

First Century Fellowship Ministry

A Biblical Church of God

The Seventh Commandment

You shall not commit adultery

(Exodus 20:14; Deuteronomy 5:18)

The seventh commandment, like the fifth, deals with a personal family relationship and how to protect that relationship. The fifth commandment showed the importance of honoring our parents and how it relates to and grows into our relationship of honoring our Creator God.

The seventh commandment tells us the way to protect the honor and sanctity of our marriage. As we learned in our study of the fifth commandment the basic building block of any society is a strong family headed by a father and mother. Their conduct and relationship towards one another is crucial to the proper development of their children. It is also through marriage and the family we learn the importance and benefits of strong secure relationships with other people and with our God. Marriage between one man and one woman was sanctified by God at creation. "For this reason shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife-and they shall become one flesh." (Genesis 2:24). This is also addressed and re-stated by Jesus in the New Testament in Matthew 19:5 and Mark 10:7 when He was questioned by the Pharisee's regarding divorce and by Paul in Ephesians 5:31. This shows the importance God has put on the

institution of marriage. Marriage and a stable home life are essential for a proper societal foundation.

According to the letter of the law adultery is defined as sexual intercourse outside of marriage. As we have previously learned Jesus amplified the law in the new covenant by emphasizing the spiritual intent of the law. Jesus stated in Matthew 5:28, "But I say to you, everyone who looks upon a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

God's law allows for sexual activity only within the confines of marriage. God created man and woman. He created them to complete one another and be suitable companions. "And the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make a helper compatible for him." (A counterpart, a sustainer beside him). (Genesis 2:18). He created marriage and He created sex. God wants us to enjoy our marital relationship and enjoy sex with our spouse within that relationship. We are to live together and share everything in this life. This adds to a healthy family which leads to a healthier and stable society. It also sets a proper example for our children. "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6). He has given us the tools we need for a healthy relationship, if we will pay attention. "Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days of the life of your vanity, which He has given you under the sun, all the days of your vanity. For that is your portion in this life, and in your labor which you labor under the sun." (Ecclesiastes 9:9).

In principle, as we saw above with the spirit of the law described by Jesus, the commandment would also cover any type of sexual immorality. Human nature being what it is exposes our weakness in submitting to the temptations of the flesh. Sexual immorality is so prevalent that we no longer regard it as a sin or

even being evil. God condemns all types of sexual immorality, "Do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor abusers of themselves as women, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Corinthians 6:8-9). And we can also see Gods plan for them in Revelation 21:8, "But the cowardly, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone; which is the second death."

This all stems from our lusts and pride. Man was given free will, independent free moral agency. We can decide what we want to obey. God's law was put in place to keep us in check by giving guidelines that we could use to have a healthy and loving relationship with God and with one another. "Because everything that is in the world-the lusts of the flesh, and the lusts of the eyes, and the pretentious pride of physical life-is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world and its lust is passing away, but the one who does the will of God abides forever." (1 John 2:16-17). Lust is the beginning of adultery as we saw above in Matthew 5:26-27. We are told to, "Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man may commit is outside the body, but the one who commits sexual immorality is sinning against his own body." (1 Corinthians 6:18).

For most of human history we have decided we do not need God's rules and have chosen to figure life out on our own terms. Been working great, huh! We've become enlightened. We do not need an absent god who lets bad things happen to good people. We do not read or study the Bible, His instruction book for whatever we may encounter and how to deal with it. We can figure it out.

Something I find amusing regarding this has to do with our enlightened society. The so called sexual revolution of the sixties and seventies accompanied by the lack of commitment to marriage and the resulting lack of a stable family unit have contributed to the decline of our country. We have become too fast paced a society for any type of formal commitment. All the modern "theories" about how to have a successful marriage leave a Godly component out. To leave God out of the picture is to degrade His holy institution. As these new methods are put into practice the divorce rate increases. The mantra, "It's my body and I can do what I want," is used to justify all types of sexual behavior, deviance and promiscuity. Others will say, "Why does it matter what I do as long as no one gets hurt."

Look what all of this has led to, an increase in sexually transmitted diseases, kids in grammar school being exposed to "alternative" lifestyles and told they are all right, an increase in pedophilia and readily available pornography to anyone with an internet connection, regardless of age and the psychological costs of betrayal and rejection.

No one gets hurt! Children become the initial losers. They receive much less parental guidance and thus become ill equipped to handle the most basic of life's problems. Many end up with deficient social and coping skills and are unprepared for the job market when they are older. They then become a burden on the rest of society. Broken homes are a hallmark of the sexual revolution. Our society and way of life is the ultimate loser. Couples, parents, have lost sight of the importance of the family unit and the stability it lends to a successful society.

God uses the marriage union as an example when He speaks of His church. We, the faithful who obey His commandments, are the bride and Jesus is the Groom. "Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as to the Lord; For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the Head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. For even as the church is subject to Christ, in the same way also let the wives be subject to their own husbands in everything." (Ephesians 5:22-24). And just as Christ gave His life for His church husbands should protect, encourage and love their wife. Nothing should come between them. Being faithful and loving to our wife leads us down the path to be faithful and loving to our Creator God. Remember, this life is short. Our time with God is eternal. He ordained marriage as a holy union between a man and a woman and used it to illustrate the lasting union between Christ and His church. "But according as it is written, "The eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love Him." (1 Corinthians 2:9). Breaking this commandment is an offense against God. The offender being the first casualty. "But whoever commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding; he who does it destroys his own soul." (Proverbs 6:32). God punished Israel for the spiritual adultery they engaged in. They left the Creator God and fled to and worshipped others god's. The prophet Jeremiah documents these transgressions in chapters 3:1-9; 5:1-7; 7:1-34 and Ezekiel in chapter 23:35-49.

So where do we go? We have all been part of the world and have participated in its lusts in one way or another. We have a loving and merciful God. "...let all the house of Israel know with full assurance that God has made this same Jesus, Whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now after hearing this, they were cut to the

heart; and they said to Peter and the other apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you yourselves shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2: 36-38). God takes no pleasure in punishing us but He will to keep us on the narrow path. He will rejoice when we repent and obey His word. We need to do more than show regret for what we have done. We must earnestly repent, turn our lives around and study and obey Gods Word and His Law. "If we confess our own sins, He is faithful and righteous, to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9). Our genuine repentance and subsequent forgiveness by God is a vital part of our continued spiritual development. As Jesus showed us in John 8 with the adulterous woman, He did not condone her behavior but He also did not condemn her. He told her to "Go and sin no more." That's what we are to do. Repent, study God's Word and Law, grow spiritually and sin no more. The benefit of a stable and loving marriage is not only to us but our obedience will repair and rebuild our society. Our society needs the benefits derived from the examples of faithfulness, love and commitment in marriage and a stable family life.