, that's not what the body's made for. You're misusing the tool I gave you. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord and the Lord for the body.

And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by His power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute?

Never. Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For as it is written, the two will become one flesh.

But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.

[35 : 31] Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own. You were bought with a price, so glorify God in your body. just a few observations from this passage.

One is, notice what he points to. Why is this a problem? Because you have the Holy Spirit living within you. Why do we have the Holy Spirit living within us? Because we've been united to Jesus Christ, and his spirit indwells us.

So, I think I can say again, Paul's saying, don't commit adultery because you've been united to Jesus Christ. And he takes it further, he says, and think about what that would mean.

For someone to, I'm trying to find the right language that he says again, to be joined to a prostitute is to become one flesh with her. And so, this is one place we see Paul speaking of this, or God's word speaking of this, not just in terms of the marriage union, that the act of physical consummation of what was intended only for marriage unites people together.

And so, again, for the unmarried, let me say again, do not involve yourself in physical intimacy with someone you're not married to. And that's even if we're engaged and it gets so much harder when you're engaged.

[36 : 49] You think, oh, this is sure thing. Just wait. But the reason it says here is because you're united to that person. You become one flesh within in one way or another.

And then it talks about can we take the Holy Spirit with us into the brothel? Do we take the Holy Spirit who we've been united to and then unite Christ, unite the Holy Spirit to this prostitute?

So, again, this is pretty deep, but he's saying we've been united to Jesus Christ and everywhere we go, Christ goes with us. And that ought to influence us and we ought to be mindful of that on our way to the brothel and say, no.

As we go to the house of that wicked woman described in Proverbs, we stop, we turn away because we think, can I bring Christ here?

Am I going to unite Christ to her or to him? And so, just a summation of what we see here. And I think it's important for us to consider in this day is to say, adultery includes any deviation from God's design.

[38 : 07] I mean, God's design for marriage, I mean, God's design for physical intimacy. And so, what does that include? Well, that includes pornography. That includes homosexuality.

God has designed this to function a certain way. It includes self-gratification. Any of these things are ways we abuse and misuse marriage and physical intimacy in ways that God did not design.

And that's a form of adultery. Now, application, just a few points to consider as we close. First, I want to encourage you to examine your own heart.

Examine your heart. Have you broken this commandment? And if any of you think after examining your heart you haven't, please come see me after the service. But examine your heart, not just to say, have I done this, but say, how am I doing this?

How am I still doing this now? And it may be as simple as not stopping in the observation that someone's pretty, but continue to linger on that and think about it. And it may go further.

[39 : 18] It may be pornography. It may be even how we view our spouse in a negative way or how we covet someone else's marriage. I said before, I think we've addressed pornography, but, you know, there's those romance books that I don't think men really read, but some women read romance books.

I really believe it's as bad as pornography. Because what is it doing? It's saying, here's what men ought to be like and what you ought to lust for. And let me just tell you, your husband's not going to measure up.

None of them do because it's fantasy. It's just another form of us fantasizing about what we want that God has not given us. So, avoid that in all forms. Listen to Ian Campbell.

He says, Adultery does not begin in the bed, but in the heart. What about the lust factor in our lives? That's where the sin is committed and where its influence must be dealt with and cut off.

Examine your heart. What is the lust factor in your heart that you need to cut off and do away with? Proverbs 6, 23-29.

[40 : 29] For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching of light. And the reproofs of discipline are the way of life. To preserve you from the evil woman, from the smooth tongue of the adulteress, do not desire her beauty in your heart.

And do not let her capture you with her eyelashes. For the price of a prostitute is only a loaf of bread, but a married woman hunts down a precious life. Can a man carry fire next to his chest and his clothes not be burned?

Or can one walk on hot coals and his feet not be scorched? So is he who goes in to his neighbor's wife. None who touches her will go unpunished.

And so there we're warned of the consequences of this, but also as we examine our hearts, can we hold fire in it to our chest and not be burned? Are there any in the room who imagine that it's okay for me to participate in adultery as long as it's not actually physical adultery?

It's okay for me to lust in my heart. It doesn't burn. Brothers and sisters, it does. We can't allow it. We have to cut it off. And then secondly, if we've examined our hearts and we understand that none of us measure up to this, all of us have broken this commandment, what do we need?

[41 : 43] And by now we're at commandment seven, you should have gotten this, right? What do we need? We need the gospel. So I want to encourage you to receive the gospel. All of us have broken this commandment and yet at the same time we know that Jesus perfectly kept all the law.

He was completely righteous. Hebrews 4.15 says, For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weakness, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

When I read this, I think this means Jesus knew that there were pretty women on the face of the earth. He wasn't ignorant. God, excuse me, there was temptation upon Jesus to commit adultery and he never did, not even in his heart, not in thought, and definitely not in deed.

Jesus is our perfect righteousness. None of us can keep God's law, but Jesus has kept it for us. One of the elders even pointed out to me, I was really struck by this, but you know, Jesus is talked about as being a friend of tax collectors and sinners and he would dine with prostitutes.

And what we see is that when Jesus meets with such people, he's not impacted by them, but his holiness is transferred. Now, I want to be careful. That doesn't mean you can replicate that. Right?

[43 : 00] I remember when I was in high school, our youth minister used to say, if you're a Christian, you can only date or court or whatever you want to call it, another Christian because you're not to be uninclined. And we always had those people in the youth group who were real crafted.

They go, well, I'm dating this girl for evangelistic reasons. I'm going to make her a Christian. Okay, don't replicate, but what I want you to see is this.

Jesus, his holiness, he communicates to others. He loved this prostitute or prostitutes in ways that we probably never could. In pure ways in sharing the gospel with them that they might come to know him.

And so if you're tempted by lust or to adultery, and again, I think we're all going to face or are facing this temptation. Go to God with the temptation.

Listen to 1 Corinthians 10, 12 through 13. Therefore, let anyone thinks that he stands, take heed lest he fall. That's those of you who are going to talk to me after the service.

[44 : 06] If any of you think you stand, you think you don't have a struggle with this, take heed lest he fall. No temptation is overtaking you that is not common to man. God is faithful.

He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation, he will also provide the way of escape that you may be able to endure it. When I read that, what I see is that even though we're tempted, God provides a way out.

Don't feel like I've got to go through with this. Pray that God's spirit will help you, that he will keep you from that lust or that temptation. And I think we're encouraged here that God will.

Or if I said another way, I'd say the worst place you can be in is to say, that's never going to be a struggle for me. I don't need God's help in this. And the best place you can be is to say, I always need God's help in this.

God helped me not to struggle with this. Remember Peter, all of them may leave you, but not this guy. I'm staying faithful. Let's not be like that.

[45 : 07] Thirdly, I want to encourage you again positively, nurture purity in your heart. Feed purity. Grow purity.

That's what we want to see in our hearts. Matthew 6.22 says, the eye is the lamp of the body. So if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light.

So if we want to be full of light, we need the eye to be healthy. We need to be fostering and nurturing purity within us. And I want to encourage you to glorify God with all your being.

And that includes, your being includes your body. It's not just your body, but we are to glorify God in everything, including our bodies. 1 Corinthians 6.19-20. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God?

You are not your own. You were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body. Because of that union with Christ, because of the Spirit living in you, glorify God in all your life, including in your own body.

[46 : 12] Now we've talked about that some in marriage. I mentioned before, but let me say again, that means again, if you're not married, celibacy. You cannot have sex outside marriage.

I've been using the term physical intimacy, which you understand includes more than that. I think we want to say that as well. You don't give yourself in physical intimacy to anyone other than your spouse. So if you're not married, you have to abstain from that.

I don't know the right category to talk to at this point, but I think especially, I mean, all of you who are not married in this room, teenagers, wait until you're married to have physical intimacy with another person.

God honors that. God blesses that. You will have a greater love, I think, for your spouse because of that. You will cherish it in different ways. Celibacy, if not married.

Fourthly, restore dignity to others. It's not as though they've lost it, that you've got to give it to them. Restore dignity to others in your heart and how you view them and how you treat other people.

[47 : 18] All people should be viewed by us as image bearers of God. Why do we not murder someone? It's not ultimately because it ends their life. It's because they're made in the image of God and we don't attack the image of God.

Why do we not lust for other people? That's not just some image on the screen. That's not just some person walking by me. That is the image bearer of God who deserves our honor and our respect.

And we don't take God's image and use it for our wrong purposes, our consuming. We're getting back into even the first table of the law of images.

We don't make images of God into play toys for us. And then say we need to view others as God views them. I think again of those who have been united to Jesus Christ.

Do we look at one another and see Christ in them? Christians look at each other and see brothers and sisters in the Lord. I think if you see someone as your sister in the Lord, my prayer and hope is that you don't then go in wrong places in your mind with that person.

[48 : 28] You love them. You protect them because you care for them. We protect our sisters. We protect our brothers. And we view them with honor and respect. Fifthly, I said this earlier, just touch on it again to remind you, delight in your spouse.

Let that be a joy. Don't give room for temptation. I want to be careful. This is not to condemn someone.

I think sometimes there can be a marriage partner who can use this as excuse. You know, I'm not enjoying this enough. And if I did, then I wouldn't be doing this. We cannot use that as an excuse.

But what I want to do is encourage the positive. Husbands and wives, you need to enjoy one another. Marriage ought to be in joy. The physical intimacy you enjoy ought to be enjoyable.

It ought to be something that you delight in. Again, see Song of Psalms if you have any questions. Fifthly, delight in God. So delight in your spouse, delight in God.

[49 : 32] One way that we address sin in our hearts is to find a greater affection, something we love more.

And so, if I said that another way, one reason we pursue adultery and lust is because we're not satisfied in the things we have been pursuing. We're looking for joy in all the wrong places.

So what do we need if we're going to fight against this? Delight yourself in the Lord. Find your joy in God. If you find your joy in God, remember what we saw earlier? One day we'll be in heaven in the presence of Christ.

We won't want marriage. We surely won't want adultery. Right? Why? Because this is better. And so, delight yourself in your marriage because it's better. And I'm saying, what's even better than your marriage is delighting yourself in God.

If you find God as your source of joy, you'll delight in your marriage more. You won't want adultery because it's a lesser pleasure. It doesn't measure up to what I have in God. Along with that is the idea that if we're going to delight in God, we want to avoid worldliness and delighting in the things the world delights in.

[50 : 39] 1 John 2.16, For all that is in the world, the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life is not from the Father, but it's from the world. The desires of the flesh is from the world.

And James 4.4 says, You adulterous people, do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

You adulterous people. I won't come back to the idea of adultery against God.

Make yourself an enemy of God. But first, let me say that one way we do this is that we seek the things that are above and we put to death the sin that is within us by the help of the spirit. Colossians 3.1-5.

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above. That's where our eyes are set on. Not the girl walking by, not the internet.

[51 : 39] Our eyes are set upon Christ and the things that are above. Where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things that are above, not on the things that are on the earth.

For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, when Christ returns, then you also will appear with Him in glory. Put to death, therefore, what is earthly in you, sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

And I think we could argue that every one of those are just ways of expressing adultery. Sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, covetousness, which is idolatry. We make an idol over something else and what is God's Word telling us to do?

How do we kill that sin? You get rid of that idol by looking to God, setting your sights on heaven, making that your joy. In God's Word, especially in the Old Testament, we see several times that God's people are accused of spiritual adultery.

God has been a husband to you and you've broken that relationship. And so, again, as we think about adultery on the horizontal plane, I want you to think also on the vertical plane.

[52 : 51] As we think of how we look to God, that we have a responsibility and obligation to be faithful to our God. Just as we are to delight in our spouse, we are to delight in the Lord.

One of my favorites, Psalm 37, 4, delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart. That's not the Ferrari. Right? If you delight yourself in the Lord, what does your heart desire?

Your heart desires what it delights in, which is the Lord. And so, delight yourself in the Lord that you may have Him, that you may have a greater joy. And I want to encourage you.

I've talked about spiritual adultery, but God's Word tells us though we are unfaithful, He remains faithful because He cannot deny Himself. And I think about even in the Old Testament, there was the exile, but there was always a remnant that God brought back.

He was faithful to His covenant and we know the faithfulness of God to His covenant relationship because He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to die for our sins. My hope and prayer is that as we see this, we will desire purity, that we will delight in our spouse, and also we'll know we all fall short, that we cannot be good enough to get ourselves into heaven.

[54 : 00] None of us are righteous, but Christ has been. Let us look to Him in the blood of the Lamb for forgiveness of sins. Let's pray together. Dear Heavenly Father, we thank You for Your Word and how it does instruct us.

And we pray now that You would help us to trust in Christ, that You would forgive us for our sins, for our physical and our mental and our spiritual adultery.

Lord, that You would make us a people who delight in You and who honor one another, that sees unbelievers as those made in Your image. That sees brothers and sisters in the Lord as brothers and sisters.

And that we would love and protect one another and that You would keep us pure from such thoughts. Definitely from such action. And that Lord, we would treasure You and set our sights upon that which is in heaven.

We pray this in Christ's name. Amen. Amen.