

Do Not Commit Adultery

Father, we do come to worship You. And as we open Your Word, I pray again that You would speak to us according to our needs. Lord, I pray that You would convict, that You would comfort, that You would conform us to the image of Jesus. Lord, help us to not be only hearers of Your Word, but doers of Your Word. Be with us. Speak to us through Your Holy Spirit. We pray this in Jesus' name and all God's listening people said, Amen.

If you have a Bible, would you mind opening with me in Exodus chapter 20. Exodus, chapter 20. And as I was thinking about this subject and listening to different sermons on this topic, I was reminded by someone of this analogy that I hope will help you get a better picture of this topic.

So, when I was a kid in Romania, in Transylvania, my grandpa used to have a small vineyard in our backyard. And he didn't have a big home. And our homes were pretty close to each other with our neighbors, so we didn't have a huge backyard. But he had enough where he would make a small batch of grapes on the harvest. And he taught me how to also take care of a vine. And I remember when he planted this one vine, and he wanted this vine to cover a specific part of the fence. And he had all these big dreams about it. And he showed me how to tend to it, how to water it, how to prune it. You have to trim it in a special way, fertilize in a special way. And he reminded me that it takes anywhere between three to five years to get it to a place where it can actually produce grapes. So it takes a long time. So I did that. I took care of it. And one fall, though, as I was cleaning the backyard and I was trying to make sure that I cut all the unneeded roots and branches by mistake, I cut off the main vine. Yeah, that's what I said, too. I was horrified. I was thinking, man, not only did my grandpa would be so disappointed, but we worked so hard to have this vine cover all this area. And I knew there's nothing I can do to fix it. It will take years to bring it back to what it was.

Adultery is similar to that, to a marriage. In Psalm 128, verse 3, the Psalmist says that a wife is like a fruitful vine. God rightly compares marriage to a vine. You've got to invest a lot to tend to a marriage. You have to wait a long time to get to a place of trust, of mutual trust, where you see the fruits of the marriage. And adultery is literally just severing the vine.

Now going back to my vine in Romania. The leaves stayed green for a few more days, but then it pretty much started to wither. And my grandpa said, okay, here's what we can still do. We can take this vine and we can put it back in the ground and hope that it's going to come back to life. And it did. But it took another three to five years to produce anything. And sometimes the vines cannot be recovered. There's nothing else you can do.

Today, as I talk about this topic, which is a very sensitive, delicate subject, I know that in this congregation, the people who are listening. I'm going to speak to different types of groups of people, and I want to acknowledge you.

First, I'm going to talk to people who never experienced adultery, and I pray you will never experience it. But this sermon will be a great reminder, whether you're married or not, to be vigilant and prayerful and careful to always protect yourself from any type of sexual immorality that would endanger God's design for marriage and sexuality.

Some of you have experienced the pain of being sinned against through the sin of adultery. And some of you haven't even recovered to the day from this heartbreaking experience. It might have been years since you've experienced it. And I pray that God will give you the strength to forgive and move on from this hard part of your life, whether your marriage was redeemed or not. I know it's a process, and I don't claim that I know how good works because I know it's almost impossible. But with God's grace, I pray that God will use even the sermon to encourage you to forgive and move on.

The third category here are people who have been the ones committing adultery on someone else. And you've experienced the consequences of your foolish decisions. And by God's grace, you've been able to take responsibility for your sin and you have repented and changed your ways of life to pursue Christ. So my prayer through this sermon is that God will encourage you to embrace His forgiveness and His grace for your life and to continue a life of holiness in Christ.

And finally, there's some of you who have committed adultery, or maybe right now be in an adulterous relationship, but you don't really see what's wrong with that, or you're trying to blame, shift, or justify your actions. I pray that God will convict you through this sermon and bring you to repentance.

So with that in mind, let's read Exodus, chapter 20. And it's just one verse. Verse 14. So let's just read it together. Together. It says, you shall not commit adultery. Very straightforward, Very simple. Not as simple to abide by.

As a reminder. Before we jump into what this means, I just want to remind you the context here. I know I do it every time, but it's important because some of you may be missing a Sunday, or maybe you're just with us for the first time. And I want to tell you that Exodus 20, where we have the Ten Commandments, comes after Exodus 1-19. You might say, man, these guys are so smart, I came to the right place. I know it's obvious, an obvious statement, that Exodus 20 comes after Exodus 1-19. But it's important for you to remember that these Ten Commandments are not given in a vacuum. And if you know Exodus 1-19, you know that in Exodus 1-19, God is redeeming and freeing up God's people from slavery.

And a lot of us, we look at the Ten Commandments and we see them as a list of to-dos and don'ts. As if we do them or don't do them, we're going to be right with God. Like a ladder, that's a climb to get to the Lord. But this is not what it's meant to be. God already freed His people. Now what He's giving through these laws are more like traffic laws, more like guidelines. And God is a God who is a kind and caring Father who wants to tend to His children. And He says, hey, you want to enjoy life? I created life. Here's how you do it. There's some rules to it so they can enjoy it freely and fully. I want you to have an abundant life. God is not a joy killer. He actually wants you to enjoy life. He wants to enjoy everything that's around you and what He created you to be.

And it makes sense. If you ever play a game of basketball and you have someone who doesn't abide by the rules, he destroys the game for everyone else. If you go driving and you see someone who's driving chaotically, he's a danger for himself and for others. You want to have rules. So with God's commandments, they're meant to encourage you. They're meant to tell you that God is a loving God.

And as I shared with you in the past, there are at least four reasons why I think that God gave the law to Israel. There's things that He wanted to teach them through that four things. First, all these laws, or these commandments, they teach us something about God. Second, they Teach us something about our sinfulness. Thirdly, it points us, it points them to the need that they have for a Savior, for a Messiah, someone to do what they cannot do. And fourthly, it teaches us ultimately how to live freely. So what I want us to do is just take each one of these points and see how this law, this commandment, applies to each one of this point.

So the first thing I want us to look at is how does this commandment, you should not commit adultery, point out to God's character? What does it teach us about God's character?

First thing that it does, an obvious thing, is that God sees the covenant of marriage very highly. This law teaches us the importance of the covenant of marriage in God's eyes. God promotes fidelity and faithfulness. God is for the traditional family. He's pro-family because He invented it, and He promotes fidelity and faithfulness. And that's part of His character. So being faithful to your wife is something that would reflect into God's character. God is a faithful God. When we commit adultery, we are going against God's character. God is not a God wants us to go after different gods.

But one of the most important things we need to make sure that we do this morning is to define marriage. Because we live in such a confused world where governments and even Supreme Court justices have tampered with the original definition of marriage. And when I say original, I mean what God intended to be from the beginning.

By the way, if we didn't have God in scripture, we wouldn't even talk about marriage. I'm not sure if you even think about that or you ever thought about it. So marriage, the idea that a man and a woman comes together in a faithful covenant is something that only in the Bible you can find. There's no other religions or no other mindsets, philosophies that have this ideology. Actually, if you are not a Christian, or if you know someone who's not a Christian and they feel offended when they hear of some spouse cheating on their wife or husband, you want to tell them that, hey, what's wrong with that in your worldview? Because in your worldview, we're coming from nothing we're just evolved animals. And that person just followed their animal instincts. They just found a better mate. So what's wrong with that? Oh, if you, do you think that something is wrong, that's because you're actually borrowing from God's standards and worldview. You're borrowing from Christianity. You're saying, no, no, no, that's not how it's meant to be. Who says that it's not meant to be like that? Well, I'll tell you who says that. God's Word. It's just that you don't recognize it. But in reality, that's exactly how you live your life. And you like that, but you just don't like the God who created marriage. But you like the idea of marriage.

On the institution of marriage, everything else is built. And this is critical for us to understand when marriage is for that. I want us to go back to Genesis chapter two. This is where God instituted marriage. And I don't want us to talk about it. I want us to read it. I put it up here so you can follow verse 18. "Then the Lord God said, it is not good that the men should be alone. I will make him a helper fit for him. Now, out of the ground the Lord God has formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the men to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The men gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam, there was not found a helper fit for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up it's placed with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God has taken from the man, he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, this at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called woman because she was taken out of the man. Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and they were not ashamed."

So based on this text and other texts from the Scriptures, but primarily from this one, I came up with a definition that I hope would be pretty inclusive of all the other areas of marriage. So here's what I came up with. I think it's a good one that we can use. Marriage is a lifelong legal covenant between one man and one woman for their mutual joy, the good of society, and the procreation of children. This covenant is meant to be a symbol of the spiritual union between Christ and His church. And I want us to kind of analyze each part of this marriage definition. Why? Because I think it's very important for us to understand what marriage is so we can understand what adultery is.

First, it's a lifelong legal covenant. In our culture, people talk about marriage as being a legal contract, more like a contract between two business partners who merge their assets together. This is now the biblical view of marriage. The Christian understanding of marriage is more than a legal contract, more than a transaction that is recognized by the government. The Christian marriage is a lifelong covenant between two people and God. That's critical. A covenant is different than a contract because a contract is done with the government as a witness. Covenants are done with God as a witness.

Malachi 2:14 says, but you say, this is God speaking. Why doesn't God accept your offerings? Because the Lord was witness between you and the wife of your youth to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion. And listen to this. And your wife by covenant. Marriage is a covenant.

So a covenant is a solemn agreement establishing a marriage relationship between a man and a woman and God. In this agreement, the man and the woman promise each other that they will be faithful to this marriage for a lifetime. And they call God to witness their promises and to hold them accountable for being faithful to it. That's why it's so important to make sure that the ones who are getting married are both God fearers, that they understand that God has to be part of this. That's why at Trinity, for example, we don't marry anyone without at least six to eight sessions of premarital counseling. And I tell them, if you're not a Christian by the beginning of it, you have to be a Christian by the end of it, because otherwise we won't marry you. And we had situations where people said, man, I'm not sure where I'm sitting with the Lord, would you mind if I at least started? And by God's grace, we've seen them totally transformed. And by the way, we don't budge on this. I actually have a couple right now in their mid-70s, who I do the primary counseling for. And they're so excited, and they're almost past the halfway through, and they said, man, I wish they both are widowers. They said, I wish I knew this when I was first married.

It's important to make sure that God is part of your marriage, otherwise you don't have a Covenant. In Matthew 19:6, Jesus says that what therefore God has joined together, let not men separate. And I heard that phrase many times until this week as I was studying. It just dawned on me what it says, based on what I've read somewhere else. And like man, this is more than just the words.

When a marriage occurs, it's not merely a human ceremony, rather something deeply Spiritual happens. God Himself joins the couple together in a spiritual union as husband and wife. And their union becomes something that God has joined together. This is God's work. God is present in that wedding. That's crazy to think about that, but there it is. God put that together.

What about the legal part of it? Marriage is a lifelong legal covenant. And I added that because I think that's important. Some people have asked me through the last few years, like, hey, why should we even make it legal? Why worry about that? I don't really believe in the government. Here's why. Because scripture seems to be saying that there was a public setting in which these people got married.

Like, for example, in the book of Genesis, the time came for Jacob to marry Rachel. We find out from Genesis 29, verse 22, that Laban gathered together all the people of the place and made a feast. He made a celebration. He wanted to show it to everyone that their status is changing. It's a public declaration and it's acknowledged by the culture around them. Now, in that situation, if you remember, was a little bit interesting because Jacob was thinking that he's marrying Rachel, but he got Leah. That's a little bit weird and interesting. Like, how can you. You're either tipsy or didn't have any kind of lightning or something like that. You just wake up in the morning, you're like, oh, you're a different woman that I married. Thank God for electricity today, because this doesn't happen anymore. But anyhow, that's a different story.

This idea of having a public event is very, very popular or very common in the scriptures. In the New Testament you see that Jesus participates in Cana, Galilee at the wedding where there was a large public event. A lot of people were there. In our times. This need for public awareness of marriage is reflected in the requirement that the couple have a marriage license issued by the local government authority and then have the marriage validated by someone recognized as having the authority to perform weddings. You cannot just show up to a wedding. You need to be certified by the government.

Why all this trouble? Because there must be a public awareness of some sort of marriage to occur so that the society will be able to think of the man and the woman as a married couple and to begin to relate to them as a married couple, not as unmarried individuals, both for legal and social purposes. Another means through which we tell the world that we are married is by wearing a wedding ring. Again, this is kind of a culture norm for us. In some cultures, for example, they wear head coverings. But in America, if you have head coverings, they just think you're Amish, but they don't know anything about you, your status. They don't know if you're married or not. Rings for us tell you at least that for most of us, 95% of situations, they tell you, yes, it means I'm taken.

So marriage is lifelong legal covenant. Next between one man and one woman. Now, this probably is obvious, but unfortunately we live in a world where there's no so obvious anymore. Especially even this last week, we have just voted. A majority of people in California voted to repeal Proposition 8, which was saying in the Constitution that marriages between men and a woman. This was in the California Constitution. Now we repeal that. So marriage can be between any type of genders.

But I want to tell you this, that regardless of what people vote and regardless of what the Supreme Court justice says, God's definition is timeless. It's between a man and a woman, period. Whether America likes it or not. This will stand even when America is not going to be around. We pray that's not going to ever happen. But this has been a timeless definition.

There are a few arguments from the text I read in Genesis 2 that are clearly pointing out the fact that marriage can be only between a man and a woman. And as you look at that text, I want you to see few things in there. I won't have time to explore more of them. Of those arguments, I preached a message years ago about this. But I'll just bullet point some of those points I had.

First. Marriage can be only between a man and a woman because of the way in which the woman was created, which indicates that she is the man's divinely designed compliment. She is the the man's divinely designed complement. In Genesis 2:21 we see that God takes a rib from the man in order to make a helper suitable for him. In verse 22 we are reminded again that she's not made out of thin air, but out of the man. And someone pointed out, quote, "what makes the woman unique is both that she is like the man, bones of my bones and flesh of my flesh, and that she's differentiated from the man. Adam delights that the woman is not another animal and not another man. She's exactly what the man needs, a suitable helper equal to the man, but also his opposite." So this is one of the arguments. The way in which the woman was created indicates that she is the man's divinely designed complement.

The second argument is the nature of the one flesh union presupposes two persons of the opposite gender. You see, you have the phrase there, one flesh, they become one flesh. It points to sexual intimacy as suggested by the reference to the nakedness in verse 25 in Genesis 24, excuse 2:24, where it begins with therefore for this reason it connects the intimacy of becoming one flesh with the complementarity of women being taken out of the man. The man and the woman can become one flesh because theirs is not just a sexual union, but the reunion. The bringing together of two differentiated beings with one made from another and both made for the other. One is made from another, the woman is made from the man, but both of them are made for the other.

Alistair Begg, a theologian that I respect, he says this. The most obvious argument against the homosexual agenda is human physiology. He goes on to say, a light bulb needs a socket if there's to be illumination. Two sockets on their own are incapable of light, and the same is true for two bulbs. And I added, let the one who has ears understand what that analogy means. Homosexuality in practice involves a perverted use of the human body, and it is the forsaking of the natural for the unnatural. It's not marriage. It cannot be.

Thirdly, Jesus himself reinforces the normativity of the Genesis account. There's a lot of people say man, I just don't like the Old Testament. I want to hear what Jesus says. Oh, listen to what Jesus says. Matthew 19, Mark 10. When He was asked about divorce, here's how He started His answer. From the beginning, God made them male and female. In Jesus mind, it seems that to answer the divorce question necessitates a right understanding of marriage. And to get the nature of marriage, one must go back to the beginning or we see God instituting marriage as a lifelong union of a man and a woman.

Let's keep going with the definition. What's the purpose of it? Definition of marriage. It says that it's also for mutual joy. Mutual joy. And what I mean here is primarily intimacy. It doesn't include just intimacy, but that's a big part of it. That's one of the big blessings and benefits of marriage and intimacy sexual intimacy is meant to be experienced in the confines of marriage. It's actually seen as the ratification of the marriage covenant. That's why Satan attacks this aspect of marriage so much, because it's so intimate and so binding.

And by the way, I should say that throughout the centuries and ages, Christians have downplayed this key aspect of marriage and has been and still is a very taboo subject, especially in Churches.

I actually ask this a lot of married people, I usually. Or even general people who are preparing to get married, I say, let me ask you what seems to be a kind of a totally off the subject question. But here's a question I ask. If you had to look in the Bible, what would be your top three songs in the Bible, including the book of Psalms? Or you take the New Testament, what would be your top three songs? And a lot of people will be like, man, I really like Psalm 23. If you're familiar with the Bible, you probably have one or two favorites. Psalm 139. I like Psalm 46. Or I like the song of Mary in the book of Luke. But when you look at the Scriptures and you see what's God's thoughts on what's the top song? He actually has a book of the Bible called Song of Songs. Eight chapters, and it's all about sexual intimacy in a family, in a married relationship. You cannot skirt around it.

Not just that this is one of the few books of the Bible that were read publicly every year by Israel. Can you imagine? Okay, guys, let's gather together, kids. Everyone. Everyone blushing. What the world are doing here? And it's a subject that everyone feels very embarrassed about. It's a subject that most people have a hard time to talk about because we rather suffer in silence than to actually look at the Bible and see what it says.

And there are people who try to look at Song of Songs and say, oh, it's all about Jesus and the church. When Solomon wrote that, he didn't have a clue about Jesus and the church. Yes, you can look backwards and say, yeah, there's some spiritual lessons we can learn that have some metaphorical stuff later on. We get that. But when Solomon wrote it, he didn't write it for that purpose. What it says to us is that God created us as sexual beings and He wants us to enjoy this aspect of life in the confines and the guidelines of marriage.

By the way, I say this actually many times. One of the key areas of counseling and the ones who have gone through counseling with me, they know what I'm talking about is usually three weeks before. So I do like six, seven, eight sessions. But the one session that I actually take very seriously, it's usually this session on sexual intimacy. And I say, I give a book that I want them to read three weeks before they get married. It's called Intended for Pleasure. And I said, you're not allowed to skip any chapters. You have to read it. Because if you think there's not work now, I can have work later with you and your spouse. This is going to always impact your life. And if God doesn't speak on it and we don't listen to God, who are we going to listen to? Dr. Phil or Oprah or somewhere else on the television or on the computer or someone tells you from school what you need to do? God's Word has the guidelines for even this most intimate, private part of our life. And this is where Satan attacks a lot of families.

And I'm not saying. Here's what I'm not saying. I'm not saying that someone can excuse their adultery or infidelity due to the lack of intimacy. But Paul does seem to be saying that we shouldn't deprive one another of this aspect of married life so that we don't give an occasion to say for Satan to tempt us.

Listen to First Corinthians 7. This is very blunt words from Paul. It is good for a man not to have sexual relationships with a woman. But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights and likewise the wife to her husband. For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise, the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Now listen to this next part. Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time that you may devote yourselves to prayer, but then come together again so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self control. This is the scriptures and it's important and it's serious.

And if you are married and this is an area of life that you are struggling, I really pray that you take it seriously. Husbands, wives pray about this. Ask for help. Meet with me with some other folks from our staff. We keep things very confidential, make you feel more comfortable even conversing about this. But there's always help and hope. Satan impacts this a lot. I didn't see this, I didn't say this at the previous services, but there's a statement that someone said. And I think based on my counseling experience of almost 20 years, I

actually agree with it. Especially from a men's perspective. When intimacy works, that's 20% of the marriage for a guy. Where intimacy doesn't work, it's 80% of the marriage for a guy. That's how God wired us. Man different. It's very interesting how God created us, but there's Things that we need to keep in mind that God planned and designed us with.

Again, it's mutual joy. It's not just one person, it's both mutual joy. The good of society is another reason why God put us together. As I said earlier, the marriage cell or the nucleus of a family is the backbone of society. Actually, I said in the past, if marriage goes, so does the society. If a society is going downhill, that's probably because we're tampered with the definition of marriage. Or we're not keeping God's definition of marriage as it should be. We're not holding marriage where it should be. When marriages go well, society goes well.

The procreation of children. It's very sad to see couples that cannot understandably so because of medical conditions cannot have children. But God created marriage in order so that people can be fruitful and multiply. And if God had created another man to be with Adam or another woman to be with Eve, they would not have been fitting together because they would have been unable to fulfill God's mandate to be fruitful and multiply. Only with an understanding of sexual complementarity does Genesis 1 and 2 make sense.

And finally, marriage is a symbol of the spiritual union between Christ and the church. And we've been studying through Brother-to-Brother, Sister-to-Sister, Ephesians, and we're right now in that section just last week. This is meant to be a pointer to Christ. The way we treat one another, the way I treat my wife, the way my wife treats me is meant to represent a picture between Christ and the church. It's one of the most personal analogies that God uses. That's why adultery is such a big deal then, because it goes beyond just cheating on a spouse. You are messing with this picture of Christ and the church.

But I want us to go back to the grid I started with. So all this was under. What is this telling us about God and what is it saying about His character? Well, the second thing I wanted to point out is this commandment talks about our human sinfulness. And what are we prone to do? We're prone to commit adultery. We're prone to break the marriage covenant. That's why He says, do not commit adultery.

Now, what does adultery mean? Adultery, in its most obvious and most direct meaning, means the voluntary sexual union between a married person and another person other than the lawful spouse. It is a physical union between a married person and another person other than the lawful spouse. That's the most basic, simple meaning. But it's also the greatest sexual sin because it violates the trust between a husband and a wife.

And someone might say, but doesn't the Bible say that all sin is equal? Andrei, why do you single out adultery? Because even though the Bible does say that all sin is equally damning, is not all sin equally devastating? All sin is equally damning in the sense that all sin ultimately will be punished by God. One sin makes us liable with death. But not all sin is equally devastating. Cheating on your taxes is not the same as committing adultery. Terrorism is not this. Stealing a book from a library, there are different consequences. Adultery breaks the core trust in a marriage, and only the mercy and the miracle of God and a lot of patience and repentance can ever build back a marriage after an adultery, if that even happens.

But having physical intimacy with someone else other than your spouse is not the only way of committing adultery. The Ten Commandments generally rule out the most extreme form of every kind of sin. But by implication, they're also ruling out all the lesser sins that lead up to it. So here's what I mean by that. In the Ten Commandments, you have kind of the big principles, but then you have the rest of the law in the Bible to kind of fit in or fill in on the commentaries on here's the umbrella. But here's also what's included in that. And you find out, as you read the law of Moses, there are other things included under this umbrella of adultery. So what is forbidden in the rest of the law that is included under this umbrella of adultery is any type of intimate relationship that is physical and is outside the boundaries of biblical marriage, any type of intimate relationship that is physical and is outside the boundaries of biblical marriage.

So what is included here? What's included here is also fornication, meaning premarital sex, also prostitution, homosexuality, pedophilia, incest, polygamy, or any other form of sexual intimacy which is outside of the marriage bounds.

Now you might ask, why is adultery in all its forms forbidden? Is intimacy something bad? No, but that's the whole point. God designed it to be such a powerful force for good. And someone said that intimacy is like super glue. When used properly intimacy seals the bond of marriage. It's the glue that helps to hold the marriage secure. This is why Paul exhorts the Corinthian couples to not deprive each other of this great blessing that the Lord invented. God has made us sexual beings to seal the love between a husband and a wife. Their sexual union cements a total spiritual communion. So you can see how this points to our fallenness. We have tampered with it. We have warped it.

And this leads me to my third point. It points us to Christ. This commandment points us to Christ. First of all, it points us to Christ, because we are all falling short and we are doomed. Listen to how the Old Testament sees the penalty for adultery. Leviticus 20:10. If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death. Pretty serious. Very serious, I would say. I

n 1 Corinthians 6, 9, 11. Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. Adulterers will not inherit the kingdom of God. But I love this next phrase. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. There is hope in Christ. We'll get to that in a second. But don't miss this. If you live a life of sexual immorality, idolatry, adultery, homosexuality, thieves, greedy, you will not inherit the kingdom of God.

And you might stay here, sit here and say, you know what, Andrei, I really appreciate what you're sharing, but, man, on this issue, I don't really I don't really struggle with. I've been able to keep myself very pure. I never had any problems with this. Okay, let me read to you something that Jesus says, and maybe it might change your mind. Matthew, chapter 5, verse 27-29. Jesus says, you have heard that it was said you shall not commit adultery. But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell.

In other words, more or less, we're all guilty of not abiding by this commandment according to God's law. We're all under God's judgment. Because you have to be honest. We all have had adulterous thoughts, thoughts that we shouldn't have. We're all guilty. And the Bible says the penalty for one sin is death. That means that we are all doomed. This is why the law is so good for us. It reminds us of how hopeless and helpless we are. There's nothing you can do to get right with God. Because God, even now, let's assume that you're starting over today. God still has to punish your previous sin. And you're saying, from this point on, I won't do any more sins. And what about the previous ones? So we are doomed.

This is why the good news of the Gospel is so good. Because God looked at us and He saw how desperate and how hopeless we are. The Bible says He loved us so much that He sent His only begotten son, Jesus Christ, to live a life of purity. He never committed adultery. He never had impure thoughts. He lived a life inwardly, outwardly that you and I cannot live. He lived on our behalf and then He took your penalty and my penalty for our adultery on the cross. And He died on your behalf and my behalf for what we deserved. And He resurrected the third day to prove that He has the power to forgive us and save us. And the Bible says that when you put your trust in Jesus Christ, He looks at you as forgiven and such were some of you. You're not like this anymore. And not only that He forgives your past, but He gives you a new heart. He gives you a heart that wants to abide by Him, that wants to do the right thing, that doesn't want to use people for our own interests. It points us to Christ.

And finally it teaches us how to live freely. This commandment teaches us how to live freely. If you're a Christian and you haven't experienced physical adultery, married or unmarried, but you have been tempted by it, I pray that you recognize the seriousness of the sin and the damage that it causes. Don't feed your flesh. Don't give yourself permission with someone other than your spouse to be too close to.

By the way, I don't believe in having best friends of opposite sex outside of marriage. It will never end up well. It will easily become a target and you will be involved in an emotional affair at least, and it's going to lead to something worse. Don't ever spend time alone with another person of the opposite sex in a place where you shouldn't be alone. If you are with someone else, be in a public place and make sure that you are not finding an emotional support in someone other than your spouse. And yes, there's a place for having brothers and sisters in Christ, but make sure that happens with more in a group setting that you're not involved in something that will easily entangle you in something adulterous.

I also want to make an important point here for the ones who are struggling with having a pure mind, people who have struggled with pornography or just things that they've had in their experiences they had in the past, and they keep haunting them back, and it's hard for them to keep a pure mind and a clean heart. Here's something that Alistair Begg says that I think was important. He says, and he has experienced this in his ministry. People who say, since I've already committed adultery in my heart, I might as well go ahead and follow through with the action because either way I'm guilty. I probably heard someone saying this. And Alistair Begg goes on to say that this is based on the assumption that there is no difference between mental and physical adultery. And without lessening the impact of Jesus teaching, we need to recognize there are substantial differences between daydreaming lust and sexual intercourse or adultery. Physical adultery breaks the marriage covenant. Adulterous thoughts do not. Adultery provides the grounds for divorce. Mental adultery doesn't. Adultery violates and defiles each other's bodies, but its mental counterpart doesn't. Adultery is the vehicle for sexually transmitted diseases. The mind is not. This is very important because I found in the last few years where people trying to argue, oh, just because my husband or my wife struggles with ongoing lust or addiction to pornography or the things that means, like, I have the grounds to divorce them, that's adultery. And I would say, yes, there are situations where people are have the grounds for it because it's extreme and even illegal. And the law says, man, what she's doing is not right or she's doing. I get that. But in most of the situations, it's important to recognize that physical adultery is different than mental adultery. And we don't really apply the same type of course of action in the other things that Jesus says. He says, oh, but Jesus says it's adultery. Yes, but he also says, if we steal, we need to cut off hands. We would be limbless and eyeless. We would not have anything to walk with or be around. Going back to my vine analogy, mental adultery definitely severs the, excuse me, severely damages the vine. Severely damages the vine, but it doesn't sever it. While physical adultery severs the vine. Makes sense. So, yes, very impactful. Severely damages your vine, but it doesn't sever it. There are two different things. Let's make sure that we're not going beyond what the scripture says. Because I said I felt in the last few years there's been a huge push for that. Again, I don't want to downplay the severity of mental adultery. We need to work around it and on it. We need to make sure that there's hope and help. We need to fight this. But don't put them on the same equation, because sometimes in the heart of the ones who've been impacted or hurt by it, it seems like you almost want to echo that and it kind of gives you easy reasons to divorce. And I don't think that's the way to go.

If you're single, remember that God calls you to purity. It's not cultural, it's actually anticultural. And people might laugh at you, but you rather have the people of the world laugh at you and God see you as a Godly person than the other way around. It's worth to stay pure. God's Word says that.

Here's another application for Some of you have experienced the pain of being sinned against through the sin of adultery, and some of you haven't recovered, as I said early on, from this heartbreaking experience. I pray that God will give you the strength to forgive and move on from this hard part of your life, whether your marriage was redeemed or not. Maybe the vine is totally withered. There's no more hope. But don't live your life always in that part of your life from the past, always feeling like you're always a victim of that adultery. Yes, you were, and yes, it's been hard. But find ways to forgive and move on. That's not your identity.

Another group I want to talk to is some of you have been once committing adultery and you've experienced the consequence of foolish decisions and by God's grace you have been able to take responsibility for your sin and you have repented and changed your ways of life to pursue Christ. I pray that through this sermon God will remind you that He doesn't see you through your past sins. Don't believe the lies of Satan. You are not that person anymore. You used to be like that. Remember what 1 Corinthians said and you once were, once were, but not anymore. Now you are a new creation in Christ. You're a daughter and a son of the King. Praise God for this. Yes, God redeemed me from this past and I'm embarrassed by it. And yes, I can talk to you about what I was, but I'm not that person anymore. I'm not that person anymore. I am a new creation.

And if you're here and you're not a Christian, and even if you profess to be a Christian, with your ongoing sin of adultery then I want to ask you, are you truly a Christian? Because the Bible makes it very clear that ongoing sin is not the characteristic of a Christian habitually sinning and not someone that represents Christ. Yes, we all deal with sin on a regular basis. But you habitually sin without repentance, without fighting sin, and probably have not met Christ. And my call for you is adulterers, like all the other sinners, will end up in hell. There's a justice coming. There's judgment coming. Today is the day of repentance. Today is a day when God opens His arms wide and He says, today, come to Me. Don't keep waiting and prolonging it. Stop it. Today you can say to me, Andrei, but you don't understand. There's so many ramifications. Yes, I do. I've been there many times, believe me, with a lot of people. Call me. It's going to be hard, but it's going to be worth it. Because your soul is at stake. It's serious. Take it as such.

Let's pray. Father, thank you for Your Word. As I said earlier, I know this subject is a very sensitive and hurtful subject for many who are here and listening online. I recognize that there's a lot of this thing that I shared that might have even increased that, those memories of hurt when maybe brought back some new ones, Lord new memories that we thought that we just forgot. I pray, Lord, that You would use Your Word and the things I shared to minister to our hearts, to restore lives, to restore marriages. I pray, Lord, that You would protect us from this sin of adultery. Help us, Lord, to honor You through our thoughts, through our lives, through our marriages. Be with us. We pray this in Jesus name and all God's people said, Amen.