

Adultery and Divorce

BIG IDEA:

It is not good enough to simply avoid sexual contact beyond a marital commitment. Those who claim the name of Christ and are inwardly transformed commit to one person for their entire lives; physically, mentally, and emotionally.

The mystery of Genesis 2:24 is that the marriage it describes is a parable or symbol of Christ's relation to His people. There was more going on in the creation of woman than meets the eye. God doesn't do things willy-nilly. Everything has a purpose and a meaning. When God engaged to create man and woman and to ordain the union of marriage, He didn't roll the dice or draw straws or flip a coin as to how they might be related to each other. He patterned marriage very purposefully after the relationship between His Son and the church, which He had planned from all eternity.

*John Piper
In Desiring God*



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READ

Read Matthew 5:27-32. Now read this passage in an additional translation. Also, look up the word ‘adultery’ in an English dictionary. Reflect on this material and any previous thoughts or ideas you had on the definition of adultery and why the Bible warns against it.

The term adultery is thrown around so loosely among those both inside and outside of the Christian community, but what does it really mean? It comes from the Latin word *adulterium* which is literally translated ‘contamination.’ When looked at that way, adultery doesn’t appear so tempting. But what about when we see it on TV or hear about it between two hot young celebrities? Why does Jesus warn us against this? Is it really that big of a deal? In verses 28-29, Jesus sure sounds serious. He warns to gouge out your eye if you look at a woman lustfully. Wow! Why so harsh? First, we were designed to commit in ALL ways (sexually, physically, emotionally, financially) to one person for our entire lives. Second, the marriage bond between a man and a woman represents the covenant between the Lord and his bride: US. If we are violating our marriage covenant, we are also violating our covenant with the Lord. The Lord wants us to enter the marriage bed, both with our spouse and with Him, pure and holy. Only He can truly make us that way, but we can make the choice to follow Him on the path of righteousness.

Prepare

In what ways do you think our society has glamorized adultery? Think about recent celebrity sex scandals... does adultery bring more or less fame to a celeb? Why do you think that is?

What does the Lord warn against in this passage? Is lust really adultery? In what ways are you opening yourself up to the wordly sexual temptations consistently being thrown your way?

What impact do you think the media has on your views of adultery, lust, and sexual purity? In what ways do societal norms for teenagers differ from the life the Lord has called you to?

An adulterer is defined as 'someone who taints a pure substance'. Viewing marriage as God intended it to be, does this definition align with the Biblical definition of an adulterer?

Where do we go from here?

Ask God to expose any areas in your life where you are creating a window for sexual thoughts, images, or temptations to creep in. Are you ready for the answer? Ask Him to guide your eyes, ears and thoughts to those things in which He desires for you to encounter and to help steer you away from those He does not.

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Read Genesis 2 describing the Lord's creation of our world and the things in it. Focus specifically on verses 20-25 and reflect on how the creation of woman from man indicates the Lord's desires for us as women and men.

Adultery has been defined as sexual sin between a married person and someone other than his or her spouse. But what about sexual sin before marriage? If it is between 2 single people who love each other and are committed to each other, is sex still wrong? Within the first book of the Bible and from the beginning of creation, the Lord answered these questions. In Genesis 2, the Lord saw that there was no suitable helper for Adam, so he created a woman from his rib. From that moment, Adam considered Eve to be “the bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.” The Lord said, “They will become one flesh.” Joining yourself physically to someone creates a bond that is not meant to be broken. God intended sex to be a special experience that involves “becoming one flesh,” but only within the confines of marriage. Becoming one flesh with a current boyfriend or girlfriend likely involves becoming one flesh with someone else's future spouse. Even if you feel that you have already crossed this line, rest assured that the Lord forgives upon repentance, and He will give you a fresh start. Remember: The “I love you” is not enough. It's the “I do” that matters most.

Prepare

Why do you think God made it a point to mention the physical connection between husband and wife? Why does it matter that “two become one flesh?”

Sex is often viewed as a spiritual connection as much as a physical one. Why might giving yourself to someone physically leave you feeling spiritually connected with them as well?

What dangers lie in indulging in sexual sin outside of the marriage bed? With this command, what is the Lord trying to protect us from?

What connection between a husband and wife and that of the Lord and his bride (us) might the Lord be trying to show us in this scripture?

Where do we go from here?

Pray for forgiveness of any sexual sin in your life in the past and ask God to guide your decisions in the future. Pray for clarity to avoid tempting situations and turn your choices over to the Lord. Is your heart in such a place that you are ready to commit to this? Ask God to begin preparing your heart for your future spouse and to prepare his/her heart as well. Commit yourself to this person and to the Lord.

Chapel Scripture

Thursday, October 21

MATTHEW 5:27-32 (NIV)

27”You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery.’ 28But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. 30And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

31”It has been said, ‘Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.’ 32But 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.

Notes:

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Read Matthew 19: 1-12. If you have internet access, look up the current divorce rate in the United States. Reflect on what this passage tells us about divorce compared to what society tells us.

We've all heard those familiar vows before. Now let's take a deeper look. To have and to hold...that doesn't sound so bad. Better or worse...how bad could it get with my hot young spouse? Sickness and health...as long as I'm the one being taken care of. Richer or poorer...well, we'll probably be rich right? Until death do us part...death? That seems like a really long time. Unfortunately, in our current society, many people keep their vows only as long as things are going well: better, healthier, richer. What happens when the latter are true: worse, sicker, poorer? Jesus says, "What God has joined together let no man separate." He makes it very clear that divorce is not permissible. He calls it adultery. A marriage is not like a wardrobe; one can't just go replace the old one when a more stylish one comes along. Christ designed marriage as a lifelong union. LIFE LONG. Make sure it is someone you are committed to, even through the poorer, sicker, worse days. The Lord knows you better than you know yourself so rejoice in the fact that your spouse has already been created and chosen for you by the best match-maker in the business!

Reflect

Reflect on the previous devotional and the definition of adultery. What does a 'contaminated' marriage look like to you? Is that something you would want to be a part of?

As divorce rates continue to run high in our society, how do you think it affects the future marriages of children of divorce? How can children of divorce open themselves up to the Lord to avoid repeating the mistakes of their parents?

If divorce is wrong, should people repent and ask forgiveness if they are divorced? Is it different if they are the one completing the act of divorce or the one being divorced?

Why do you think marriage is so important to Jesus? Why did he speak so much about it?

Where do we go from here?

Ask God to show you areas of your heart in which you are not yet ready to commit all you have and share everything with another person. Pray that He changes your heart in preparation for that. Also pray for the hurting marriages among families in our school. Pray that He will heal those hearts and that husbands and wives will look to God to bandage their wounds and keep their marriages strong.