**THE TEN COMMANDMENTS**

# Lesson 10 - The Seventh Commandment - Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery

**Exodus 20:14**

**Introduction:** Here is a suggestion for a meaningful Bible exercise: Read through the prophets from Isaiah through Malachi. Much of their message was calling the people back from disobedience. And can you guess what it was they disobeyed? For the most part, they disobeyed the Ten Commandments. The prophets warned them of God’s judgment to come, all because they disobeyed! All they needed to do was obey these simple commands which were put in place by their Covenant God, for their good!

With this in mind, as we continue with the seventh commandment, notice Jeremiah 5:7-9. Judah is about to be taken away into captivity under the judgment of God. While their sins are many, among them was adultery. There was the spiritual adultery committed by their idolatry, and there was physical adultery common to pagan idolatry. This is, perhaps, like an indictment upon our own society. The seventh commandment is lightly regarded in our nation; the multitude of extra-marital affairs clearly indicates a more than casual attitude toward God’s command.

**I. ADULTERY CLEARLY DEFINED**

**A. Adultery is . . .**

1. To have sexual relations with another person’s spouse.
2. To have, as a married person, sexual relations with anybody other than your own spouse.
3. It is distinguished from fornication in that fornication is between an unmarried man and woman.

**B. Adultery means a mixing-up of things that ought not to be mixed. (Simcox)**

1. Gasoline is adulterated when mixed with water.

2. The gospel of salvation by grace through faith is adulterated when mixed with works.

3. Marriage involves the sexual union of one man and one woman. There is no place for another. When another enters the mix, then the mix is adulterated.

**II. ADULTERY IS PERVERSION**

**A. Hebrews 13:4 “The bed” in marriage is honorable and causes no defilement.**

1. Most understand that homosexuality and lesbianism are sexual perversion, violating nature itself.

2. Few, however, seem to understand that adultery itself is a perversion. Oh yes! It does not at all fit into the purpose and plan of its Designer. It is dishonorable and causes defilement.

3. A husband and wife who express their love with the maximum physical expression, sexual intimacy, is the “original picture.” A man with a woman not his wife is a sick perversion of the original.

**B. Adultery cannot be committed under the guise of “love” to make it legitimate.**

1. Adultery contradicts the Biblical definition of love: “Love seeketh not her own.” (I Corinthians 13:5) Genuine love is godly love, and love seeks the best for its object.

2 A man says that he loves a woman that is not his wife. Now if that is so, he wants what is in her very best interest. According to the Word of the Creator/Designer God, the worst thing he could do is commit adultery. The result from God is all negative; the act is *against* the person who supposedly is the object of love. That is not love; that is a perversion of love.

**C. Proverbs 6:23-35 The Word of God declares that adultery, by its very nature, is destructive.**

1. “Thou shalt not play with fire.” “Thou shalt not play football on I-35.” The reasons are obvious!

2. “Thou shalt not commit adultery!” G. Campbell Morgan: “No argument is used, no reason given, because none is required. The sin is so destructive and damning a nature that it is in itself sufficient cause for stern forbidding.”

3. Adultery arouses jealous passions that are often expressed in many violent and hurtful ways.

4. Psalm 38-39 show the effect of the violent reactions of adultery in the life of King David.

5. Proverbs 2:16-19 gives a solemn warning: Once a person adulterates, their life is never the same again; the path of one’s life is forever altered. God will still forgive and provide restoration; it will just not be as before. “Oh, it was just a one-time fling; it meant nothing.” Oh, but it did mean something. It means your life will never be the same again. That is already a fact set in motion by our Creator God!

6. Proverbs 22:14 Adultery brings a man into a place of abhorrence before God. Surely it is a state sensible men and women desire to avoid.

7. Adultery is a sin against society, the family, the partner of the act, and God Himself.

**III. THE COMMANDMENT IMPLIES THE SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE**

A. Genesis 2:18-25 God Himself instituted the sacred union of marriage.

1. God made Eve and brought her to the man. He established that a man is to leave father and mother, cleave unto his wife (singular), and they two shall be one flesh.They were both naked and not ashamed. Their sexual attraction was natural and wholesome.

2. It is almost amusing, if it were not so pitiful, what some outside the faith *think we think* about things sexual. Some actually believe that we think all and any kind of sexual reference or conduct is “bad; taboo; negative; don’t even think about it.”

3. Quite the contrary! We believe sex to be a gift from God and that a wholesome and biblical understanding of this gift will allow meaningful sexual experience that cannot be known by those who do not make it their business to know the design and purpose as given by the Giver, God. God made us with a sexual appetite *and* He has made legitimate means by which the appetite may be satisfied, without sin and without guilt.

B. Matthew 5:31-32 & 19:3-12 Jesus takes us to Genesis when He teaches the sanctity of marriage.

1. Matthew 19:6 Jesus taught that what God joined together, man is not to put asunder.

2. In the beginning (and reconfirmed by Jesus), marriage was a lifetime commitment. God joined together and no man was/is to put apart!

(**Note:** Matthew 19:6: “What therefore God hath joined together . . .” Some will argue that a marriage not ordered by God is not bound to this teaching. However, it does not mean that God must order each union, but that the union of man and wife is of God’s instituting, so that all who participate are responsible to God in the union, even if the two parties are atheists.)

(**Note:** The exception clause of Matthew 19:9 does not say “except it be for *adultery*,” but “except it be for *fornication*,” as in the case of Joseph and Mary when he supposed she had fornicated and was mindful to put her away privately. (Matthew 1:18-ff))

3. Jesus taught that the union, therefore, is to not be adulterated.

a. So, contrary to the worldly opinion that when two adults consent to sexual relations it affects no one but them and is no one’s business outside their own concern, when a marriage is adulterated, the effects are very widespread. Primarily, the Designer of the beautiful institution is offended.

b. The whole point is that the sexual relationship is an integral part of the marriage union; a union so unique it is said that two become one. There can be no room for three; that would be adultery!

IV. AVOID ADULTERY BY NURTURING A WHOLESOME INTIMATE LIFE IN MARRIAGE

A. Ephesians 5:22-33 The marriage of a man and a woman has a divine purpose.

1. Marriage is a divine institution and not man-made. Part of the divine purpose is to picture or demonstrate Jesus’ love for His church.

2. When a marriage is adulterated, that purpose is destroyed!

B. The Bible formula for the intimate life.

1. I Corinthians 7:1-5 Knowing our sexual passions, God gave a means of gratification without fornication, which is sin. “Man, have your own wife.” “Woman, have your own husband.”

2. Proverbs 5:15-21 Nurture a meaningful sexual experience with your own mate. Having done so, why would a man or a woman commit adultery? To violate God’s order of things is to miss God’s best.

3. The sexual relationship in marriage is to be the maximum physical expression of love. When sex in marriage is approached from the standpoint of love and not lust, it is wholesome, good, and honorable.