

BIBLE LIFE MESSAGES

Commandment # 7 - Honor Your Marriage Vows

Exodus 20:14

¹ The Seventh Commandment is to honor your marriage vows. ² Exodus, chapter 20, verse 14, says, **You shall not commit adultery.** ³

I. What Did This Mean to Them?

What did this mean to the original recipients of this command? ⁴

Let's look at the meaning of the word **Adultery**. In the original languages, it was pretty clear. ⁵ The word in the Old Testament ¹ and in the New Testament ² both meant willful sexual intercourse with someone other than one's husband or wife. Adultery is always committed by someone who is married. If you are married and you step out on your spouse and have sex, you committed adultery! ⁶

It's related to **fornication**; ³ any sexual relationship outside the bonds of marriage. ⁷ It can be committed by anyone, married or not, who has sex with anyone

¹ אֶזְבֵּי.

² Μοιχεύω.

³ Πορνεύω.

else, married or not, who isn't your spouse. This includes pre-marriage sexual intercourse! We get our English word pornography from this word. ⁸

What was the punishment for adultery under the Old Testament Law? ⁹

Capitol Punishment! Deuteronomy, chapter 22, verse 22, **If a man is found sleeping with another man's wife, both the man who slept with her and the woman must die. You must purge the evil from Israel.** ¹⁰

Why was this punishment so severe?

God thinks more of your marriage than you do! ¹¹ The union of you and your spouse makes you **more complete** than any of you could be alone. ¹²

The union of marriage provides an emotional **security** that affects your whole being. There's an indescribable security in faithfulness to a monogamous relationship. ¹³

The union of marriage **protects** you from venereal diseases and AIDS. ¹⁴

There appears to be a spiritual, as well as a physical and emotional bond, in marriage. ¹⁵ When adultery breaks the marriage bond a spiritual connection is also broken. ¹⁶ Divorce is often the outcome when the marriage bond is broken. ¹⁷ The Book of Malachi states, "I hate divorce", says the LORD God of Israel . . . ⁴ ¹⁸

Then, there is the new dimension our Lord Jesus placed on it! ¹⁹

There's the divorce aspect. Matthew, chapter 5, verse 32 says, **But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery.** ²⁰

There's the mental and emotional aspect. Matthew 5 continues, **You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.'** **But I tell you that anyone who looks**

⁴ Malachi 2:16.

at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ⁵ ₂₁

There's the forgiveness aspect. One day when Lord Jesus was in the Temple with His disciples, some of the religious leaders dragged a woman before Him. They had caught her in the very act of adultery!

Guilt was not the issue. She knew she was guilty. Lord Jesus knew she was guilty. Virtually everybody suspected she was guilty.

Their plan was to fulfill the Law of Moses punishment for this crime, public execution. Would Jesus agree with them and agree to her execution? That would violate His public teachings about love and forgiveness.

**Would Jesus deny the Seventh Commandment?
Would He speak against the scripture requiring death**

⁵ Matthew 5:27-28.

for breaking it? ⁶ They envisioned this confrontation as the perfect trap!

However, He pointed out their hypocrisy of bringing her in the first place by implying each of them were guilty of the same crime. They just didn't get caught!

He, then, forgave her on the condition that she would genuinely repent of her adulterous lifestyle! ⁷

⁶ Deuteronomy 22:22 - If a man is found sleeping with another man's wife, both the man who slept with her and the woman must die. You must purge the evil from Israel.

⁷ At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group and said to Jesus, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him. But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground. At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" "No one, sir," she said. "Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."

Would you forgive your spouse if they committed adultery but were willing to completely repent and begin building the bond of trust again? ²²

II. What Should This Mean to You?

What should this commandment mean to you? ²³

There was an amusing sign in the parking lot of a place I used to work that said, “Don’t even think about parking here!” Lord Jesus made an implication to the Seventh Commandment, **But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. Don’t even entertain the thought of adultery!** No matter how tough the situation is at home; no matter how attractive the situation elsewhere – don’t even entertain the thoughts! ²⁴

One way to avoid adultery is **don’t put yourself into vulnerable situations!** First Thessalonians, chapter 5, verse 22, **Avoid every kind of evil.** I like the King James Version translation of this phrase the best, **Abstain from all appearances of evil.** ²⁵

Another way to avoid adultery is prevention. **Don't let the marriage you have deteriorate!** ²⁶

Most often the temptation of adultery comes from when things are not right at home. ²⁷ Put effort into keeping the spark in your marriage alive. Plan romance. ²⁸

Work together. Play together. Enjoy one another's company. ²⁹ Recall often what originally attracted you to one another! ³⁰

Remember, God hates adultery so much that the Law of Moses demanded the death penalty whenever anyone was found doing it!

God wants you to remain faithful to your mate always.

Work out problems!

Stick together!

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