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7th Commandment (Part 1)



Ten Commandments - Steve Gregg

Steve Gregg discusses the 7th Commandment of the Bible in Exodus 20, which forbids adultery. Gregg highlights that adultery harms not only the marriage partner but also society's God-given relationship of marriage. He emphasizes the gravity of the sin and how engaging in sexual acts with someone other than one's spouse is not only a personal act of infidelity but a crime against God himself. Gregg also warns about the dangers of mental adultery and the importance of modesty and self-control in a Christian's conduct.

Transcript

Let's turn together to Exodus chapter 20 once more, and we will be reading the 7th Commandment. We have been in a series on the Ten Commandments for several weeks now. This is not the 7th week because there have been occasions when we've taken more than one week on a commandment, and there's been times when we've taken two commandments in one week.

But we have been at this for some weeks now, and you can see we're getting nearer the end. We're past the halfway point. Tonight I have quite a lot that I'd prepared to talk about, about this commandment, but I think it'll take two weeks to go through it unless we wanted to stay all night, and I don't want to stay all night.

I'd rather that we could have more time of worship and fellowship afterwards, so that I'll give you this message in two installments. In Exodus chapter 20 and verse 14, we have the 7th Commandment in the Decalogue. It says, thou shalt not commit adultery.

Now, most of you are familiar with the term, adultery. It's perhaps one of the most common sins in our society, and it's not unique to our society either. It is, as some have cynically said, the oldest profession, prostitution.

But, of course, prostitution is not even the major form of adultery that is found in our society, because adultery simply means, in its most literal definition, sexual relations between two parties who are not married to each other, but of whom at least one of them is married to someone else. That is, if you're a married person, then if you have

sexual relations with anyone other than your husband or your wife, you're committing adultery. If you're a single person and have sexual relations with someone who is married to someone else, then you are also committing adultery.

Now, that is the narrowest interpretation of the term, adultery, and most of us can feel quite confident that we are relatively unscathed by that definition. Most of us probably have not slept with someone else's wife, though I wouldn't doubt that maybe some of you have at one time or another. But Jesus broadened the definition of adultery quite a bit, and I would like to talk about all the implications of this law, since we do not want to be legalists who take the law only at its letter and ignore the spirit of it, because we want to know what the counsel of God is for his people and how we can live a life pleasing to him.

This is certainly the reason he gave his law. First of all, to inform us that our lives by nature do not conform to his standards, which we can determine simply by reading the Ten Commandments. We can see that by nature we do not keep those commandments.

And secondly, that we might know what standard to aim at in our conduct to please God, because his law certainly is the expression of his will and of what pleases him. So we'll talk about this sin of adultery tonight. In the scriptures, the sin of adultery is called by various names, all of them very negative.

In Job chapter 31 and verse 11, Job speaks of it as a heinous crime. And it is a crime, but it's not only a crime, it's a heinous crime. In Jeremiah chapter 29 and verse 23, God himself calls adultery villainy.

That a person who commits adultery is a villain and a criminal against the laws of God and the laws that God has set for the order of his universe. I'd like to say that the crime of adultery is against more than one party. In the first instance, of course, it is a sin against marriage.

And as such, it might be seen and should be seen as a sin against society in general. Since marriage is the foundation of all society, it is the foundation stone of society. Whenever adultery takes place, it not only affects that marriage, but it affects society.

Maybe only in a very small way, but I think we all know that the fact that one marriage out of every two in the United States ends in divorce today is not only a statistic about how many families have gone awry, but it is also something that encourages people who have not divorced or have not committed adultery to do so since they figure everyone's doing it. That if you commit adultery, it does not only harm your marriage or the marriage of the partner that you're engaged with in this, but it in a small way or maybe a great way, depending on how influential you are. It damages society in general by adding one more instance that people can look to and say, well, this is everyone's doing it.

This is accepted these days. It's not wrong anymore. Look how many people see it as OK.

And society, of course, refers to all relationships between human beings. And marriage is the basic relationship that God has ordained. It's the first human relationship that God ever ordained.

God did not first ordain the relationship between kings and subjects or the relationship between parents and children or the relationship between employer and employee or the relationship between teacher and student or any of these kinds of relationships that exist or the relationship between neighbor and neighbor. None of these represent the first relationship to God established. The first was marriage.

When God created man in his own image, he said it's not good for man to be alone. So he created not a neighbor, not an employer, but a wife for Adam. And so we see that the basis of all human society, the first established and God ordained relationship is that of marriage.

And adultery, obviously, is a sin against that ordinance. Now, marriage is entered into through a covenant or by the swearing of an oath. There are not very many covenants in our modern society.

And the word covenant has almost passed out of use in modern Western society in the Middle East and in the Orient, especially in Bible times. A covenant was well understood. Covenants of all kinds were entered into covenants of peace between parties and between nations and covenants that one group would bless another group or something like that.

But marriage was one of those covenants, and it is the one covenant that has passed into our modern society as well. And a covenant is something more than just a contract. It is that.

But it's a solemn agreement sworn with an oath, usually invoking tremendous penalties upon oneself if they would break it. The entering into covenant in some societies has been done by the cutting of risks of two parties and putting those two bleeding risks together to symbolize the interchange of blood, the oneness of the two parties in the covenant. Covenants are generally considered to be lifelong or eternal.

And of course, if one person breaks a covenant, then the covenant is broken and the other party is considered free. Nonetheless, whoever breaks covenant has done something very grievous indeed. And it is for this reason, I believe, that adulterers in the Old Testament were stoned to death, whereas people who committed fornication, meaning two people who were not married, either of them, they were only given what would seem much lesser penalty.

They were, for instance, in Exodus chapter 22, if a man who was not married slept with a

virgin who was not married and not betrothed, then those two as their penalty would have to get married. And if it was not agreeable to the father of the girl for them to get married, then the man who had done the thing would have to pay a certain sum to the father so that he might increase the dowry of the girl. Her no longer being a virgin would be not as desirable on the wife market, and therefore a larger dowry would be needed.

And so the man would have to pay a financial penalty. But it's interesting that both adultery and fornication represent the exact same physical act, yet the penalty for one is relatively light, whereas the penalty for the other is death. If two parties would commit adultery, the Bible says that both of them should be put to death by stoning.

Now, what is the difference? It seems obvious that the difference between adultery and fornication is that in the case of adultery, there has been a covenant broken. It is not only an act of sexual pollution and sexual impurity, it is an act of infidelity, an act of unfaithfulness, an act of perjury. Everyone who commits adultery or, for that matter, everyone who divorces their spouse, their spouse not having committed adultery first, is guilty of perjury, which is something which is punishable in our courts.

That is lying under oath. Everyone who gets married swears with an oath of some kind, makes a covenant that they will remain faithful unto death. In Malachi chapter 2 and verse 14, God, through His prophet, is rebuking the people, the men, especially the older men who have divorced their older wives and married younger wives, apparently because they found the younger women more attractive.

They just discarded their older wives and married younger wives. And God, through the prophet, speaks of this as treachery. Repeatedly in Malachi chapter 2, God speaks of this situation as a treacherous dealing of a man with his wife, breaking his covenant.

And yet he says, yet she is thy companion and the wife of thy covenant. That's Malachi 2, 14. She is still the wife of your covenant, meaning that though you might seek to make her something less to you, you cannot ignore the fact that you entered into a covenant with her.

And by breaking that covenant, you have perjured yourself and done something that is even greater than just the mere act of committing a sexual sin. Now, in saying that, I do not mean to imply that fornication is better than adultery. In a case like this, neither would be considered better, but one is certainly considered worse.

Neither is good. And the New Testament tells us that fornication is equally corrupt and forbidden to Christians as is adultery. So by comparing the various penalties for the two crimes in the Old Testament, we should not come away with the impression that God doesn't care much about fornication, but is only angry about adultery.

In fact, we'll talk about fornication along with adultery in this study as we go along. Now,

even when people commit fornication, neither party being married, this, in a sense, is an act of adultery, or at least potentially so, because presumably one or both of those parties will later marry someone. If they don't marry each other, which is what the law demanded that they do in a case like that, but if they don't, then they will probably marry someone else.

And the act that they committed before marriage is a sin against that future marriage. Because God has ordained that one man should have one wife for his whole lifetime. And it may be that he does not find his wife until later in his life.

Nonetheless, he is expected to be her husband and she his wife for life. And any sexual acts that he or she has done before the marriage are sins against that marriage, though it has not yet taken place. There are scriptures to that effect, one of which is in First Thessalonians chapter four, and this is in a passage that's talking about fornication.

Now, adultery is not mentioned here, but fornication is. And it says, we'll start with First Thessalonians 4, 3 and read through verse 6. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that you should abstain from fornication, that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel, meaning his body in sanctification and honor, not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles, which know not God, that no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter or more properly as the margin reads in this matter, because that the Lord is the avenger of all such as we have forewarned you and testified. Now, it says, do not commit fornication.

He says, because if you do, in verse six, you will be defrauding your brother. Now, he's writing as most most of the text of Scripture addressed to men, though, of course, the same principles apply to women, but generally the man, the male is the one addressed. He's writing as though he's writing to men, and he says that by committing fornication, they are defrauding their brother.

But fornication is not with a married woman. Therefore, the brother that is defrauded must be her future husband. And that would certainly be understood in that society, because in Bible times, if a man found out that his bride was not a virgin, he could put her away.

It was considered he got a bad deal. Now, most men today kind of don't even have any expectations of finding a virgin for a wife because of the amount of sin that is profuse in our society. But in the Bible times, if a woman was married to a man and he found her to not be a virgin, then he could actually have her killed for it.

And the law concerning that is in Deuteronomy, Chapter 22, from verse 13 on through the majority of the chapter. But I'll just read a few verses. Deuteronomy 22, 13, if any man take a wife and go in unto her and hate her and give occasions of speech against her and bring an evil name upon her and say, I took this woman and when I came in

here, I found her not a maid or not a virgin.

Then shall the father of the damsel and her mother take and bring forth the tokens of the damsel's virginity, whatever those were, probably bloody bed sheets from the marriage night. It's wedding night, it's believed unto the elders of the city in the gate and the damsel's father shall say unto the elders, I gave my daughter into this man to wife and he hated her and lo, he has given occasions of speech against her saying, I found not my daughter a maid and so forth. Now, it does say a little further.

In verse 20, but if the thing be true and the tokens of virginity be not found for the damsel, then they shall bring out the damsel unto the door of her father's house and the men of the city shall stone her with stones that she die because she has wrought folly in Israel to play the whore in her father's house. So shall thou put evil away from among you. Now, notice in a case like this, she has committed fornication.

She has had sexual relations with a man before she was married so that when she finally was married, her husband found her not a virgin anymore. She was then stoned to death. Now, if she had been caught with the man that she previously had relationships with, they wouldn't have been stoned, they would have had to get married.

But in this case, they don't know who the man is necessarily. Therefore, she alone bears the penalty. But notice she gets the same penalty as an adulterer or an adulteress because her act before marriage was a sin against her future husband, and he had the right to take her before the court as though she had played the harlot while she was his wife.

So we can see that fornication, though we might see it containing often a lesser penalty in the law than adultery, is a form of adultery, actually, that unmarried parties who commit sexual acts are sinning against future marriages. And any of you who have committed acts of sex with people who were not married and who were not married at the time, you don't have any grounds for feeling like you're free from the guilt of this because, in a sense, fornication, too, is adultery. It is a sin against a marriage, a future marriage, but a marriage no less.

There's another reason why this is a sin against society and against marriage. It's a great sin because it's one of the few sins where you necessarily have to defile another person. Now, if you kill someone or if you rob from them or if you bear false witness against them, if you covet their property or if you do any other thing against them, you may harm them, but you will not cause them to be guilty before God of anything.

After all, if someone kills you, you don't have to answer to God for that. If someone steals from you, that's not your fault. But if you commit adultery, then by necessity, by the very nature of the act, you bring another person into sin with you.

You cause someone else to stumble. Now, Jesus made a statement about how grievous it is to cause someone to stumble. In Luke chapter 17 and verses one and two, Jesus said to his disciples, it is impossible, but that offenses will come.

Now, that's a strange way of putting it in the King James, but what that could be rendered or should be rendered is it is inevitable. It is inevitable that stumbling blocks will come. They will come.

Stumbling blocks is what offenses should be translated. But woe unto him through whom they come. It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he cast into the sea than that he should offend one of these little ones.

Now, Jesus was saying to his disciples. It is unavoidable there will be stumbling blocks, but woe unto the person that brings those stumbling blocks. Woe betide the man who brings another into sin.

It's bad enough that he sends himself. He can go to hell and burn forever for that, but that he brings another party into it makes him twice as bad. And no, Jesus said that the Pharisees did this as a habit.

He said to the Pharisees, you not only forbid, you not only don't enter into the kingdom of God yourself, you forbid others from coming in. He said, you traverse land and sea to make one proselyte or one convert. And after you've made that convert, you make him twice a child of hell as yourself.

Therefore, your damnation is greater, he said. It's a greater damnation when you bring other people into sin than if you simply send yourself. Now, you say, well, what's worse than just burning in hell? I can send if I'm burning hell forever for for stealing.

And what what greater punishment could I get for bringing someone else into sin? Oh, God can think of something. He said that he would avenge Cain sevenfold upon those who killed him. I don't know how you avenge someone sevenfold when one fold vengeance would be to kill a person.

What do you do if you can do it sevenfold? Yet God said there and there are scriptures that indicate that there are degrees of punishment and judgment. Jesus said those who knew their master's will and didn't do it will be beaten with many stripes, whereas those who didn't know their master's will and didn't do it will be beaten with few stripes. There are degrees of judgment.

And it is a greater crime, adultery than any other crime against society, because it not only exploits another person, it not only takes advantage of them, but it actually brings them into criminal activity as well. It makes them also culpable of your crime. They become accomplices because it's absolutely necessary for that to be the case in such a sin.

Another reason that adultery is a crime against society and against marriage is that it sows discord. It says in Proverbs chapter six and verse 19 that there are seven things that God hates. And the one on the list that's last is he that sows discord among brethren, he that sows divisions and stripes in the family.

God hates it. And adultery will always do that because in one sense, adultery will either be it'll obviously either be discovered or it won't be discovered by the wronged spouse. If it is discovered by the wrong spouse, it will certainly bring discord in the marriage.

If it is not discovered, then it still brings discord because there are secrets hidden. There are there's a guilty conscience on the part of one party. There might not be repentance on the other party so that the the affections of the adulterous partner are alienated from her spouse or his spouse.

And so that there is a break in the relationship and the marriage very frequently divorce will follow. In fact, Jesus indicated it's the only grounds for divorce that exists. If divorce ever occurs properly, it will be because of this grounds and for no other.

And when there's divorce, not only the parents are affected, of course, children are affected to usually when parents get divorced, children usually feel like they're guilty about it. It causes all kinds of problems in the relationships. God hates those who cause rifts in family relationships.

He hates those who sow discord among brethren and adultery certainly does that. And so it is a great crime against marriage and against society. And.

Another reason that it is a great crime against society. Is reflected in Jeremiah, chapter five and verse seven and eight. God says, how shall I pardon thee for this? Thy children have forsaken me and sworn by them that are no gods.

When I had fed them to the full, then they committed adultery and assembled themselves by troops in the harlot's houses. They were as fed horses in the morning. Everyone made after his neighbor's wife.

Now, what he's saying here is that adultery. Is. When men act like animals, men reduce themselves to the level of beasts.

Sexual activity is not beastly. God created men and women to have sexual activity within the confines of marriage. But to ignore the marriage relationship and to run around and sleep with people outside that relationship, that is to play the beast.

That is to be like an animal. And if society would generally practice this, then human society would degenerate to that of the jungle. It would just be a society of animals running around lusting after everyone else's wife.

There would be no more foundation for human society at all. It'd be anarchy and it'd be a jungle. Therefore, adultery is a crime against society.

It reduces men to the level of beasts. In fact, lower than some beasts, because there are animals that practice more chastity. Chastity than an adulterer.

Turtle does, for instance, don't change partners for their whole life. I'm told that storks, though they fly all over the world, in fact, they always nest only in their own nest. And naturalists tell us that if a stork leaves its mate and takes another mate, that its fellow storks will pluck its feathers out and kill it.

There are some animals that have higher standards of chastity than some people. And when a man commits adultery, he not only lowers himself to the level of animals and throws off that distinctive human relationship that God has ordained of marriage, but he makes himself baser than some animals. And he ignores the fact that he is created to be the crown of creation, higher than the animals in the image of God.

He makes himself only one of them and sees himself as no better. So adultery is a crime against marriage and against society. It is also a crime against God.

All sexual misconduct is a crime against God because the Bible says that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. In First Corinthians, chapter three, verses 16 and 17, it says, Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man defiles the temple of God, him shall God destroy. For the temple of God is holy.

Which temple ye are? Now, your body is the temple of God. Now, when we think of the temple that stood in the Old Testament times and the tabernacle before it, which was its precursor. You remember how holy everything was.

Anyone who is not a priest could not touch the holy vessels in the tabernacle or in the temple. Anyone who is not a Levite could not come near the tent building, the tabernacle building. If they touched it, they could be put to death because it was holy.

That's why it was. That's why it happened that when the priests were bringing the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem in David's time on a cart and it was jostled and almost fell off the cart. There was a man who reached out to try to support the Ark to keep it from falling over.

But as soon as he touched the Ark, God struck him dead. Made David angry, just like it might make you angry when you read that story. But the reason we get angry is because we fail to take into account how holy God is.

And those things that are set apart for him are for no other purpose. They're not to be touched by unholy hands. Now, your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

A moment ago, we read in First Thessalonians, four, three, that every man must learn to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor. That means your physical body. You need to learn how to possess it in sanctification and honor, because it's sanctification means holiness.

Your body is holy. It's holy unto God. He has made it his habitation and he has made it known publicly to the world that the church is his habitation and that he dwells in his people.

Therefore, when you sin, you defile his temple. And it's certainly no less offensive to God than when his temple is defiled when Antiochus Epiphanes broke into the Holy of Holies and sacrificed a sow on the altar. That kind of defilement is something that offends God and brings his wrath and adultery defiles God's temple.

And therefore, it is a crime against God, as well as a crime against the marriage and against society. In First Corinthians, chapter six, verses 15 through 20, it says, No, you not that your bodies are the members of Christ. Now, since we're parts of the body of Christ, our bodies are like hands and feet, members of Christ.

Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? God forbid what? No, you not that that that he which is joined to a harlot is one body for the two, say, if he shall be one flesh. So what he's saying here is that adultery is a sin against God in another sense. Not only are we the temple of the Holy Spirit, we are the body of Christ.

Your physical body is a member of Christ's body, the church. When you join your body to an adulteress or an adulterer and become one flesh, you are joining Christ. To a harlot, you are making him, in a sense, a whoremonger.

His reputation is dragged down by your activities. He has so intimately associated himself with you as to call you his flesh and his bones. He has risked his personal cleanliness by dwelling in you.

And when we defile our bodies, we are defiling Christ. We are members of Christ. And shall we join the members of Christ to a harlot? Further in the same chapter, in verse 19 and 20, he says, What? No, you not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which you have from God, and ye are not your own, for you have been bought with a price.

Therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. Usually, when people commit sexual sin, they consider that they are doing a victimless crime unless it's rape. But if they're having sexual relations with a consenting adult, it is usually considered to be a victimless crime.

And of course, that's very much a misnomer because there is no such thing as a

victimless crime. In fact, any act of sexual sin may create victims, children, and it victimizes your partner, whoever that would be, even if they enter into it willingly. It brings them into damnation.

Or establishes their already status of being damned more fully, gives them something more to repent of. But more than that, God is the victim. Even masturbation, which would be the ultimate victimless crime, is not a victimless crime because your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

You are supposed to possess your vessel in sanctification and honor because it is God's. It is a member of Christ. Will you bring Christ into that kind of activity? He is the victim, always, whenever there's any sexual pollution.

And so adultery is a crime against marriage and society. It's also a crime against God. But the Bible says it's also a crime against your own body.

It's not only against your body, it's against you in many aspects, many respects. You hurt yourself when you commit sexual sin. Now, some people say, well, that kind of hurt, I don't mind.

But people who say that don't know what they're talking about. In Proverbs, chapter six. Verse twenty six through.

Twenty nine says, for by means of a whorish woman or a prostitute, a man is brought into a piece of bread and the adulterous will hunt for the precious life. Can a man take fire into his bosom and his clothes not be burned? Can one go up on hot coals and his feet not be burned? So he that goeth into his neighbor's wife, whosoever touches her shall not be innocent. Now, he says that going into a woman who is not your wife and having sexual relations is like taking coals into your bosom or walking on hot coals.

Can a man do that and his feet not be burned? We know that I've just heard that it's a big craze in the San Francisco area. Now, certain occultists are doing just that, walking on coals without getting their feet burned. I've heard of a few cases of people who tried it and got their feet quite burned.

I understand it's a big popular fad. Now, down there, there's a coal walking cult, but some of them have been burned pretty badly. In other cases, demonic powers have kept it from happening.

But the illustration is obvious. He's saying that if you take coal into your bosom, you expect to be burned. If you take an adulterous under your arm or if you move in sexual misconduct, you are asking to get burned because adultery is a sin against yourself as well as a sin against God and others.

It is, first of all, a sin against your own body. It says in 1 Corinthians 6:18, 1 Corinthians

618, it says all other sins are done outside the body, but he that committeth fornication sins against his own body. I'm not sure exactly why he says all other sins are outside the body.

Perhaps that's to be taken relatively. Many of them are outside the body, but we could probably think of some others that hurt the body. But he says fornication itself is against your own body.

Certainly, we know that there are known diseases that a man risks catching if he is involved in sexual behavior beyond marriage. Recently, the herpes epidemic was said to be nature's check on the sexual revolution. I would call it more the judgment of God upon a sexually promiscuous society.

But there was a herpes epidemic. I don't know if it still is. I suppose it still is in some places.

Also, the AIDS epidemic, which started mainly among homosexuals but is now affecting others as well, and of course, the age old venereal diseases, syphilis, gonorrhea, and others that have always been around. From ancient times, these dangers to the physical body have been known by men to be attached to sexual misconduct. And people, when they have committed sexual sin, have usually done so knowing that they were taking a risk of this.

In describing the dangers of getting involved in adultery, Solomon, talking to his son in Proverbs chapter five, said in verse eight, Remove thy way far from her, meaning the adulteress, and come not nigh the door of her house, lest thou give thine honor unto others and thy years unto the cruel. Lest strangers be filled with thy wealth and labor thy labors be in the house of a stranger, and thou mourn at the last when thy flesh and thy body are consumed. And say, how have I hated instruction and my heart despised reproof? Says in the end, after you've lived your sexually promiscuous life, you'll mourn at the end when your body and your flesh are being consumed with disease.

In Proverbs chapter seven and verse 23, he talks about the fool who goes in after the prostitute and he says that he's like a lamb or like an ox going to the slaughter or like a fool to the correction of the stocks until a dart strike through his liver as a bird hastes to the snare and knows not that it is for his life. This reference to a dart going through his liver most likely has to do with internal disease also because of his sexual life. So adultery is against your physical body.

It's also against your reputation, by the way, not only against your body. And a good name is more to be chosen than riches, it says in Proverbs. But in Proverbs chapter six and verse 33, talking about the adulterer, it says a wound and dishonor shall he get and his reproach shall not be wiped away.

The man who commits adultery says he'll get dishonor and a reproach. His good name will be soiled forever. He'll always be remembered as the adulterer, at least in the minds of a few, if not in society at large.

So it's a sin against your body. It's a sin also against your good name and your reputation. It's also hard on your finances.

If you are a person driven by your lust, you'll find it very hard on your pocketbook. This is also stated in the scriptures in Proverbs five again and verse 10. We read this verse, it says, you should avoid the harlot, less strangers be filled with your wealth and thy labors be in the house of a stranger.

That is the things you've worked for. Your wealth will go to someone else. Who? Well, the harlot, obviously, if you're going to a prostitute, she's going to get your money in our society.

Like I said, I haven't known that many people who go to prostitutes, massage parlors and things like that. They are available still, and I'm sure that they still have plenty of people coming to them. But most people I've known who are involved in sexual pollutions are not paying for them in money.

Nonetheless, a person who lets his lust dominate him, the same kind of person who commits adultery, will find that there are many people who are willing to exploit his lusts for money with peep shows, pornography. And all kinds of ways, an adulterer and his money are soon parted. It's a very costly thing of the prodigal son.

It says that he wasted his entire living on prostitutes. And partying. In Luke, chapter 15 and verse 30.

It's expensive being an adulterer. Not every affair costs a lot of money, though sometimes it does if you have to rent a motel room or something like that. But a habit of sexual misconduct will run into money because there are always those who will use your bondage to lust as an opportunity to get rich off of you.

And many people have found themselves financially hurt because of it. That certainly isn't the worst thing that can happen to a person in adultery, but it is at least one of the other things that come of it. Another reason that it's hard on you is that it can cost you your life.

Not only because of syphilis and things like that, but because, at least in biblical times, an adulterer could be put to death legally. In fact, he was supposed to be put to death. In Leviticus 20, in verse 10, the command was given, anyone who sleeps with his neighbor's wife, the both of them shall be stoned to death.

So it was hard on the survival side of it to commit adultery. It's a sin against yourself in

that respect, too. But further, in Proverbs chapter 6, it indicates that a man who commits adultery is courting disaster because of the jealous husband.

And we know of many people who've been murdered in crimes of passion when a husband has learned that his wife was messing around. In Proverbs chapter 6, in speaking about the adulteress, a wound and dishonor shall he get, his reproach shall not be wiped away, for jealousy is the rage of a husband. Therefore, he will not spare in the day of vengeance.

He will not regard any ransom, neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts. You may try to buy him off, but he's a man of passions. He's not going to be content until he's gotten your blood.

So a person can lose their life committing adultery. That's another reason why it's a crime against yourself. But probably the most horrible part of it all is that adultery damns, like all sin.

All sin damns a person. Now, I know that any time you're tempted to have any kind of sexual sin, I know exactly what the devil says because he's talked to me, too. We all talk to the same devil, I have a feeling, or at least hear from him.

And whenever he tempts you to commit any sexual sin, he tells you, well, you know how gracious God is. God forgives. You can do it and then repent.

You know how that God always forgives when you repent. But there's a hidden clause that the devil doesn't mention, and that is that sin, though it is true, God will forgive it once it's been repented of. Sin numbs you to spiritual things.

And a practice of any sin, and a sexual sin especially, blinds your eyes to spiritual reality. It takes away moral judgment. It hardens the heart against conviction.

And a person who chooses an adulterous life will find that he is not convicted enough after a while to even repent. The same is true of many other sins, but probably none as much as adultery. I've heard of so many cases just in recent times of men of God that I knew who were pastors.

In some cases, I knew them personally. In other cases, I knew of them because they were famous, who got involved in adulterous relationship with someone in the church. And when it was found out, they were confronted by the church.

They were removed from the ministry. They went through counseling and so forth. They seemed to clean up their act for a little while, but they just went right back to it.

And I've known a very few. I'm not sure I could single out one that I have heard of, of a man who's run off with one of the women in the church or something who ever came

back repentant. Now, there may be some.

I'm not saying there aren't. But I know of many cases of men who have run off in a situation like this, and I haven't heard yet of one that came back. It's true if you repent, God can forgive.

But don't count on being able to repent. If you go deliberately into any sin, you already have your heart hard. The reason I know is because I've been tempted as strongly as anyone has in almost every areas of sin that you've been tempted in.

And sometimes temptation is very strong and sometimes it seems almost irresistible. But my heart is just up to this point, fortunately, just soft enough that even at the extreme time of temptation, I could never allow myself to give in to it. But if I did allow myself to give into it, what I'm saying is my heart would have to be somewhat harder than it is now, harder toward God just to allow myself to even do that.

And so even if I would commit an act one time, it would be an indication that my heart was already becoming harder than it is now toward God. And the act itself generally will bring further hardness. And as an act is continued in, it brings more and more hardness.

Everyone knows that every one of you who had sexual relations as a teenager or whatever know that the first time you did it, if you had any kind of religious background or moral family life, it seemed wrong. You probably felt convicted by the Holy Spirit, even if you weren't a Christian. But when you did it again and again and again and again, it became less wrong, seemingly, until it became something that you just figured, well, there's nothing wrong with this at all.

And that's the way sin is. It numbs you. You become harder and harder and harder toward God.

Your conscience becomes numb. And so a man is a fool if he listens to the devil and the devil says, go ahead and do this. You can always repent.

No, you can't always repent. You can't always repent. God has to grant repentance and be not deceived.

God is not mocked for whatsoever man soweth, that shall he also reap. If he sows to the flesh, he will reap of the flesh corruption. And the Bible says that the harlot's house, the steps of her house will lead down into hell.

And so a person who commits adultery is playing with fire, with real fire, with eternal fire. In fact, I'd like to read you one verse concerning that in Revelation 21 in verse 8. It says, 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. So, we see then that adultery is a

crime against marriage and society.

It is secondly, or we might say primarily, really, a sin against God as well, because your body is his and when you defile his temple, you sin against him. Thirdly, it's a sin against yourself. In more than one way, it's a sin against your own body because of the disease.

And you can see why Job called it a heinous crime. And why God in Jeremiah called it villainy. It's a very especially evil crime, as I said, because it involves others as well as yourself.

Now, as I said earlier, adultery might seem to refer to only a very narrow stream of sexual activity since it specifically speaks of having a sexual relationship with someone who's married to someone else or in your case, if you're married to someone else, having relations with someone who's not your partner, your spouse. But in fact, the one commandment, thou shalt not commit adultery, in itself condemns all other form of sexual, moral pollutions because it springs from the same fountain that they all do, and that is the fountain of lust. Adultery is the product of lust and so are all other sexual sins.

In Leviticus chapter 20, there's a long list of sexual sins for which a person can be put to death, having sex with animals, having sex with another man's wife, having sex with your sister, having sex with your mother, having sex with another person of the same sex as yourself, a long list. And every one of them in Leviticus chapter 20, it says they shall be put to death. It's obvious that they're all equally forbidden because the same lust that motivates a person to commit one motivates the people who commit the others.

In fact, it can even be said with some validity that all sexual compromise leads ultimately to adultery, at least in the mind, because once you throw off Christian morals in the area of sexual conduct, whether it's just getting into masturbation, which seems a small thing in our society and most psychologists tell us it's a healthy thing, kids should do it, or if it's getting into messing around as a teenager with another teenage person, experimenting as they sometimes call it today, seemingly harmless terminology. But whatever the sexual misconduct it is, you're setting yourself up for a bondage to sexual lust, and a bondage to sexual lust will lead you ultimately to at least mental adultery, if not physical adultery as well. So in the one command, thou shalt not commit adultery.

All other sexual acts that are of the same species that come from the same fountain from lust are forbidden. And that's why Jesus spoke of the man who has lusted after a woman or actually who has looked upon a woman to lust after her. He has committed adultery already in his heart.

Now, he hasn't literally gone out and committed adultery, but he's already on the road there. He might as well, if he's indulging in that kind of activity, write himself off as an adulterer, because all of that kind of activity eventually leads to the same place, that is,

to no scruples about adultery. Suddenly, the marriage bond seems very small.

Once a man is consumed with lust, marriage seems a small matter. And it's very obvious how much we get out of touch with moral reality when we allow ourselves to get involved in such things. Now, there's one other area I want to talk about before we break it off here.

And I'll have to continue this next week as well, because it is a lengthy study. But I want to talk about mental adultery, since that's what we just introduced. Jesus is the one who talked about it the most.

We could turn to the passage where he did talk about it. Matthew, chapter five and verse. Twenty seven and twenty eight, Jesus said, You 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 by right I offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee, for it is profitable for thee that one of my members should perish and not that my whole body should be cast into hell. Now, he said, if a man looks at a woman to lust after her, he has committed adultery in his heart.

That's mental adultery. And we need to know what this means, because a lot of people are quite convinced that they've already done it when sometimes they haven't quite gone that far. Most of us have had times when because we were in an office with women who were dressed seductively or because we were driving down the road and there were billboards with with amorous couples petting and things on the on the billboard.

There have been times when lust was aroused, when there was a where the sexual awareness and the sexual drive began to get stirred. And most of us, if we have tender consciences toward the things of God, have felt at those moments, oh, no, I've committed adultery in my heart because these emotions have been stirred because Jesus said, if you look at a woman to lust after you've committed adultery. But what I would want you to be clear about is that there's a difference between temptation and sin.

Jesus was not saying that if you're tempted with adultery, that you have committed adultery. He's talking about something a little more further gone than that. In James chapter one and verses 14 and 15.

James chapter one, verses 14 and 15, James said. Every man is drawn away. Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lusts and enticed, then lust when it has conceived, bring a fourth sin and sin when it is finished, bring a fourth death.

That's James one, 14 and 15. He said lust when it has conceived, brings forth sin. That means lust exists before it has become sin.

Lust has to conceive before it's classified as sin. What is lust? The word lust in the Greek simply means strong desire. And it's used not only of sexual lust, it's used of any kind of desire.

The same Greek word is used by Jesus when he came to his disciples in the upper room on the last night of his earthly life. And he said, with great desire, I have desired to have this Passover with you before I suffer. In the Greek, it's the same word lust.

With great lust, I have lusted to have this Passover. Lust is not always a bad thing. Lust simply means strong desire.

But what James said is that a man becomes tempted when he is drawn away by his desires, by his lusts. And because his desires have allowed him to be drawn away, meaning out of the prescribed path, because desire is strong, it draws us off. Then we're enticed.

And then when those desires or that lust conceives, it brings forth sin. Now, that means that lust or our desires are not sin in themselves. And we should always understand that because God created our desires.

All of our physical kinds of desires, in essence, or at their root, are God-given. Your desire for food is a God-given desire to keep you alive. But, of course, you know that food can be used sinfully as well.

A person can become gluttonous, can eat themselves to death. It's sinful. But that doesn't mean that the desire for food is a sinful desire.

God created it. The desire for sleep is certainly something that God gives us because we need it at times. But if a person sleeps all day long, the Bible says they're sluggard and they're worse off than a fool, it says in Proverbs.

And it's a sin. A person who doesn't work should not eat. It's that much of a sin.

The same is true of sexual desire. God created sexual desire. And obviously, He wanted it to be expressed within the confines of the marriage relationship.

And sex within the right confines is not a bad thing at all, any more than hunger or the desire for sleep is. Those are desires of the body that God has created for the procreation of the race. But obviously, it's not necessarily a stronger desire than the others, but it is the one that is more frequently, I think, we're drawn or tempted to misuse it more often than some of the others.

Maybe you have more trouble with food than with sex. It's quite possible. Some do.

But I think the average American youth has more problem with sexual desire than desire for food or sleep. Though he may have problems with all of them. But that desire is not

the evil thing.

It is when we allow ourselves to be drawn away out of the path of God because we have that desire, because I have a sexual desire. When I say, OK, because I desire, I want to let my thoughts wander off and fantasize about relieving this desire on some kind of an inappropriate object. Then I am being tempted when the thought of satisfying my desire on an inordinate object.

Someone else's wife, another man, an animal, a relative or some other forbidden person. Then that is temptation to sin. But temptation is not sin.

Sin is when I say yes to temptation. Jesus was tempted, it says in Hebrews 4:15, in all points like as we are, but he did not sin, which makes it very evident that sin is not temptation and temptation is not sin. Sin is the response of the will.

Affirmatively toward temptation when the devil says you have this desire. Why don't you use it this way? And I say, yes, then I've sinned, whether I actually ever do it or not. The fact that I said yes, in my mind means I've sinned.

If I start to go off and commit that sin and drop dead in my tracks before I get there, I'm already guilty and I'll stand before judgment as though I'd committed it because I said yes to it. It was a decision of my heart and I made it. I committed adultery in my heart.

Now, Jesus did not say anyone who looks at a woman and lusts has committed adultery. He said anyone who looks at a woman to lust after her. Which speaks of the motive for looking, some of you have probably condemned yourself.

Because you've tried to keep blinders on and everything, but nonetheless, someone has come across your path and you've suddenly had a thought, a lustful thought has come through and you said, oh, no, I've committed adultery in my heart. That's not necessarily true. It may be you can commit adultery that quick in your heart, but it's not necessarily the case.

You may have been tempted, but you and your heart may be saying no. You cannot help being tempted. I remember once I used to have to drive this particular road every week.

I was teaching a home Bible study, a certain area of the county, and I had to drive this one freeway. And I remember there was this one billboard that it was a suntan lotion billboard that had a picture of a woman laying on her stomach in a one part, one half of a bikini and some man rubbing suntan lotion on her back. And, you know, it was some kind of a lewd expression on his face.

And I was single at the time. And I remember that there were times when I'd look up at that and it would put thoughts in my head. So I began to realize, OK, the billboards over there at this point, I'd recognized what on ramps were near there so that I'd know when

it was coming.

And so I got in the habit of looking over the other side of the freeway when I got to that part of the freeway. And one week I realized we were getting near that point. So I looked across the freeway and lo and behold, there was another billboard for some Las Vegas nightclub on the other side of freeway at the same point.

I thought no matter where I look, there's going to be one of these things trying to stimulate me. And depending on what my particular chemistry or or what my mood is or something like that, it's possible that apart from anything I want, that there may be something that brings a temptation that an evil thought can be slipped into my mind by the enemy. But as long as I say no, I do not want that thought.

It has not become sin. Lust has not yet conceived until my will says yes. And that's true of any sin, whether it's sexual or any other kind.

Now, that doesn't mean that you can just go around saying, oh, OK, then I can go out and scope on the women because it's not necessarily sin. Jesus said, if you do that to lust after him, then you are committing sin, because if the reason you're looking is because you want to lust, then you've already made the decision. You've already said yes before you've even looked.

And even that's the reason you've looked. But what Jesus is saying is that adultery is not only something that happens in physical action, it can happen in the heart and that those who have committed adultery in their heart are just as guilty before God as those who've committed adultery outwardly. Now, concerning this mental adultery, I think I need to just say a couple of things and then we'll close the study.

One thing is that most of us, especially the younger of us, are often tempted to look at the opposite sex with the wrong kinds of desires. And if you have homosexual background or tendencies, you might even have a temptation to look at the same sex that way. And it's something that torments people who are trying to be good Christians.

But other people don't find it a torment at all. Some people quite enjoy it. There's a lady in this town who came to me for counseling recently.

She's an older lady, I imagine in her 50s. But she's married to an old man who's a peeping tom. He comes out here to Bradley Lake with the binoculars and peeps.

And I guess he does that at other places, too. But some people just get a kick out of it. I guess some people just get a real turn on by looking at people like that, you know, girl watching.

And when you become a Christian, obviously, you have made a decision that you're not going to commit sexual sins. But sometimes you might find yourself inclined to look a

little long, knowing that there's no one but God who knows. And God is very understanding, we argue.

But in fact, you're hurting yourself. It's obvious that you can only be hurting yourself by doing that. You are teasing yourself.

What is the point? What is the value in teasing yourself? With something that you know you're not going to let yourself have. It's a foolish thing that young Christians sometimes do. To think they're really getting away with something by kind of they know they can't go out and commit the sin, but they can still look, they can still fantasize, whatever.

But there's no satisfaction in that. It only makes the fire burn hotter. Paul spoke of having unfulfilled sexual desires as burning.

In First Corinthians 7.9, he said, it's better to marry than to burn. And it is burning. It burns, it consumes you on the inside.

Lust does that. It's a fire. In fact, I'm not sure I could be dogmatic, but my view of hell and of the flames of hell is such that I don't believe it's necessarily literal flames of the same substance that the fire in my fireplace is of.

I believe the flames of hell are the flames of unfulfilled desires. That a person who lives in selfish, sinful desires all his life is addicting himself to such things, and he will have to be totally separated from all capacity to fulfill those desires for all eternity. And he'll be burning constantly with what Paul said, it's better to marry than to burn with unfulfilled desires and unfulfillable.

Now, there may be literal flames, too, though I don't know that we need to argue about what kind of flames they are, but certainly hell will have that kind. A person who has nurtured his soul on lust and on evil thought and has addicted himself to such things when he is separated from his physical body and lives forever in hell or dies forever in hell, we might say. He will be still addicted to such things, but have no capacity to bring himself any kind of relief from it.

So that the man who lives in mental adultery, but is quite already decided that he won't commit the physical act. He's just creating for himself an early hell. He's just causing the burning to begin already, beginning to entertain desires that he knows he can't fulfill.

It's an act of stupidity, and yet you see, the devil likes to make fools of people. Because God has made people so wise, really, God has made man in his image and has given him great wisdom above that of the other animals, at least originally. But the devil likes to mock God by making man look so foolish.

That man will do things that hurt himself and feel like he's getting away with something. Now, the last thing I want to say about this mental kind of adultery tonight is that we can

be guilty of causing others to commit it. It is possible for us to never commit this ourselves, actually, or to be convinced that we haven't, and yet to be guilty of causing others to commit it.

There's more than one way that you can cause someone to commit adultery. Married people, for instance, can drive their partner to adultery by refusing relations with them. There are sometimes, I've known of marriages, I've counseled marriages like this, where wives try to blackmail their husbands.

You know, their wife wants to get something, the husband's not inclined to give it, so she withholds herself from him, and it's sort of a sexual blackmail game. And she doesn't know it, she's hurting herself more than she's hurting him, because it's going to alienate his affections. And he may not actually go out and actually commit sexual crimes, but he is being more tempted because of it.

Because he has unfulfilled desires in his marriage, he'll be tempted to commit adultery in his heart. And the woman who does that is a fool, because she's working against her own marriage. But whether a person is married or not, they can certainly become a pressure upon others in this area of sexual, mental adultery.

And I'd like to talk about, very quickly, three ways that we can become a temptation to others in this, that we can become guilty. And I want to make it very plain to you that if you offer poison to a person, and they refuse it, you're still guilty of murder. Attempted murder, at least.

If you try to give someone poison, and they say, no thank you, I'm not going to eat that, you've still intended to murder them. You've still offered them that which can destroy them, and you could still be tried as an intended murder. And the same is true with sexual, with adultery.

If you tempt someone to lust after you, even though you don't expect them to do anything about it, and you know you're not going to do anything about it, you are still making them an adulterer. You are still as guilty as if you were actually bringing them into the crime itself. So, we need to take this very seriously.

How can we, and how do we sometimes, become the cause of mental adultery in others? First of all, by indelicate speech. There is actually seductive speech, and there's also just lewd speech. Now, this can be, this can work more than one way.

In Proverbs chapter 7, verses 13 through 21, it records the way a harlot talked to a young man she was trying to proposition and bring into her house. Proverbs 7, verses 13 through 21, I won't read the passage, it's rather lengthy, but she's just talking to him, describing, you know, how she's made her bed, and how she's perfumed it and all, and she's just trying to allure him with her fair speeches. A little later in Proverbs, in chapter

9, in verse 7, it has the harlot saying to her victim, stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.

In other words, with her speech, she's trying to allure him and trap him. Oh, this is a forbidden thing. It'll be much more exciting because it is.

Stolen waters are sweeter. Bread that's eaten secretly is more pleasant. And boy, that is, in fact, that is true, in a sense.

In a very temporal sense. There's something about our corrupt, bent natures that takes delight in feeling it's getting away with something. And that may be why men are sometimes more attracted to women, other women, any women, than their own wives.

Even though they were ravished with their wife's beauty before they got married, as soon as they got married, suddenly she was ordinary because she was no longer forbidden. He made his conquest, now he wants to go out and make other conquests. And people sometimes think that way, but that's off our general point.

The point is that the Bible records that with speech, with descriptive speech, you can cause someone to have mental adultery. That's how the prostitute does. He says with her fair speeches and her flatteries, she draws him in.

It's possible to do so also simply by relating cases of sexual misconduct graphically. I've known this to be done by preachers. I've known it to be done by Christians.

Just being more graphic than they need to, and just discussing sexual matters. Also, of course, it's possible to lead people into more mental adultery by telling lewd jokes and things. Now most Christians hopefully don't do that.

But you know that, oh, sometimes, well, I've heard Christians make little remarks that were supposed to be cute, but were really sexually perverted. That really had sexual connotations. And those kind of things just begin the mind of the hearer to turn in those circles of to be thinking about sexual promiscuity and things like that.

And it's possible to be an agent of temptation, to be a mouthpiece for Satan, to tempt someone to mental adultery by the way we speak. We need to always speak cautiously and reverently. When we talk about sex, we can speak of sexual sin because the Bible does, and we need to call it by its right name.

But we can describe it as the abomination that it is and not try to describe it too graphically, knowing how much that appeals to the imaginations of many. The Bible says in Ephesians 4, Ephesians 4, 29, it says, let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth. But only that which is to the good of the edifying.

That may edify the hearers also in Ephesians, that was Ephesians 4, 29, but in Ephesians

chapter five and verses three and four, it says, but fornication and all uncleanness and covetousness, let it not once be named among you as become a saint. Let it be giving of thanks, neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient, but rather giving of thanks. Let your speech always be with grace.

Let it be giving of thanks. Let it not be anything but that which could edify others. Lewd talking, filthy joking, jesting, those things create mental images which can stick for a long time.

It's an amazing thing. How long a bad image can stay in your mind. I can just remember hearing, I mean, I don't even want to bring them to memory right now, but there are just times where I've heard about a case.

I've heard about a story about someone who was involved in something, and it was told to me in just graphic enough detail that I got a mental picture of it. And from time to time, the devil can just bring that picture right back, or he can work with it all day in there. And I can be trying to shake it off, but it comes back and it comes back.

Such a powerful influence this lust has over the human personality when it's not controlled by the Holy Spirit. And if we're dealing with people who may not be able to control themselves, well, we can become very much the agents of sin in their lives. Another way that we can become guilty of inciting others to mental adultery is in the way we dress.

This is especially true of women, since it is relatively well known that men tend to be more aroused by sight than women are, and women tend to be more aroused by tenderness and touching and things like that. But men are very much aroused by sight. Men are very indiscriminate generally about their lovers, so long as they're pretty, whereas women usually want someone to be decent as well.

But men sometimes don't care about that because they are, their nature is to be incited by the eyes. And so this is especially true of women, though maybe to some degree of men, too. I do know that some women are so lustful that they have to go out and buy magazines that show naked men and things like that.

It really shows how far down the society has gone into this cesspool. But whether you're a man or a woman, you need to be careful about the way you dress, and especially not dress in any way that would allow someone to fantasize. The Bible makes specific statements about dressing modestly in 1 Timothy chapter 2 and verse 9, and also in 1 Peter chapter 3 and verse 3. It says, and it's speaking to women in that context, that they should dress modestly, that they shouldn't seek to ornament themselves too much, that they shouldn't try to let their hairstyles and their clothing be the beauty that they are seeking to cultivate, but it should be instead the inner man, the hidden man of the heart, the meek and quiet spirit, the ornament which is of great price in the sight of God.

That's what women should be adorning themselves with, but many Christian women today feel like they must keep up with all the styles. Now some styles are harmless enough, but it's very obvious that some styles are downright lewd and seductive. And it's a sad state that Christian women feel compelled to keep up with the styles, even when those styles become lewd, that there are women who will show more skin than they conceal, simply because it's considered to be the normal way that women dress in the summertime especially.

But what's normal for the world is not normal for us. It's normal for the world to lust. It's not to be normal for us.

And it's normal to the world to try to seduce and try to incite lust in the opposite sex. That's not normal for us. It's an abomination.

If you cause another to stumble, it's better for you that a millstone be tied around your neck and you cast in the sea. Do you want that? Then you might as well dress as seductively as your fellow ladies in the world do. But it is possible to be guilty of adultery by causing someone else to commit adultery, though you don't go ahead and do it yourself.

The Bible was not just writing to fill up space when it said that women should dress in modest apparel. And while it might be considered old-fashioned, I don't believe God was just laughing in his gums when he said those things. I believe they're in the Bible because they're as binding as any other thing in the Bible.

And women, many Christian women, need to throw out their whole wardrobe and start over again. I'm not saying anyone here necessarily, but I know of women, especially in Southern California where I came from, who probably don't have anything that would fit into the category of modest in their wardrobe. And yet they think because the rest of the world's doing it, it's okay.

In Proverbs chapter 7 and verse 10, it talks about the apparel of the harlot. It's the same apparel that a lot of women wear today, even some Christian women in some parts. And we need to be careful about not wearing immodest apparel.

You men also, you know, men nowadays, there's a real movement among men to try to get pretty bodies. I guess they wouldn't say pretty, and it's obvious that I've got a sour grapes attitude about masculine bodies. But the fact is there are men who are seeking to have alluring bodies.

I know of Christian bodybuilding clubs in Santa Monica, which I think is ridiculous. I mean, if someone wants to build their body or if they have athletic aspirations, that's their business. But to have a Christian bodybuilding club, and the Bible specifically says bodily exercise profit, it's very little.

It seems to me to have a very wrong focus. And the focus is, of course, to have a beautiful body. And the men who have those kind of bodies, and even some men who don't, often wear clothing that are intended to show off those features that they think are attractive to the opposite sex.

And so men can be just as guilty as women of dressing to allure the opposite sex. And I'm not saying that men or women have to have to be ugly or have to dress ugly. But it's very evident that some kinds of clothing are designed to attract the opposite sex.

And if you're single, you don't need to attract the opposite sex. That way, at least. If you're looking for a godly spouse, a godly spouse will look for the same things that God's looking for, a meek and a quiet spirit, and will be repelled by the attire of a harlot.

If you're married, then of course you need to only dress to please your husband. Now, some husbands have been hard on their wives in this way because their husbands encourage them to dress like harlots. I knew a Christian man, or so he called himself, who liked his wife to go braless so that the shape of her figure would show through her clothing and all.

And he liked it when other men leered at her as they walked down the street. He felt flattered. He felt macho.

But the man was causing his wife to cause others to stumble. So he was guilty, and so was she, of adultery as well because they were leading others into it. And so we need to take this seriously.

Sometimes we think clothing is not a serious matter. It is a serious matter because it can lead to sin. And the final way that I have down here that we can even inadvertently sometimes lead people into mental adultery is by seductive mannerisms.

In Proverbs chapter 6, in verse 25, Proverbs 6.25, Solomon warns his son about the harlot. He says, don't be taken by her eyelids. Don't let her eyelids take you.

In other words, her batting her eyes at him and making eyes at him. Don't let that draw you away, he said. And there are many mannerisms that are very common that we've all learned in the world or sometimes even in the church that are sexually arousing.

I've seen preachers that dance around the stage like Marjo did. He wasn't a true Christian, obviously, if you know who he was. He was a phony preacher, but he said specifically that he learned his stage movements from Mick Jagger.

They weren't modest, to say the least. But I know Christians who relate in fellowship in very subtle little seductive ways. And sometimes they don't even know it.

Just the way they bat their eye or the way that they look out the corner of their eye or

the way they hold their bodies or the way they walk or some other thing like that is maybe not intentionally seeking to instill lust, but it's something that was developed at a time in their life when they must have been designed to do that. Because all those mannerisms are learned for that purpose. And we can become guilty of leading someone on.

We can become guilty of causing people to have evil imaginations. And we need to avoid doing that. After all, if you advertise a product that's not available, you're a deceiver.

And liars are going to have their place in the lake of fire as well. If you act like you're advertising yourself, but you and your heart know that you're not going to do anything about it, then you're a deceiver. And if you are planning to do something about it, then you're worse.

You're an adulteress as well. But we need to be careful, not only of our own hearts, not only watching out that we don't commit adultery, but that we don't stumble others into doing so, because all the norms of our society today are in that direction. The way people are supposed to dress, the way they're supposed to pitch their voice when they speak, the way that they're supposed to hold themselves, the way they're supposed to walk and bat their eyes, the way that they're supposed to, the things they're supposed to think are funny and to talk about.

All those things are things that the devil has worked into the fabric of our society in such a way as to make them seem very normal and a person very prudish who doesn't do them. But if we seem prudish for not doing them, so be it. We should be willing to seem prudish if that's what it takes to be Christian.

And so thou shalt not commit adultery has far reaching effects. Now, what we really need to know and what I'm going to get into next week, because I don't have time. We've already got an hour and a half tonight and we're going to stop at this point.

What I'm going to talk about next week.