***The Biblical Doctrine of Adultery  
  
RV180-01***

Please open your Bibles to Revelation 14:1-5. Our subject is "The Victorious Lamb," and this is segment number four.

**Sexual Sins**

At the end of the tribulation era, the Lord Jesus Christ will stand in total victory on Mount Zion in Jerusalem, surrounded by 144,000 Jewish evangelists. From heaven, John hears, as he observes this scene, a chorus of martyred saints singing a new song of praise to God, exalting God's grace, to the accompaniment of harps. The 144,000 witnesses are able to relate to the song of praise, since they too have been carried through the tribulation by God's grace. These men are declared to be morally chaste since they have not defiled themselves with sexual sins. These men have obeyed God's design for sexual relations with women within the bounds of marriage. Violating God's laws governing human sex is a self-defiling act with temporal and eternal consequences. God the Holy Spirit indwells the believer in order to guide him into doing what is right relative to his sexuality, and to empower him to sexual conduct which ennobles him, and does not besmirch and degrade him.

**Commandment Number Seven**

This principle was very important, and it was laid out for the Jewish people when God brought them together after their 400 years of slavery in Egypt, and established them as a nation which would now go on to produce the Messiah promised through the line of David. In order to preserve their liberties and their freedoms in Satan's world, He gave them a code of conduct which we call the Ten Commandments. Commandment number seven of those principles, which are simply principles to preserve freedom, is the one that forbids sexual sins. We find this one in Exodus 20:14: "You shall not commit adultery." This was the instruction given to the Jewish people. The word "adultery" is the Hebrew word "naaph." "Naaph" signifies sex relationships with a married person other than one's own lawful spouse.

**Adultery was a Capital Crime in Israel**

In Leviticus 20:10, this prohibition is applied to both men and women as an absolute moral principle: "If there is a man who commits adultery with another man's wife, one who commits adultery with his friend's wife, the adulterer and the adulterous shall surely be put to death." So, the crime of "naaph" was a capital crime in Israel.

It is forbidden by the addition of another Hebrew word, "lo." That's the most powerful word for a negative. It's like the Greek "ou.". You absolutely don't do this. This is not as Episcopal Bishop Joseph Fletcher on one occasion said – that the morality of the Old Testament must be conditional, and that after every one of the Ten Commandments in our modern age, with our additional perception on human psychology and human relationships, you must add the word "ordinarily." So, that Joseph Fletcher said that the way you must read this commandment is: "You shall not commit adultery ordinarily, but under certain conditions, where there is an extreme loving circumstance, it's OK to do it." I give you these Hebrew words to point out to you that that is simply not true. This is an absolute prohibition.

**Fornication**

Sometimes the Bible also calls illicit sex of married people fornication. You have that in Matthew 5:32 and Matthew 19:9. The Greek word is "porneia," as in 1 Corinthians 5:1. This word "fornication" usually connotes sex between unmarried people. Sometimes the New Testament distinguishes very precisely between these two kinds of illicit sins.

We have an example in 1 Corinthians 6:9. I point this out to you, because while it is speaking of adultery, which is pertinent to married people, the principle applies to unmarried people relative to fornication: "Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators (and here it uses the word 'pornos'), nor idolaters, nor adulterers (and there it uses the word 'moichos'), nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, (and so on), are to be part of the blessings of the Kingdom of God." The astounding thing about this particular passage here is that this applies to believers. Certainly this is true of unbelievers, but right here he's talking about the sanctity of Christians. And he is talking about their not inheriting the Kingdom of God, which does not apply to heaven, but it applies to the blessings of royal authority. A person can be born into the royal family of England, but by his conduct, undermine his right to rule on the throne, and undermine his right to exercise royal authority.

You Christians, as the body of Christ, are destined for royal authority in the millennium. But those who are guilty of these sexual sins are not going to exercise royal authority. They're going to be put in the back row. They're going to be sweeping the floors. They're not going to be in the position of honor as the aristocrats that you are, and that you should be treated as.

**Fornication vs. Adultery**

So, in a restricted sense, "fornication" is the word we use to denote illicit sex between unmarried people of the opposite sex. And in a restricted sense, we use the word "adultery" for illicit sex between married people who are not married to each other. In a wider sense, in the Bible, sometimes the word "fornication" denotes any kind of illicit sex. This principle, then, forbids all sexual relations outside of the bond of marriage. The sin of adultery included the mental attitude sin of lust, which always precedes an overt act of sin. There is no overt act of sin that is not first preceded by preparing the mind for that sin.

Jesus pointed this out in Matthew 5:28, when He said, "But I say to you that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart." For a man to do this, it is mental adultery. For a woman to do this, it is equally the same thing. It applies both ways. So, this comes also under the prohibition of the seventh commandment of the Mosaic moral code. Mental fantasies of illicit sex will lay the groundwork for overt illicit sex, when the opportunity presents itself.

**The Biblical Doctrine of Adultery**

So, in order to bring all this together, I think it is important for us to summarize the biblical doctrine of adultery. We live in an age when this is trivialized, and when illicit sex is not only considered alright, but, even worse that, the very thing that one ought to do.

1. **Adultery is Always Prohibited**

Adultery is prohibited under all conditions by God. In the Old Testament, in Exodus 20:14, as we saw, was the explicit command within the moral code of the Mosaic Law: "You shall not commit adultery," and it encased all other sexual sins. Leviticus 18:20: "And you shall not have intercourse with your neighbor's wife, nor be defiled with her." Here is the same word (the same principle) that Paul is pointing out that John had pointed out to him – that illicit sex is personally defiling. And it is defiling to a degree that is horrendous. One does not understand ordinarily, unless you take the Bible seriously, the extreme wrath that this bestirs in God. This is a sin that has a high wrath level, and therefore, a high judgment upon it.

In Deuteronomy, 5:18, this same principle is enunciated. In the New Testament, it is enunciated in 1 Corinthians 7:2, just to be sure that we understand that this does apply to us Christians as well: "But because of immoralities, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband." The point of Paul's statement here within this context, in which he's talking about touching women in an improper way, he is pointing out that marriage is the confines to encapsulate legitimate sexual relationships.

1. **In Israel, the Penalty for Adultery was Death**

Under the Jewish theocracy, the penalty for adultery was death for both of the partners. We have seen that in Leviticus 20:10, which we have read. And in John 8:5, we see the application of that Mosaic principle: "Now, the Law of Moses commanded us to stone such a woman. What then do you say?" This was on the occasion when a woman was caught in the actual act of adultery, and the question was posed to Jesus. Under the Old Testament Law, it was a death penalty for both.

1. **The Divine Institution of Marriage**

Adultery is an attack on a divine institution of marriage. That is why it is commonplace for fornication and adultery to be taking place in terms of people who live with each other but who are not married. It is extremely stupid and shortsighted to say, "Yes, I live with this person in a marital relationship because I intend to marry this person." You don't know that. You don't know how things can change overnight. You don't know how dramatically something gets interjected that changes the whole picture. Anybody who is in that kind of a relationship is a person that you should spot immediately as a person whose commitment you should question. No manly man, and no womanly woman would put themselves in that position. It reflects the weakness of a lack of commitment, because when you are ready to commit yourself to a person till death do you part, you don't play games like that. You make the commitment. So, adultery is obviously an attack on the divine institution of marriage. When you attack one of the divine institution, you expose humanity to destruction at the hands of Satan.

1. **Adultery Affects the Soul**

Adultery affects the soul. This is pointed out in Proverbs 6:32: "The one who commits adultery with a woman is lacking sense. He who would destroy himself does it." That's pretty clear. Adultery affects the soul. It is a senseless person who does this. It is an emotionally, mentally, psychologically self-destructive act. Why? Because it obviously builds a hardness on the facets of the soul between you and God. It makes you hard in mind, emotions, and will. It leads to a frantic search for happiness in the wrong way. Sexual sins are an expression of seeking happiness in the wrong way. It leads to frustrated desires in the soul which then result in neuroses and psychoses. The difference between neuroses and psychoses is that the man who builds castles in the air is having a neurosis. He builds castles in the air, and he dreams of the rooms, and he furnishes it. He just imagines this castle in his mind. That's a neurosis. When he starts living in that castle, he's got a psychosis. He's really nuts. So, it starts off one way, and can very quickly go to the other way. And sexual since have this effect upon the soul, and upon the psychological nature of man.

Furthermore, it leads to emotional domination of the soul. Sexual sins lead to the emotions dominating, because that's what you're acting on. You're acting on feelings. You're not acting on a mind which is governed by the principles of God's Word.

1. **Adultery Affects the Body**

If that isn't bad enough, that your inner man is affected, the truth of the matter is that adultery affects the body as well. And Paul points this out when he takes up this matter in 1 Corinthians 6:13-18. In that particular church, there was a horrid case of incest, which was being tolerated by the congregation, and he had to stop and deal with this issue. Paul says, "Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food. But God will do away with both of them. Yet the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body." Yes, it is true that you must eat to live. Some people live to eat. That's not a good way to do it. But everybody needs to eat to live. But it is true that eventually that body is going to die, and it will be gone. But that does not mean that you have contempt for the body. In the ancient world, they had great contempt for the physical body. It was a passing trivial thing that the worms were going to eat up, and it was treated with contempt. The apostle Paul says, "The body belongs to God." Your body was never created for immorality. That is not God's design.

One of the earliest heresies in the Christian church was a thing called gnosticism, from the Greek word "gnosis" for knowledge. These people posed as individuals who had great insight (secret insights) from God. And one of those insights from God that they claimed they had was that the body is inherently evil. That is not true. They thought that the way to get rid of the evil in the body was to flesh it out by doing every filthy, vile thing you can do. Gnosticism was a very popular religion. It always had enough offerings, and it had a large following: Flush out the evil by doing every evil thing you can think of. The Bible says, "No, you don't treat the body in that way. The body belongs to God.

Verse 14 says, "Now, God has not only raised the Lord, but will also raise us up through His power." The time is going to come when He will raise your body to life again, even if it does die, as He raised Christ. The body you have is one you will live with forever, and what you have done with it will live with you forever: "Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ, and make the members of a harlot? May it never be. For do you not know that the one who joins himself to a harlot is one body with her? For He says, 'The two shall become one flesh.' But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with him. Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body." I need not explain to you how self-evident it is in our day that sexual sins are sins that particularly and uniquely affect your body. They may lead to impotence and frigidity. They may lead to nymphomania, an insatiable search for sexual satisfaction that is never reached. They may result in frustrations to find satisfaction, which in turn, then, will lead to the use of drugs, alcohol, and the pursuit of the details of life. Sexual sins produce secondary evils. It leads to various kinds of physical slaveries, obviously. But it does not lead to the slavery of sexual addiction.

One lady this morning was observing that they have a special clinic in Dallas now for the people who are sexually addicted, and that this is seen as some kind of a disease that needs special treatment. What it needs is regeneration, and the understanding of the empowerment of God the Holy Spirit, and the knowledge of doctrine. You are what you choose to be. ...

Of course, one of the most horrendous results of the effects on the body is venereal disease, and death. Venereal diseases have always been designed by God, including the horrendous one of the AIDS, to stress the fact that sexual sins have upon them the kiss of death. This is a judgment of God,

1. **Adultery is a Mental Attitude as Well as the Overt Act**

Adultery is a mental attitude toward a woman as well as the overt act. Matthew 5:27-28: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." Mental adultery only affects the soul. That's bad. But when it becomes overt adultery, then it affects both soul and body.

1. **Adultery is Grounds for Divorce**

Adultery is grounds for divorce. Having said that, you must not press what God has said concerning this matter beyond what He has said. It does not necessarily require that you divorce a person that's guilty of this, nor is it desirable necessarily. But there does come a time when there is a persistence of lifestyle that now exposes you to inordinate hazards. And God says, "It's time to separate or to be divorced." In Matthew 5:32, Jesus says, "But I say to that everyone who divorces his wife except for the cause of unchastity (except for adultery) makes her commit adultery. And whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery."

Matthew 19:9: "And I say to whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman, commits adultery. An improper divorce and remarriage is an act of adultery.

Luke 16:18: "Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries one who is divorced from a husband commits adultery."

The Bible lays out two basic reasons for legitimate divorce.

**Abandonment is Grounds for Divorce**

1 Corinthians 7 lays out abandonment. If You come home and find the clothes gone from the closet, and the car gone, you may suspect that you have been abandoned. In the New Testament, the apostle Paul says that you may have a spouse who does not want to live within the confines of biblical principles. Perhaps the person is not even a Christian, and you are. It is your legitimate right then to be divorced, and you may be remarried, but only to another Christian. That is important. So, abandonment (desertion) is cause for divorce along with adultery.

Divorce was allowed because of persistent adultery under the Mosaic code in order to protect the wife. It was because of the hardness of the hearts of the Jews that divorce was permitted. It was never in God's order. He always said that it was one man for one woman. The Old Testament prophets made it clear, as one of them said, "God hates divorce." But that comes into our lives sometimes before we are Christians, or it comes into our lives where it is beyond our control, and we go from there.

1. **Marriage Sanctifies Sex**

Marriage sanctifies the sexual relations of a man and woman as genuine love. Outside of marriage, it is a relationship of lust. It is important that you know, so when some sweet-talking sweet-patootie wants to talk you into doing that which is against the moral code of God, you understand that that is a person that you should shove off from quickly.

Hebrews 13:4 says, "Let marriage be held in honor among all. Let the marriage bed be undefiled. God will judge fornicators and adulteries." It is very clear from the Word of God that marriage sanctifies sexual relationships. Outside of that, it is an unholy act.

1. **Adultery Destroys the Spiritual Maturity Structure**

Adultery destroys the spiritual maturity structure in the soul. That is probably self-evident to all of us – that adultery destroys your temporal fellowship, and it destroys your spiritual maturity. You can't grow much when you're in this status of evil.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-4: "For this is the will of God: your sanctification (your experiential sanctification – that is part of being spiritually mature); that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality, and each of you know how to possess his own vessel (your body) in sanctification, and in honor." So, adultery will destroy your spiritual maturity.

1. **Adultery Describes Apostasy**

Adultery is used in the Bible to describe apostasy and negative volition to doctrine. The Old Testament prophets use this analogy. Negative volition to doctrine and apostasy (falling away from the Word of God) is like adultery. There's nothing more terrible that a human being can do than to turn his back upon the teachings of the Word of God. There's nothing that a human being can do that is worse than becoming an apostate from the truth of doctrine. And this comparison is shown with how serious a sin adultery is.

In Jeremiah 3:8-10, the prophet said, "And I saw that all the adulteries of faithless Israel. I had sent her away and given her a writ of divorce. Yet her treacherous sister, Judah, did not fear, but she went and was a harlot also." Here, the prophet, speaking for the Lord God, says, "I looked up to the Northern Kingdom. I looked at Israel, and the whole nation had become one huge harlot. And I sent them into captivity to enslavement under the Assyrians." Did the southern kingdom learn its lesson? Not on your life. Judah proceeded to imitate the harlotry of the Northern Kingdom.

Verse 9: "And it came about, because of the lightness of her harlotry, that she polluted the land, and committed adultery with stones and trees." Adultery not only is destructive to the soul of the individual, and to the body, but it also pollutes the land, like the shedding of innocent blood (murder of innocent blood and of innocent lives) is poured out upon the ground, as righteous Abel's blood was poured out, and it screams out to God for justice. Here, adultery pollutes the land.

These people had degenerated so far into the animal level, which is what adultery and all sexual sins do. It brings you down from the image of God into being a barnyard animal. They were performing their sexual acts with stones and trees.

Verse 10: "'And yet, in spite of all this, her treacherous sister Judah did not return to me with all her heart, but rather in deception,' declares the Lord."

Ezekiel 16:23-43 give you the same picture.

In the New Testament, James 4:4 touches upon this same principle, that adultery is described as apostasy (negative evolution doctrine). James 4:4: "You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God." To be a friend of the world is to be an adulterous.

In Revelation 17, when we get to that chapter, we'll be looking at the apostate church, and the first five verses describe this woman who is sitting on the beast, the religion of the world, which is dominating the antichrist for the first three-and-a-half years. In verse 5, she has a name on her forehead. She is called the Mystery Religion of Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and of the abominations of the earth. This religion will be the epitome of the Babylonian religion begun by Nimrod. This religion will rise to such a horrible degree in the first three-and-a-half years, dominating the antichrist. And at the mid-tribulation, when he is now the world ruler, he'll throw this religious system aside, and create his own religion with the false prophet. Adultery is used under the analogy of apostasy.

1. **Adultery Applies to the Unmarried**

The principle of adultery applies to the unmarried as forbidding sex between male and female outside of marriage. In 1 Corinthians 6:18, adultery is a general term for illicit sexual relations: "Flee immorality (as we have read). Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body. But the immoral man sins against his own body."

1. **Bible Doctrine Governs the Godly Use of Sex**

The godly use of sex is governed by the storage of Bible doctrine in one's human spirit. It is the divine viewpoint of doctrine that gives guidance to your soul. You can see how the world's people do not know how to deal with the power of their sexuality, because they have no divine guidance. The inhaling of Bible doctrine into your soul is what removes your ignorance and your hardness of your soul toward the rules of God.

1. **Adultery Destroys the Family**

Adultery destroys the freedom and the security of the family. That is certainly a self-evident fact. It destroys the freedom of the family to be a family. It certainly destroys the security of the family to function as a family. Nobody trusts anyone.

1. **Repenting, Ceasing, and Confessing**

Adultery in the church age is handled by repenting and ceasing, plus confessing to God the Father. This is the principle enunciated, as you know, in 1 John 1:9. Where sexual sin has been entered into: you get come to your senses; you cease and desist; and, you make your confession to God the Father – not to anyone else. You make things right with Him, and then you go on. He forgets, and you forget.

1. **Sexual Sin Causes Weakness in Society**

The degree to which sexual sin is justified and practiced in a society is an indication of the extent of that society's degeneration, weakness, and disorientation to divine viewpoint. This certainty of applies very clearly to the United States. A generation ago, people would not talk about what they do privately in their sexual evils. They would not be proud of these things. You cannot get one of these female actress twits on a talk show without her telling you about her evil escapades in her sexual immoralities. She's nobody if she doesn't do that. To the extent that a society thinks that's acceptable, and tolerates it, shows the degree of its own disorientation to divine viewpoint. These people do not know God. Therefore, they can act that way.

**Sex Education in Public Schools**

Personal sexual knowledge is a very private thing. This is why sex education in public schools is the epitome of grossness. You cannot take a mixed group of human beings in a public context and teach them about sex. That is a personal private matter. What public school sex education does is jade young people to the privacy of sex; to the personal quality in it; and, to the fact that it is to be done out of sight of the world. It is not something you talk about or brag about unless you're a real lowlife type. Young people have their sensitivities desensitized. They become dehumanized toward their own sexuality. Talk about the devil being smart! He knows how to get at a nation. This moral absolute regarding human sexuality is what makes a nation great and strong. There was a time in the United States when you were not proud of the fact that you bore child out of wedlock. You were not proud of the fact that you were in an illicit sexual relationship. It was a shame. It was a great shame. It is still a shame, except for those who have no orientation to reality. Therefore, this nation, because it respected this basic human relationship, and did not condone evil acts, was a great nation.

Recently, I saw what the code used to be for movies. All movies used to have to live up to a certain code of ethics or they could not be shown publicly. You could not use swear words; you could not show sexual scenes; and, you could not run a story line that in any way undermined traditional morality. Can you believe that? You could not do anything on the screen that degraded; that undermined; that questioned; or, that caused a person to doubt his traditional morality, by which they meant biblical morality. How far we have come!

As American society has plunged headlong into sexual immorality, a blanket of darkness has also covered the directive mind. The directive mind is what makes the decisions. The directive function of the mind makes the decisions. The information to make those decisions is either fed up from your human spirit with doctrine as a Christian, or it is fed over directly from the learning side of your mind (the perceptive mind), and it takes in the ideas of the world; feeds them directly into your directive mind; and, it makes decisions. When you don't have the Word of God to guide you (nothing to feed into the directive mind), all you have is barnyard animals.

This mental disorientation and its toleration is causing Americans to reject and to oppose everything that has made us strong and great as a nation. American political leaders have little moral influence on the nation. They are weak, and they are confused themselves. I needn't explain to you how American politicians also are proud of their violation of God's sexual code. The homosexual representatives in Congress are proud to proclaim themselves as part of the gross, depraved community.

**Sexual Immorality in Israel**

The background of the seventh commandment against illicit sex in Israel was that no sin was regarded with greater horror by God. When the people of Israel were in tune with God, there was no sin that they regarded with greater horror either. Yet, when they were out of touch with God, as most of the time they were, this is a sin that was extensively violated. The land of Canaan, into which they came, was filled with morally debased people, and I mean of the most loathsome kind. They were a cancer upon the human race, and that is why God instructed their military leaders under Joshua, "You are coming into the land, a land which I gave to your father Abraham, and which for the four centuries you have been slaves in Egypt has been filled now with the most vile kinds of human beings. You cannot deal with them. They cannot be salvaged. They cannot be reeducated. It's a cancer that must be cut out. Therefore, when you go in, you will kill every man; you kill every woman; and, you kill every child among them. You'll leave none of their society left, and you'll destroy everything that you found of their lifestyle, and especially of their worship sites."

This one was filled with morally debased people. The Jews did not do that. When they were secure, and when they were victorious, they let the rest of the people who were living go free. Those people were there to plague them throughout all the rest of Israel's history. These people that lived in Canaan defied the reproductive forces of nature, especially as it was exemplified in human sex. That is the point of the Baal worship. The Baal worship was a phallic cult worship. It worshiped the human sex organs. The Canaanites worshiped their gods through the sacred temples, and with the sex act with the priests and priestesses who were at that temple.

This kind of worship practice was a great temptation to the Jews. And Moses, when he wrote his final book of Deuteronomy, near the end of his life, made a special point of alerting them to the temptation to practice the sexual religions that they would find there. In Deuteronomy 23:17-18, Moses says, "None of the daughters of Israel shall be a cult prostitute, nor shall any of the sons of Israel be a cult prostitute." You don't worship me through prostitution of your sons and daughters as they do at the temple of the pagans: "You shall not bring the hire of a harlot or the wages of a dog into the house of the Lord your God for a votive offering. For both of these are an abomination to the Lord your God." You don't even bring the money as an offering to God which you have secured through these kinds of illicit sex actions.

The sexual immorality in Israel extended at times to respectable women – respectable women in Israel played as prostitutes to visiting strangers. The Jews, all through their history, regularly drifted off into this kind of sex practice and worship.

The seventh principle was necessary because the Jews themselves had an improper view of women. They did not understand that God's order was male and female. They did not understand that God's order was a divine institution of the family where there was male leadership, and lines of authority, and there was a father, and there was a mother, and they had roles that they played within the family unit.

I have been discussing this with our children in the academy. And at our chapel programs, I have put them with their family on a desert island in the South Pacific. There is food, and there is water, but there is only room for their particular family group. We're talking about who's going to do what. We have asked them: what will they do when their parents can't take care of them? One boy immediately knew what to do: "Put them in a nursing home." I mean, he just zipped it out. And one thing interesting about this kid is that his parents believe that the time to remove a child from Berean Academy is when he's in the fifth grade. This guy is a fifth grader. Then he can get into the public school system in the sixth grade, which tells children they're junior high kids, and he can get in the swing of things with his friends, as if he lives with certain kids all of his school life.

However, as one of our teachers observed, that's one of the reasons you shouldn't take your kid out in the fifth grade, because he still thinks you should put the parents in a nursing home. On occasion, that might be the best thing for their physical care. But he knew what to do with it. I haven't gotten around to asking him what they're going to do on the island. I suppose that they might say they should the old folks adrift in a boat, or on a raft, and give them a couple of coconuts and a pouch of water or something.

In any case, the seventh principle against illicit sex was necessary for the protection of women, because under the Jews' viewpoint, they looked upon women as their property. They did not see them as objects requiring sacred treatment that God had made as their companion and helper. No, marriage is not a 50-50 proposition. It is not half-and-half. That's bunko. That's the world system. Marriage is with a husband who's in charge. So, don't marry a jerk. Marry somebody who is not beneath you spiritually. Marry somebody who knows how to take care of you, and who will take care of you. Don't marry someone who's going to interpret the fact that there is a curse upon the human race. God has said that you will live by the sweat of your brow. Don't marry someone who interprets that as living by the sweat of his frow. Take care. Who's going to put his hand of care upon you? It is amazing the kinds of people that ladies will marry.

The seventh principle was very important as it is today. Women are not dogs. They're not objects of property. The Jews used to have a certain prayer. They would pray, and often they would close their prayer, with this sentence: "I think Thee that has not made me a gentile, a slave, or a woman." That was the horrendous disorientation that the Jews had toward women. They did not think that women should be educated. They looked upon that with horror. And they avoided speaking to women publicly. That's what surprised them when they walked up to Jesus at the well in Samaria, and they saw him talking to this woman. You wonder: what are they so surprised about? A Jew who is somebody significant does not talk to a woman publicly. ...

The wisdom of Solomon in Proverbs 31:10-31 pays tribute to a good wife – a wife who takes care of her family; a wife who, on the side, even brings some income into that family. But she knows that her first calling is to be her husband's friend and helper.

The Mosaic Law ensured certain rights to women in Exodus 21:10, because of the attitude of men. Exodus 21:10 said that if he takes himself another woman, he may not reduce her food or clothing, or conjugal rights." God was not approving polygamy here. He says, "When that sin comes in, that's bad enough. But don't make it worse by abusing the first wife."

Divorce is against God's order. Moses provided it in order to control the evil nature of man and to give protection to women (Matthew 19:7-10).

**Sexual Purity in Christianity**

Let's shift the scene to Christianity. That's how it was in Judaism. In Christianity, the picture is dramatically and clearly difference. Christianity demanded an uncompromising sexual purity outside of marriage, and fidelity within marriage unto death, Christians respected the human body as the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:16). Whereas, the Greek and Roman world view the body as evil, and they acted accordingly. The Christian view of the body in marriage and divorce, in time, would revolutionize the Greco-Roman world ideas. Under Christianity, marriage became a sacred state, and it became the norm for the good life. 1 Corinthians 7:2 considers marriage the status of the good life.

Sex was limited to marriage. Premarital and extramarital sex was strictly forbidden. Christianity recognized that divorce was out of order except for adultery or desertion. 1 Corinthians 7:10-39 and Matthew 19:9 laid those principles out. Under Christianity, it became understood that a couple in marriage were to leave their parents and cleave to each other (Matthew 19:5, Genesis 2:24). Even before there were any kinfolks, Adam and Eve were told to be glued. That's the Hebrew word "cleave" means: glue yourself to one another, and leave your relatives.

Sometimes it is very hard to leave your relatives because your relatives won't leave you alone. There's nothing so terrible as having a mother-in-law that won't butt out. And when she butt out, you have to try to butt her out, but that's not easy to do. Nothing is worse than having an in-law who keeps poking their nose into your family, and who keeps arriving on the scene, uninvited and undesired. Nobody, I suppose, has been able to handle that terrible condition better than Ralph Cramden on "The Honeymooners," whenever the old lady came around, uninvited and unwanted. When the Bible says, "Separate yourself from your in-laws," it's a two-way street. They've got to leave you alone. You don't go home to mommy and daddy, and say, “Do you know what's happening?" And if you do, mommy and daddy should say, "Don't tell me. Tell the Lord. Go home and get yourself straightened out." You know the Word of God – act upon the Word of God. There's a new focus of loyalties. Separation and union of the two are to be aided by the parents, not hindered.

There is a chain of authority. The authority goes from God to the husband; to the wife; and, to the children. The older you are in the family, as children, the more authority you have over the rest of them (1 Corinthians 11:3). Ephesians 5:22 says that the wife is to be in subjection to her own husband. He is the final authority in the family. 1 Timothy 2:11-13 tell us that. This is God's order. Therefore, be careful whom you put in charge of your life.

Marriage is a relationship under Christianity of mutual dependence and fulfillment with love and respect: love for the wife; and, respect for the husband (Ephesians 5:33). There was not a tension of rights. In the New Testament, the husband is told to love his wife. His wife is not told to love her husband. She is told to respect him, and to recognize her subjection under his authority. The wife is to obey the husband, and he is to be kind and considerate to her, recognizing that she is, by nature, a weaker vessel in her physical structure (Colossians 3:18-19, 1 Peter 37).

**A Right Man and a Right Woman**

I disagree with men like Dr. Dobson who don't think that there is a right man and a right woman for each other. I think that it is God's provision to have a right man for a right woman. The reason that Dr. Dobson doesn't like that, I suspect, is because there are so many people that have blown it. They have not waited upon God's time, and they have settled for second best. When you have done that, you will now have your life revised and reworked, and happiness will come. It will not be the maximum level of happiness that it would be had you married the right man or the right woman. But once you are married, that person becomes your right man or woman.

Furthermore, a husband and wife are not to deny each other sexual relationships. 1 Corinthians 7:3-5 makes it very clear that the wife does not own her body, and the husband does not own his body. It belongs to each other. And they are not to deny each other their sexual relationships. If they do, they're inviting immorality. The Christian principle of marriage in the New Testament is reciprocity – duty and privilege on both sides in a partnership. It is not an exploitation.

The permanence of Christian marriage was a dramatic change in the Greco-Roman world, but it was based upon the laws of God. It was not based upon the presence of love. The continuance of the marriage was not based upon being compatible with the person. The presence of the continuance of the marriage was not based upon some kind of fulfillment. It was not even based upon your being happy. It was not even based upon your being at peace. It was not based upon anything else except the law of God. The law of God says that it is a lifelong relationship.

So, this guy boozes it up; he comes home; and, he beat you up, and he doesn't feed the children. What should you do? Hunker down and suffer, and take it? No. There comes a time when, for your self-protection and the well-being of your children, the answer is to separate. You arrange your life, and you move out. And, if necessary, you put him under a legal peace bond so that he can't bug you. You separate yourself from that potential danger. But you do not divorce.

**Monogamy**

Marriage is monogamous – one man to one woman. Genesis 2:23-24 makes that clear, as well as 1 Corinthians 7:2.

**Homosexual Marriage**

There is no such thing as a marriage between homosexuals: between male and male; or, between female and female. The very thought; the very idea; or, the very suggestion of that shows what a gross moral evil homosexuality is.

So, the Jews did it better. They never got it all together in their proper view of women, but under Christianity, the full revelation of doctrine enables us to know just exactly the relationships that should be there. And they're all based upon an orderly process of authority in the family, and it's based upon fidelity within the marriage.

There is a right man, and there is a right woman. You take your time until you find that one. You don't go out hunting. Every now and then, some of these tapers me when they listen to our marriage tapes. And I can hear their frantic voice at the other end: "I'm 25 years old, and I haven't found the one to marry." I know some 16 year olds that haven't either. The problem is tremendous. They don't understand. I have to reassure them that, in the orbit of the child who walks with God, if that's His purpose for you to be married, the contact will come.

You may be sitting out in the middle of the Iraqi desert running the only gas station or 200 miles. Here, in this red Corvette, will come this gorgeous blond. And you'll know that she's the one. That's how it is with blonds. They just drive up on you in the middle of the desert in their red Corvettes – and you're gone.

So, the contact will be made. You wait upon the Lord.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1993

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