THE SACREDNESS OF MARRIAGE

 **DATE: 3/18/2018 am**

**TEXT: Exodus 20:14; Proverbs 6; Ephesians 5**

**INTRODUCTION**

We are continuing to look at how we can be obedient to God’s Command to Seek the Old Paths

**Jeremiah 6:16 –** ***“Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls”***

Society wants change, and the Churches are falling for it

The Churches are throwing away God’s way for some so-called New Modern way

The Church leaders are trying to tell us that if we don’t change we will not be around in a few years

But my Bible tells me different

**Proverbs 24:21 –** ***“My son, fear thou the LORD and the king: and meddle not (don’t get involved) with them that are given to change:”***

They are trying to change our Worship, and our Bibles

Instead we need to be looking at ways to Follow the Old Paths

The True and Tried way, a way that has proved itself over and over again

The Old Paths are God’s Way

And One of the best ways to follow the Old Paths is to Keep God’s Commandments

**Proverbs 7:2 *– “Keep My Commandments, and live; and My Law as the apple of thine eye”***

We pick up where we left off last time in our study of the 10 Commandments found in **Exodus 20**

We now come to the command for **Fidelity in Marriage**

Marriage is as Old as Man is Old, Marriage began with the creation of the first Man and Woman

God performed the First Marriage, Marriage is of Divine Design

As we come to the 7th Commandment we learn of the …

**“Sacredness of Marriage”**

**~~~Prayer~~~**

According to the National Center for Health Statistics, each year 2.3 million couples marry in America

For some, their marriage will become a Special, Sacred and Satisfying relationship

For others, their marriage will be anything but happy

This is evident in the number of divorces each year

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, nearly half of the recent first marriages will end in divorce

According to one study … 49 out of 100 marriages in the United States will end in divorce

For many, their marriage will not end in divorce, but their relationship is more of an Endurance than an Enjoyment

God never intended Marriage to be a Burden but a Blessing

God’s purpose for Marriage was to provide a relationship to Enhance and Enrich our life

Apart from our relationship with God,

There is no relationship that can be any more meaningful or fulfilling than the Marriage relationship

Let’s look at the 7th Commandment by first noticing that it *Projects …*

**I. THE “DEVOTION” OF MARRIAGE**

The 7th Commandments Projects or sets forth the idea of Fidelity and Faithfulness in a Marriage

The command - ***“Thou shalt not commit adultery”*** is clear

A Marriage is to be a relationship of Faithfulness

Married Couples are to be Devoted to one another

**Devoted** means – *lovingly committed, dedicated*

According to a study from the National Opinion Research Center, roughly 15% of married or previously married Americans have committed adultery

(Others have placed these percentages much higher)

One study said that around 15% of women and 25% of men have had more than four affairs during their married life (That’s pretty sad)

Whatever the case, the Bible defines Marriage as being monogamous (meaning only one)

*Faithfulness* in Marriage is -

**A. The ‘Premise on Which Marriage is Established’**

*Faithfulness* is the Basis on which a Marriage is *founded*

In the very beginning God said in **Genesis 2:24 -**

***“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh”***

Marriage involves Leaving and Cleaving

The word ***“cleave”*** means to *cling or adhere*

It describes something being *glued or cemented*

The idea is that when a couple leaves their father and mother and enters into a Marriage relationship …

… They are to be Faithful to one another

Faithfulness and Fidelity is the Foundation of Marriage

**Ill.** In a Gallop Poll published in *USA Today* - of 500 men surveyed, 67% of married men and 60% of unmarried men said an affair was absolutely out of the question

The honest truth should be that for every husband and every wife, an affair with another person should be absolutely out of the question!

**Faithfulness is the Premise on which Marriage is established**

Furthermore, *Faithfulness* in Marriage is …

**B. The ‘Promise by Which Marriage is Entered’**

In every wedding ceremony that I have done a couple *Promises* each other that they will be Faithful

In traditional wedding vows the couple Promises to forsake all others and to be a Faithful and Loyal husband or wife till death parts them

Every marriage starts out with the Promise that says …

*“I am forsaking all others and make the commitment to be faithful to you as long as we both shall live”*

To be Unfaithful is to violate the trust that our mate placed in us

To be Unfaithful is to break the Promise that we made (1) to our mate, (2) before our family and friends, and (3) in the presence of God

The Bible says in **Hebrews 13:4 - *“Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled…”***

Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage kept pure

The prophet Malachi said in **Malachi 2:15 - *“Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth”***

The word ***“treacherously”*** means *to deal deceitfully*

It speaks of being unfaithful to the wife

Every wife ought to be able to trust her husband, and vice-a-versa, every husband his wife

**Quote:** It has been said that *love brings two people together, but it is faithfulness that keeps them together*

**Quote:** Someone else has said that *faithfulness is the anchor that keeps the relationship steadfast till the partner’s part in death*

Faithfulness is **the Premise** on which a marriage is Established and **the Promise** by which a marriage is Entered

Marriage calls for Dedication and Devotion to one’s mate

The 7th Commandment Projects and Sets Forth this Faithfulness

**THE “DEVOTION” OF MARRIAGE**

Secondly, the 7th Commandment *Prohibits …*

**II. THE “DEFILEMENT” OF MARRIAGE**

What causes so many Marriages to Fail?

The 7th Commandment Calls for Faithfulness and Condemns Unfaithfulness

Its message is crystal clear, ***“Thou shalt not commit adultery”***

The word ***“adultery”*** found in the 7th Commandment literally means *to apostatize*

To **apostatize** is *to abandon a previous loyalty*

Adultery is to Abandon the Promise you made to your mate, the Promise to be Faithful

Underlying the 7th Commandment is a call for a life of Moral Purity and Marriage Fidelity

It prohibits all premarital and extramarital intimacy

It’s a command that says when a couple walks to the marriage altar they are to have saved themselves for one another and that from henceforth they will keep themselves for that one person

It is a command that says marriage is Special and Sacred and is not to be Defiled

I know that’s not the way society thinks about it, but we are not to take on the mentality of society

Sorry, but believers need to walk the Old Paths

The Bible has a lot to say about Adultery and Adulterers

And as we look in the Bible we are left with no doubt that it is …

**A. A Sin that is ‘Condemned’**

The 7th Commandment does not need any explanation

***“Thou shalt not commit adultery,”*** …

Leaves us with no doubt that God Condemns Infidelity and Immorality

The 7th Commandment is reiterated in **Deuteronomy 5:18 -** ***“Neither shalt thou commit adultery”***

In **Jeremiah (23)** God said –

***“I have seen also in the prophets … a horrible thing”***

The horrible things God sees is identified in **v. 14** were it says that ***“they commit adultery”***

God description of Adultery is that it is a horrible thing

Jesus said in **Luke 18:20 - *“Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother”***

The Apostle Paul said in **Romans 13:9 - *“For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself”***

Again in **Galatians 5:19** Paul said - ***“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness…”***

In each of these lists the writer puts Adultery at the top

Over and over again we see in the Bible that **Adultery is Condemned**

As well, we see that Adultery is …

**B. A Sin that has ‘Consequences’**

The Bible speaks of the Serious Consequences that come with Infidelity and Immorality

If you want to understand how horrible Adultery is in the eyes of God and how serious are its Consequences,

We just have to read **Deuteronomy 22:22 - *“If a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then they shall both of them die, both the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: so shalt thou put away evil from Israel”***

**1.** Under the Mosaic Law, Adultery was a capital offense and punished with death!

You get the idea that committing Adultery was a serious matter (Turn to **Proverbs 6**)

**2.** In **Proverbs 6** we are given a Warning of the Consequences of Adultery

This Proverb begins with a challenge to take serious (1) the Moral teachings of parents and (2) the Commandments of God

We read in **vs. 20-23 – *“My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother:” “Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck” “When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee” “For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life:”***

Keeping the Commandments of God should not be a burden

They should be a Blessing!

As the wise man said, keeping them is ***the way of life!***

After challenging us to keep these Commandments,

We are then told how obedience to the Commandments (1) will strengthen us and (2) prevent us from falling prey to temptation

We read in **v. 24 - *“To keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman”***

When we live by moral and spiritual principles,

It will keep us from becoming a victim of temptation

Then in **vs. 25-29** we are given a Warning of the consequences of yielding to temptation, and specifically, committing adultery

We read - ***“Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids” “For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life” “Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?” “Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?” “So he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent”***

That is very plain

If you play with fire you will get burnt

A man or a woman that committeth adultery ***“shall not be innocent”***

Notice **v. 32 - *“But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul”***

The Bible says that the Adulterer is not to smart!

A person is absolutely stupid to commit Adultery...

Why?… You destroy your own soul

The word ***“destroyeth”*** means *to decay, bring to ruin*

**3.** Adultery can be very expensive – **Pro. 5:9-11 …**

*It can cost* your name and reputation,

… and even worse … your family

(In some cases your life) **vs. 35, 36**

Add to it the shame, guilt, and embarrassment it brings

… To you, your family, and even your Church

It can ruin many things for you

The next time those feelings start rising up in you

Take **Proverbs 6:32** and beat yourself over the head with them and say - *No, it is not worth it*

**4.** Even more serious is the Judgment of God that comes upon the Adulterer

We read in **Ephesians 5:3 - *“But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints”***

Then in **v. 6** we read - ***“Let no man deceive you with vain words: …***

***… for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience”***

Paul told us to not let Hollywood or the perverted thinking of our society make you think that infidelity and immorality are acceptable

Absolutely not, for the wrath of God comes upon such sins

There is perhaps no sin that has as many Consequences as adultery

Lastly, notice with me that the 7th Commandment not only …

*Protects* **THE “DEVOTION” OF MARRIAGE** (and)

*Prohibits* **THE “DEFILEMENT” OF MARRIAGE**

But it also *Promotes …*

**III. THE “DEVELOPMENT” OF MARRIAGE**

The heart and soul of the 7th Commandment is that we are to have Strong, Secure, and Satisfying Marriages

We are to be so Devoted to one another that being unfaithful is out of the question

Can there be that kind of Devotion, Commitment?

This Commandment is calling for …

**A. A ‘Loving’ Marriage**

How do we Develop a Loving Marriage?

**Humor:** The story is told of an old couple that were sitting on the front porch. The husband looked over at the wife and said, *“After fifty years, I’ve found you tried and true.”* The wife’s hearing wasn’t very good, so she said, *“What?”* He repeated, *“After fifty years, I’ve found you tried and true.”* She replied, *“After fifty years, I’m tired of you too.”*

As the years pass, we shouldn’t get tired of one another, but grow even more in love with one another

Our Marriages need to go from deadlock to wedlock, from fizzle to sizzle

The honeymoon may be over, but the honey should remain in the Marriage

With each passing year our love for one another should grow

Unfortunately, couples lose interest in one another,

We Loose the attraction for one another, resulting in a cooling of our love

**Genesis 26:8 - *“And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window, and saw, and, behold, Isaac was sporting with Rebekah his wife”***

The word ***“sporting”*** means *to laugh and play*

The king saw Isaac laughing and playing with his wife

For many couples the sporting is gone

As couples, we must keep the playfulness in our Marriages

**Humor:** Someone has said:

Love is holding hands in the street
Marriage is holding arguments in the street

Love is dinner for two in your favorite restaurant
Marriage is a Chinese take-out

Love is cuddling on a sofa
Marriage is deciding on a sofa

Love is talking about having children
Marriage is talking about getting away from children

Love is going to bed early
Marriage is going to sleep early

Love is a romantic drive
Marriage is a traumatic drive

Love is losing your appetite
Marriage is losing your figure

Love is sweet nothing in the ear
Marriage is sweet nothing in the bank

Love is a flickering flame
Marriage is a flickering television

Love is 1 drink and 2 straws
Marriage is "Don't you think you've had enough!"

Marriage doesn’t have to be that way and should not be that way

It should be a relationship in which the love you have for one another is constantly Growing and Deepening

The 7th Commandment is calling for **a Loving Marriage**

**And it is also calling for …**

**B. A ‘Lasting’ Marriage**

How do we Develop a Lasting Marriage?

The heart and soul of the 7th Commandment is that we are not to do anything that will hurt or ruin our Marriages

We are to have the kind of Marriage that will last

The answer is never Divorce

The answer is always Dedication!

The goal is to have Marriages that are Affair Proof

Selfishness will Ruin a Marriage

Selflessness will Grow a Marriage

Christ must be at the Center of our Marriages

Strong Marriages, Enduring Marriages, Lasting Marriages are Christ Centered Marriages

A Christ Centered Marriage is what we should strive for, work for and pray for!

That is the kind of Marriage the 7th Commandment seeks

**CONCLUSION – The 7th Commandment …**

*Protects* **THE “DEVOTION” OF MARRIAGE**

*Prohibits* **THE “DEFILEMENT” OF MARRIAGE**

*Promotes* **THE “DEVELOPMENT” OF MARRIAGE**