

Deeper Meaning of the Law: Adultery (Matt. 5:27-30)

A Small Group Outline



1. Praise (Purpose: To worship God)

- What are you thankful for this week? (*let the group's secretary write these down in an A4 hardcover or some notebook*)
- Song Service
 - Sing a few songs of praise to God

2. Pray (Purpose: To carry each others' burdens and to seek the Lord)

- What challenges did you have this week? (*write these down in an A4 hardcover or some notebook*)
- Go into a season of prayer

3. Review (Purpose: To learn accountability)

- Tell us how it went with what you promised to do in last week's meeting? (*e.g. Who did your share your faith with this past week? Who did you minister to? How did actioning your I WILL STATEMENT go?*)
- *Where people have failed to fulfil what they said they would, do not be harsh with them but gently encourage them to try again in the coming week. Give them more support by phoning or joining them in the week.*

4. Give (Purpose: To be good stewards of our monies)

- This is the time to return tithes and offerings. If done electronically, kindly ensure that you get the bank account details of your local church from your treasurer. Don't forget to complete an envelope and to send the breakdown to him/her.

5. Discover (Purpose: To learn to listen to God, and be obedient to His Word)

• **Notes for the facilitator**

- Read *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessings (MB)*, pp. 59-63
- Sex as God designed it, is a most beautiful gift to mankind. It is just merely an act, but a relationship with someone you dearly love. It is one of God's most beautiful gifts to husbands and wives. But, as always, Satan has perverted this precious blessing in all kinds of lustful thoughts and behaviours.
- In the pagan culture sex was linked to worship. E.g. Baal worship, the temple of Aphrodite (Corinth), Diana (Ephesus), etc. Thus they used sex to gratify base passions and lust, and called it worship.
- Sexual immorality includes: adultery, pre-marital sex (fornication), incest, polygamy, bestiality, homosexuality, paedophilia, etc.
- Almost every book in the New Testament counsels regarding sexual impurity. E.g. "Free from sexual immorality" (1 Cor. 6:18); "But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality..." (Eph. 5:3); etc.
- Results of masturbation: "Entire mind given to low passion... The brain is weakened... Drain upon system is great.... Fine nerves of brain become benumbed and in a measure paralysed... Appetite for unhealthy food clamours for indulgence... Impure thoughts control imagination... There follows an almost uncontrollable desire for the performance of impure actions.... It is a terrible, debasing, soul-and-body-destroying indulgence." (*Testimonies to the Church, Vol. 2, p. 470*)
- "We hate to say it, but in a zinc deficient adolescent, sexual excitement and excessive masturbation might precipitate insanity." (*Carl Pfeiffer: Ph.D, M.D., Zinc and other micronutrients*)
- "Sexual excess [in marriage] will effectually destroy a love for devotional exercises, will take from the brain the substance needed to nourish the system, and will most effectively exhaust the vitality. No woman should aid her husband in this work of self-

destruction. She will not do it if she is enlightened and has true love for him.” (*Adventist Home, p. 124*)

- “In order for us to reach this high ideal, that which causes the soul to stumble must be sacrificed. It is through the will that sin retains its hold upon us. The surrender of the will is represented as plucking out the eye or cutting off the hand. Often it seems to us that to surrender the will to God is to consent to go through life maimed or crippled. But it is better, says Christ, for self to be maimed, wounded, crippled, if thus you may enter into life. That which you look upon as disaster is the door to highest benefit” (MB 61). In other words, it is better to limp into heaven than leap into hell.
- “It will require a sacrifice to give yourself to God; but it is a sacrifice of the lower for the higher, the earthly for the spiritual, the perishable for the eternal” (MB 62)
- We should be careful not to toy with temptation, because it will one day kill us. “You cannot keep birds from flying over your head, but you can certainly keep them from building a nest in your hair” (Martin Luther), i.e. you cannot avoid temptation (even Jesus was tempted), but you prevent sin from taking root in your heart (through the power of the Holy Spirit). More specifically, in this context, be careful of playing with sexual temptation.
- Sexual sin is at first gratifying, but it can cause a host of problems. It is one of the deceitful desires in Eph. 4:22. It is deceitful because they promise happiness but deliver sorrow, freedom but give slavery, immunity from wrongdoing, but they bring destruction. Some of the fruits of sexual sin includes:
 - Isolation, guilt, shame, anxiety, anger, depression, sexually transmitted diseases (gonorrhoea, syphilis, AIDS), financial loss, divorce, etc.
- Pornography:
 - It leads men and women to look at each other as nothing more than sex objects
 - It gets you caught up in a fantasy world that eventually heaps additional stress onto *real* life relationships.
 - It is a lust-generating activity that drives you to seek gratification. The memories resulting from porn activities *can last a lifetime* and damage the ability to enjoy sex in marriage.
 - It can lead you down the path of sexual perversion – paedophilia, homosexuality, rape, bestiality, etc.
 - Porn is addictive, similar to a seductive and powerful drug.
 - It could take years for you to re-learn how to love your spouse and eliminate the stranglehold lust has on you. You may have to relearn how to have sex in a loving way, since you have become tuned for lust through porn.
 - A study done by Dolf Zillman of Indiana University and Jennings Bryant of the University of Houston showed that viewing pornography drastically decreased levels of satisfaction with a person's sexual partner. The study also found that daily exposure to porn decreased fidelity and increased the desire for sex without attachment. The alarming thing about the study is that participants were not subjected to excessive amounts of porn. They viewed only "soft-core" pornography for one hour a day (*The Porn Effect by Drew Dyck. Taken from <http://www.pureintimacy.org/piArticles/A000000631.cfm>*)
 - Ted Bundy, an infamous serial killer, murdered 28 women before his arrest. In an interview before he was executed he described the cause his abominable actions, viz., pornography. He further noted: “I’ve lived in prison for a long time now, and I’ve met a lot of men who were motivated to commit violence. **Without exception, every one of them was deeply involved in pornography - deeply consumed by the addiction.**” (to read the full interview go to <http://www.pureintimacy.org/piArticles/A000000433.cfm>)

- There is hope for those who have made wrong sexual choices. God can forgive our past, and give victory over current sexual sins. Consider what he did for Rahab, and Mary Magdalene. We can call on His name.
 - *Read Matt. 5:27-30. Preferably let one person read it. Let everyone then put down their Bibles and get the group to reconstruct the passage in their own words. This teaches the group to be careful in quotation Scripture correctly and to use it as the basis of their discussions.*
 - **Discussion Questions** *(use only a few). The notes in italics after some of the questions below are for the facilitator, and not to be read out to the group.*
 - Why do you think sexual immortality is so common in society?
 - What are the devastating effects of marital unfaithfulness?
 - What does it mean to gouge out a habit of lust, or to cut off a sinful practice?
 - How does pornography feed into the problem of adultery?
 - Although society encourages masturbation as a ‘harmless’ and healthy way to explore your sexuality, what is the Christian view of masturbation? How does it fuel the lustful thoughts warned against in our passage of consideration? *(ask one question at a time)*
 - Is there anything wrong with the statement: It’s okay to look as long as you don’t touch?
 - How does the way a person dresses impact lustful behaviour? *(this does not excuse the perpetrator, but it does place a responsibility on people who fuel lustful thoughts)*
 - How can a Christian remain pure in a sexually charged society?
 - **Application Questions** *(select a few depending on your time. One has to be the I WILL STATEMENT)*
 - What can you do to maintain purity of thought and practice as a Christian?
 - What 2 steps can you take to protect your marriage against affairs?
 - I WILL STATEMENT: Formulate an I will statement in response to what you have discovered in the Word. Let the group’s secretary also record these in an A4 notebook. Ensure that everyone gets a chance to give their I WILL STATEMENT. You have to be specific. E.g. “I will try to guard the avenues of sexual entrance by selling my television / investing 2 hours a week for special marriage enrichment week / monitoring the internet for my children.”
- 6. Share** *(Purpose: To be witnesses of our faith)*
- Do you have anyone you could share today’s lesson with this week? *Be specific.*
- 7. Closing prayer**

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