



## SESSION 8

# DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY

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Not long ago, a commercial came out for Pepsi Max® that depicts two truck drivers eating at the same diner. One represents Pepsi Max and the other Coke Zero®. The Pepsi guy strikes up a conversation with the Coke guy while the song “Why Can’t We Be Friends?” plays from the jukebox. Next, the Pepsi driver offers a Pepsi Max to his newfound friend (who happens to be wearing a Coca-Cola hat and uniform). Thinking this is a sign of true friendship, the Coke driver takes a large swig of the soda. But the Pepsi driver gets his smartphone out, records the other driver, posts the video to YouTube®, and then tells the guy what he’s just done. The commercial ends with the two of them launching out of the diner window in a brawl.

The reason the Pepsi Max commercial is effective is because we see the Coca-Cola driver “cheating” on his company. In reality, of course, he was just drinking another soda. He was not married to the product; he just worked for the company. Even though he wouldn’t be legally prohibited from drinking Pepsi, there is irony in his actions. What makes the spot effective is that we expect fidelity from the truck driver, even without oath or commitment.



# The Seventh Commandment Helps to Emphasize...



## Why God Hates Adultery

The prohibition against adultery doesn't make sense until we understand God's original design for sexual expression within the confines of marriage. From the beginning, God established a blueprint for the family. He saw that it was not good for man to be alone, and He created woman. Adam and Eve together reflected the image of God in their relationship of trust and love.

**Deuteronomy 5:18**

*Do not commit adultery.*

► Have you or someone you know walked through the pain caused by adultery? What were the consequences of this sin? Why do you think immorality is treated so seriously in the Scriptures?

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The glorious picture of marital bliss in the Garden is shattered by human sin. When the first couple sinned against God, they became separated from God. The marriage covenant is still powerful, but because of sin, it is a fractured version of what God originally intended. Trust is broken. Marriages are imperfect. Many fall apart.



## The Best of Intentions...

Once upon a time, a master artist was commissioned by the king to compose a painting. The master spent many hours working on the painting, watched closely by his apprentice.

As the deadline approached, the apprentice grew concerned. It appeared that the master would not make the deadline. Though the main strokes were completed, there were many details remaining to be finished.

The night before the revealing of the picture, the apprentice snuck into his master's studio. Using the light of a single candle so as not to be detected, he filled in the gaps and details his master didn't get to. He labored far into the night, but finished the painting.

The next morning, the king arrived to receive the picture. The master and apprentice joyfully welcomed him into the studio. The master swept the sheet off the painting, only to reveal that the painting was terrible. The work the apprentice had put in had decimated the painting. The colors that had looked appropriate in the dark were horrific in the morning light. The strokes that seemed so masterful by candlelight were ugly blotches in sunlight. The simplicity of the master's design had been overrun by the apprentice's foolhardy attempts at perfection.

The furious king stormed out, the devastated master sank to the ground, and the apprentice stood heartbroken.

Adultery is much like the apprentice's work that night. It promises to provide greater happiness than God's design, like all sins do, but it only distorts that design. The apprentice's work ruined the master's design, just like adultery does. It destroys relationships and deforms what would otherwise be a beautiful picture of the gospel.

In Scripture, God often describes His relationship with His people in terms of a marriage covenant. The expectation is love and fidelity. God is faithful and constantly pursuing His people, but His people "cheat on Him" by running after idols.

► What are some activities the Scriptures would consider "spiritually adulterous" toward God?



# The Consequence of Committing It

**This passage begins with the author telling the reader that his wisdom will bring life and discipline. It is written from the perspective of a father giving advice to his son. He wants him to stay away from the woman who has a flattering tongue. He warns his son not to lust after her or be captivated by her eyelashes. Notice the progression: flattery and flirting that leads to lust and then infatuation.**



The consequence of adultery—just like the consequence of all sin—is spiritual and physical death. If left unchecked, sexual desire can become an idol that consumes our hearts. That’s why we must guard our heart from anything that would hinder our relationship with God. Choosing to disobey God is choosing death over life.

Another consequence of adultery is that it cheapens the beautiful gift of sex that God has given us. The Bible doesn’t just give us warnings against sex outside of marriage; it also commends sex inside of marriage.

## Little Choice, Big Deal

It sometimes seems like the consequences for an action are so out of proportion to the action itself, especially when it comes to mistakes. For instance, I remember getting into a pillow fight during elementary school at a friend’s house. I threw a pillow at somebody, the target ducked, and the pillow knocked into a really expensive vase my friend’s parents had received at their wedding. Oops. It was an error in judgment on my part, but it cost them something very precious and dear.

Another good example is texting and driving. Sadly, many people are injured and even killed due to texting and driving. And, even more tragically, many of them are not the ones texting. It’s another sad picture of how something that seems so insignificant (a quick glance at a screen or a few seconds thumbing something out) can result in very significant and everlasting



### Proverbs 6:20-29

*My son, keep your father's command, and don't reject your mother's teaching. Always bind them to your heart; tie them around your neck. When you walk here and there, they will guide you; when you lie down, they will watch over you; when you wake up, they will talk to you. For a command is a lamp, teaching is a light, and corrective discipline is the way to life. They will protect you from an evil woman, from the flattering tongue of a stranger. Don't lust in your heart for her beauty or let her captivate you with her eyelashes. For a prostitute's fee is only a loaf of bread, but an adulteress goes after a precious life. Can a man embrace fire and his clothes not be burned? Can a man walk on burning coals without scorching his feet? So it is with the one who sleeps with another man's wife; no one who touches her will go unpunished.*

► In what ways can sexual sin become an idol? What are some ways you see a cheapening of sexuality in society today?

► What are some examples of movies or television shows that romanticize or glamorize adultery? What should be our response to their message?

consequences. If we're honest, though, everything we do has eternal consequences. Even in the instances of the pillow fight and texting while driving, we should be aware of the gravity of what's going on around us. That vase looked expensive (and it was!). Driving involves moving a half-ton of metal, plastic, and rubber at very high speeds and in close proximity to others doing the same. There really is cause for us to be aware of the significance of consequences!

Adultery (and adulterous thoughts) are in the same category. They may seem insignificant, even minuscule at the time, but they carry heavy, heavy consequences. It may not be a mauled car and a body under a sheet on the side of the road, but it can be an eternally scarred people and possibly even a soul or two in a spiritual body bag. Let us take warning against the evil of adultery, especially given its severe consequences.





# The Cure for the Lustful Heart

The law focuses on the action of what not to do. Jesus went even further. Knowing that our actions and motives are contaminated by sin, Jesus claimed that even if we do not outwardly commit the sin of adultery, we are guilty of sin because of our inward lusts. Jesus took the Seventh Commandment and went beyond the action to the heart.

► How does the gospel give us hope as we deal with sexual sin?

According to Jesus, it's not the hands and feet that lead us to adultery; it's the heart. Therefore, the solution to a lustful heart is not willpower, self-discipline, or self-mastery. It's a heart transformation. The only solution to an adulterous heart is to have our hearts changed by the gospel. Living in light of this change, we are to do whatever it takes to remain pure.

## Matthew 5:27-30

*You have heard that it was said, Do not commit adultery. But I tell you, everyone who looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.*



Proactively dealing with sexual sin and temptation does not mean creating a checklist of legalistic requirements. It means our pursuit of pleasure in God is greater than our pursuit of pleasure in this world. So take a good look at your life, and take a good look at your heart. If you are addicted to internet pornography, get some accountability. If you are committing adultery within your heart, seek God's grace and repentance in your life. There should be a sense of urgency in fighting sexual sin.

► Oftentimes, lapses into lust are followed by strong remorse and feelings of shame. How can we use those feelings to move us to godly sorrow and repentance rather than paralyzing us from serving the Lord and others?

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## Satisfies More than Snickers

A buddy of mine frequently takes missions trips to impoverished regions in Asia. He shared with me a terrible sight he recently saw in India and Pakistan. For entertainment, well-off people would toss their half-eaten sandwiches into the gutters of raw sewage, which lined the roads. Street urchins and other poor waifs would dive into the sewage to get the food (often fighting over it). The rich people find this to be an entertaining pastime.

The point I want to draw out here is not the depravity of those rich people, but the intense hunger of these children. They will fight for and consume food covered in human sewage. What would disgust us is incredibly appealing to them. If you're hungry enough, even disgusting things that are dangerous to you will look good.

You don't need to imagine such a terrible scenario to get the point. Next time you're hungry, admire a cheeseburger or some other piece of food. Then, gorge yourself. Now, put that same cheeseburger in front of you, and it suddenly won't look appealing. In fact, you may find it disgusting and want it taken away.

The same idea is true spiritually. Without the new heart from the Holy Spirit, we will dive into the sewage of adultery and lust in order to satisfy ourselves. We will drink from the cracked cisterns (Jer. 2:12-13) of pornography, masturbation, or other sexual sins and never be filled. But, if we have the new heart from the Holy Spirit that Jesus purchased for us, we'll see lust as the sewage-covered sandwich that it is, and it'll be saddening and disgusting, not appealing. If we're already satisfied in Jesus, lust (and every other sin) will be repugnant, not satisfying. To be sure, there will be moments of struggle and perhaps even lapse. Yet if we would conquer lust, we must feast on the goodness of God.



# GOD'S STORY, YOUR STORY

In light of the sexual confusion and perversion promoted within today's culture, it is important for us to understand God's design and intention when it comes to sex and romance.

Throughout this session, we learned that God hates adultery, noting that it goes against His design, is an expression spiritual adultery, and misrepresents the gospel, etc. This session also emphasizes the consequences of committing adultery, allowing us to see first hand the biblical warning to those entering into an adulterous relationship.

*Why do you think it is important to understand issues of sex and romance in light of God's design and intention?*

Also, like the previous session, the issue of adultery is one that is primarily of the heart. This means that even though many of you are years away from being in a marriage relationship, you can still identify with the root issue of lust that leads to physical adultery. Moreover, since lust is ultimately an issue of the heart, anyone who has lusted in his or her heart is a sexual sinner in need of forgiveness and restoration. Thus, when it comes to issues of pornography, premarital sex, or same sex attraction, it is important to note that these things are indicative of a deeper issue taking place within the heart. And like with all heart issues, the only lasting cure for sexual sins is the finished work of Christ on our behalf.

*Why is it important to focus on the heart when it comes to issues of purity?*