

THE HIGH COST

of

Adultery

J. Paul Reno

The following four studies were presented on radio in the fall of 1993 in Kingston, TN. God blessed the preaching of His Word with conviction. Requests were made for this material to be put into print. My wife has labored to take the taped messages and transcribe them. The form is of the spoken word, and from a broken-hearted preacher. It is our desire that these studies will bring repentance to the sinners, purity of life to the Church, and help to our sick nation.

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17829 Woodcrest Rd.  
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(301) 739-8585

## Chapter 1

I want to ask you to turn to Exodus 20:14, as I have a burden on my heart to deal with one of the ten commandments. The command is a very simple command. There is not room left to negotiate, to try to adjust it, to try to explain away any violation of it. The command is very simple: "Thou shalt NOT commit adultery."

This is God's command. He has never revoked it, He has never adjusted it, and He doesn't intend to do so. He has recorded it in His eternal and unchangeable Word, and it can never be adjusted. "Thou shalt NOT commit adultery."

I would like to address the subject of the cost of adultery. What does it cost someone when that person gets into adultery? God has commanded that we don't. Some people say, "If I do, it is not going to cost that much. It is not that bad." The world tells us it won't cost at all. But God says there is a high cost.

As a nation we are becoming more and more tolerant of immorality and of adultery. As a church, in general, we also have become more and more tolerant of adultery and immorality. It used to be, not many years ago, that such a thing was considered a scandal. Now it is considered normal, or just an emotional problem being worked out. But God says, "Thou shalt NOT commit adultery." There is a high price tag attached to this sin.

As a nation we are rotting from the inside out. I am convinced there is a Satanic onslaught on the morals of our nation to get rid of the old-fashioned Puritan morals that made America great. This will rob us of our spiritual backbone and our power for evangelism and missions, both now and into the future.

I will be giving you some scriptures that speak rather clearly on this subject. It is not a case of what I believe. It doesn't make much difference what I believe. The issue is what did God say? What did God teach on this subject? He has given it to us in the Bible, and He gave it simply enough that you cannot duck and dodge and get around it. The only thing you can do is to either openly contradict it or refuse to look at it. God said, "Thou shalt NOT commit adultery."

What happens when a person does commit adultery? What does it cost them? What is the price they are

going to have to pay? Turn to I Corinthians chapter 6. The Apostle Paul was writing to a church that was in a very wicked city, the city of Corinth. Corinth was, in the Roman Empire, the equivalent of Sodom and Gomorrah. If you wanted to insult someone in Paul's day, you would say that they acted like someone from Corinth. That would be an attack on their moral principles. As a city they were totally given over to wickedness. There was a young church just getting started there. Paul wrote to them to instruct them on some things. If ever there would be some leniency on this matter of adultery, one would expect it now. These were a people that had grown up with it as a way of life. All their neighbors openly practiced it. It was the custom, -the way of the people. It was explained and taught openly as something marvelous and to be enjoyed. It was a "free sex" society. This church would have been influenced by that, but the Gospel is always stronger than the pull of the world.

In I Corinthians 6:9 the Apostle Paul wrote, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?" He said, in essence, "Don't you know that people that are not right, that don't live right, that have no righteousness, - don't you know that they are not going to inherit the kingdom of God? They are not saved!" In other words, when somebody gets saved their life changes. They stop being wicked, and they start living righteously. That is one of the signs given in I John as an evidence of having received eternal life. Here is the evidence that they have entered the kingdom of God.

Somebody who is not living righteously simply shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind ...." (I Cor. 6:9b) Four of these five have to do with the matter of committing adultery. They are specific areas of sexual sin or immorality. "Be not deceived ..." - none of these going on down through verse 10 "... shall inherit the kingdom of God."

God says that the person who lives in adultery is lost. That is what God says. Now I know that many preachers say otherwise, but there have been preachers trying to contradict God ever since the Devil began preaching in the Garden of Eden. They are just preaching along his lines. When God says that adulterers shall not inherit the kingdom of God, God simply means that adulterers shall not inherit

the kingdom of God. That is not difficult to understand. You can talk all around it, but that is exactly what it means. The kingdom of God is entered by a person when he is born again. Anyone that lives in adultery is classified with the idolaters, the murderers, and the homosexuals. They are not saved. They are lost! That is all there is to it.

Those who want to go out and begin committing adultery immediately hang a question mark over their salvation. If they can go on and live in that, then there is evidence that there never was any salvation, whatever their profession might have been. Paul wrote this to a church where you would have expected the greatest tolerance, because the church existed in a Sodom-Gomorrah type situation. Verse 11 continues, "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." Paul is saying that some of them used to be adulterers, but they had been saved. In other words, when somebody became saved, they stopped their adultery. They stopped their sexual sin. They were washed from their sins. They were justified, they were sanctified, and that sin was a past matter. When that sin continues in the present it is evidence a person has never gotten to verse 11. They still are adulterers. Instead of "such were some of you", it is such are some of you who have never been saved. The "such were some of you" applies only to those who have been saved. The issue of whether you have been in adultery before or after your profession of salvation sheds much light on whether that profession is solid or whether God would have to say that it is hollow. You can say that it is fine, but God gets the last word. He has already written down what He has to say about it. If you want, you can go to other sources, and I'll guarantee that you can find books on prophecy that will justify this sin. You'll find books on liberalism that will justify this sin. You'll find books on psychology that will justify this sin. You'll find books on socialism that will justify this sin. You'll find books on all types of heathen religions that will justify this sin, but the Bible won't. The Bible said that you're not in the kingdom of God if you live in this sin.

Let us look at Galatians 5 for a second witness from the Bible. You may be thinking that this is a very strict line that I hold to. Well, it is not my line. God is the one who wrote it, and I just

agreed with God. I've agreed with God many years. I began pastoring twenty-five years ago, and what I am saying, I am saying to the glory of God. I wasn't even aware of it until just a few years ago when my wife and I began to examine God's working in our ministry. I went into the ministry in 1968, and since that time we have yet to have the first case of divorce. When one member of a married couple attended services regularly (not necessarily a church member), we have not yet had one case where there has been a divorce. We have had ones who have left and found a church where they would be justified in how they wanted to live, and they did get a divorce. We have had cases where spouses wouldn't attend; they had seen the lawyer; they had moved out; the plans for divorce were set. However God always stopped it because of the honoring of His Word. We share this to the glory of a God who can stop this sort of thing. The increasing compromise in churches on this subject of adultery is directly related to the increasing immorality in our country. I realize that we may have a problem a month or two from now, - even before this material can be put into print, but we feel this is a testimony to the greatness of our God. I marvel at it when I see how God has worked again and again.

Beginning in Galatians 5:19, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, ...", and then it names some others down through the list. In the middle of verse 21 he said, "... of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." In other words, those who "do adultery"- (that is modern terminology, "doing this" or "doing that"), - those that "do fornication" will not inherit the kingdom of God. If you want to quibble that whatever you may be involved in is not adultery, only fornication, the scripture still says you will not inherit the kingdom of God.

You may be saying, "Well, I can get saved like anyone else." God said that He won't save you. God said that you're not His. You may be saying, "I can get saved whenever I want." I am sorry, but it is His kingdom and His salvation, and He does the saving. He is not going to save anyone who will not break with sinning.

If a Christian wants to get into adultery, there is a "sin unto death" for such people. I have been to funerals for people who got into sin, and God only

let them go so far before He took their life. On the other hand, I see a lot of this going on, and the participating parties are still alive. There is only one conclusion possible. God said the works of the flesh are these, and those who do them shall not inherit His kingdom. They are not in. They are not in. I thought they were in, others thought they were in, but God said this one is not mine. I only deal with my children, - not with the neighbor's.

When I was just a young boy and living in a Baptist parsonage, occasionally we would hear of a minister who might have gotten into adultery. Of course his ministry was over automatically, the first time he fell into this sin. They would advertise coast-to-coast that this man had gotten into adultery, because of the disgrace his ordination credentials were removed by the church that ordained him, and a black border was put around the box announcing what he had done. It was a rare thing. Today it is becoming rather common, both in the pulpit and the pew. It is tolerated, excused, and often times even defended. I want you to know how far we have gotten from what God has to say.

Look at Ephesians 5, and we will pick up a third witness on this subject. Verse 5 states, "For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." A whoremonger is someone who cannot stay clean and faithful in marriage.

Now let me ask you this. If God wanted to say that people who committed adultery were lost, could He have made it any simpler, - could He have said it any clearer? What words could He have chosen that would satisfy you if these don't? In other words, if this doesn't mean they are lost, just what would He have been able to say to satisfy you on this subject? It seems to me that He has made it as simple and consistent as you could ask for.

Verse 6 continues, "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." These people aren't even the children of God. They are the children of disobedience. Living in this kind of sin will bring God's wrath upon one. God has told us not to let anybody deceive us with vain words. Somebody is going to try to deceive you. They are going to be able, by their talk, to make

it sound so right, - so good.

If you would like, I could go through much of the reasoning and psychological counseling of our day. You know people have various hidden needs. They have certain situations they cannot conquer. They are unable to deal with this matter, and they try to overcome it. That is just the problem, - they have never become an overcomer. They are not saved from their sin, and that same sin rises up and controls them. Still they want to claim some kind of an experience. God says that if you have this sin as a way of life, that experience doesn't amount to anything.

Perhaps you are thinking that you have a plausible explanation. God says we ought not to listen to it. That is deception. Vain words, smooth words, and nice words are often used to deceive on this subject. I have listened to them. I grew up around them. I went to college where they were used. I was in a church where they used them, and the deacons covered for our pastor when he got into adultery. I have seen it happen in case after case around this country. I have listened to the arguments. I have heard men say, "Oh, I have the anointing." They have not bothered to analyze whether that anointing is of God or a demonic counterfeit. They wouldn't know the difference when they are in this kind of sin. They are not in the kingdom of God, so how could they have any discernment on it? God says they are lost! Don't let anybody deceive you!

God says when it comes to the matter of adulterers who want to say they are saved, we ought simply to stay away from them. That is deceptive talk, and about the only way they could ever hope to make a point. They will have nice words. They will be able to use sweet talk, but God has already warned us about such ahead of time. Anyone who will swallow that kind of talk is either ignorant of the scripture, or they don't believe God. They too are unbelievers, as far as the Bible is concerned.

Let us take a fourth witness on this subject, Rev. 21:8. "But the fearful, and the unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." God says that they are lost. They are not going to heaven. They can't be going to heaven. They are going to



the lake of fire, - the place that burneth with fire and brimstone. They didn't have the second birth for they weren't in the kingdom of God. They will have the second death.

We have churches full of people in adultery, and others looking for a chance to get into it. They have many ways to explain it, but God says it will be the lake of fire and not the kingdom of God for them. It is fire and brimstone, - not the kingdom of Christ and of God. Don't let anyone deceive you. They are unrighteous. They can't inherit the kingdom.

The first cost of adultery is that it will cost you your soul. You may ask, "What happens if a Christian gets into this?" God says Christians can't live in it. You may be saying, "Well I know somebody." You don't know them as well as God knows them. You don't know them from God's view. Are you going to agree with the Bible, or are you smarter than God? Are you going to correct God on this subject?

Four times in the New Testament simply and clearly God says the same thing. This is the first cost. Even one time of adultery hangs a question mark over somebody's profession or claim to salvation.

You may say, "How many times do you have to commit it before you are living in adultery?" Are we trying to see how far we can go in sin? Do we want to see how far we can get from holiness and still be on safe ground? Let's see how many times we can get by with sin, - how much poison we can drink and still stay alive.

God knows where He is going to draw that line. Anytime a person heads in that direction loosely and freely, they have already laid a full question on their conversion. If somebody comes to me that has been in adultery, I cannot be certain of their salvation. I must see that God has so dealt with them that they are broken and changed. Then there is a chance they might have been saved. This is never to be taken lightly. It is never to be easily dismissed.

I remember a young convert coming to me one day and asking if I would turn him over to the Devil. I asked, "What in the world for?" He said that he had committed adultery. I questioned as to whether it was before or after his salvation, and he assured me that it was before. He said, "The Lord has been

dealing with me on it. I feel I need to be turned over to the Devil." I said, "Have you repented of it?" He assured me that he had, so I told him that it wouldn't be necessary.

Now we have a generation going around saying that they can keep serving God, -that adultery is just a small matter. They have a wrong view of what God calls adultery. He says it will send them to hell.

This is only the beginning of the cost of adultery. There is a whole lot more in this matter.

## Chapter 2

Let us again turn to Exodus 20 where we have been looking at this one particular commandment, number seven of the ten. Let me say that while the command is given, there are those who do violate the command. God has some very clear and strong things to say, but we must also realize that God is a merciful God and a forgiving God. There can be forgiveness if they will fully and Biblically repent of their sins. There is no forgiveness for those who go on and defend their sin in an unrepentant condition. We ought to have mercy on those in the family of the adulterer and upon others that are affected thereby. I am not speaking of something I am not aware of. I have seen the effects of this both in my own relatives and in my wife's relatives. I have seen it in friends' families. I have seen its awful effects. We must face what the Word of God teaches on this. If we don't understand what the cost of adultery is, we aren't going to see a generation stand against it.

The command we are considering is in Exodus 20:14, "Thou shalt NOT commit adultery." The world says it won't cost you much to break this command, but God says it will cost you greatly. According to four passages in the New Testament a person who lives in adultery is a lost person. Those who would commit a singular act of this sin at least raise a question mark over their soul as to whether or not they have ever been converted. It may be possible, but it sure looks questionable at that point.

There are some other costs in this matter of committing adultery. Take one more look at verse 14 in Exodus 20. The command is simple and clear, "Thou shalt NOT commit adultery."

Now let us look at the book of Proverbs and see some more of what it costs to commit adultery. In Proverbs Solomon is giving instruction to his son. The reason he is giving this instruction is to try to help the son stay out of sin, - to live holy and to be useful to God. Solomon gives him some stout warnings to prepare him to be able to move on in the ways he needs to move. Parents ought to instruct their children. Sunday School teachers ought to instruct their classes. Pastors ought to instruct their churches, even as Solomon did his son. These are issues of instruction that God recorded so that we would know how to teach in this area.

Let's start in Prov. 2:10, "When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto Thy

soul; Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee: To deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward things; Who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness; Who rejoice to do evil, and delight in the frowardness of the wicked; Whose ways are crooked, and they froward in their paths: To deliver thee from the strange woman, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words: Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God. For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead. None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life." (Prov. 2:10-19)

God makes it clear that when a man gets into adultery he never returns to where he was before he committed that first act. God said very simply in vs. 19, "None that go unto her return again." He has left something he cannot return to. He has lost something he never can recover. It is gone, - gone permanently. There is no way to return. He has lost his virtue. He has lost his innocence. He has lost his purity. He has lost his honor. He has lost his holiness, if there was any. These are tremendous losses. None return! None!

Some may say, "Well, I think I'll return." God says He is making no exceptions. None will ever get back. You just can't get back, once you have crossed over that scarlet line. Not only have you crossed the scarlet line never to return again, but the verse continues, "Neither take they hold of the paths of life."

For a number of years this has puzzled me in the light of the rest of Scripture. I believe that we can just take the Bible for what it says. With enough study we can get hold of some of these things. The verse did not say, "Neither can they walk the paths of life." It is possible for a person who has gotten into adultery to get converted, saved, and delivered therefrom. They are able to walk that path, but they can't get hold of it.

You may ask, "Well, what is the issue?" It is one thing to tread the pathway, but it is another to be able to lay it out for others to be able to see it. It is one thing to be able to know it, but another to be able to present it in proper fashion. Somehow they cannot get a grip on these issues in salvation and present them as God wants them presented.

He says that they cannot get hold of the paths of life. They are like a person who has no fingers or hands, - just nubbins on the ends of their arms. They are trying to get hold of something and they really cannot. They try to get hold of their silverware, and it is awkward at best. They can just push and pull and move around, but they lack that fine touch. It is somewhat like I am whenever I try to thread a needle. I'm never sure whether you put the thread through the needle, or the needle over the top of the thread. You ladies would probably laugh at that, but if you saw me it would be even funnier. You too would have problems if you bundled up with enough gloves, I suspect. That is what I mean when I say that you just can't take hold of some of those things that require delicacy, firmness, and the ability to handle things in just the proper fashion.

After a person has gotten into adultery, never again are they going to be able to take hold of the paths of life like they did before. When it comes to being able to witness to people, - to evangelize, they are handicapped for life. They can walk the paths, they can talk about the paths, but they can't really handle them like they ought to be handled.

In another generation or two there will be enough immorality that we will be short on preachers that can properly handle the Gospel. It will be a horrible blight on this nation. We already have a problem with many people who can't handle it right. They handle it in a most clumsy fashion. They beat around the bushes, but they never do deal with the issues as God wants them dealt with. Sometime in the past they have been in adultery. God says that you can't return when you cross that scarlet line. He says that you can't get hold of the paths of life. You are handicapped.

Adultery will cost you more than you will ever want to pay. Flee fornication. Stay out of that sin. Avoid it at all costs. Be like Joseph. If you have to lose your coat, run for your life when temptation arises. Joseph knew how bad it was, and he fled to protect himself and his future. He didn't want to lose something he would never get back. He didn't want to be handicapped in the future as far as usefulness with God.

Now let us go to chapter 5 of Proverbs to learn a little more of the cost of adultery. In Prov. 5:3

we read, "The lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword." (through vs. 4) What tastes so sweet, sounds so good and feels so good, ends up in absolute bitterness, like wormwood. I'll have to confess that I have never tasted wormwood. I don't know how bitter it is, but with a name like that it can't be anything but awful. I don't feel that I have to sample it to find out what it is like. What starts out sweet ends up bitter. What started out as a fun-time proposition, ends up with heartache and weeping, bitterness of soul, -bitter as wormwood.

Listen! The other side of it is not nearly as nice as it looks on the front side. It is like those old buildings that they built out West in boom towns. They would put up a solid front, but the back wasn't anything but a tent. It looked like one thing from the front, but from the back it looked totally different. That is the way it is with adultery. The front side looks a whole lot nicer than it really is. It is something bitter there in the back, bitter as wormwood. It is not only going to be bitter, but it is "sharp as a two-edged sword". They are going to get cut to shreds. They will be sliced up. I'm not just talking about gossip, but I'm speaking of what will happen in their soul. They'll be cut apart. They'll be bleeding inside. There will be pains and sores and scars and wounds that will come because of adultery. The Devil will not tell you that. The world will not tell you that, but we have a bleeding world around us full of bitterness. It is because they have believed the Devil's lie, - that adultery doesn't have any cost. God said that it will cost you, bitter in the end as wormwood and sharp as a two-edged sword. God's Word is obviously so. First we know it is because it is the Bible, and God said it. Secondly we can see it all around us. We can observe the results of it.

Verse 5 continues, "Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell." That doesn't sound so good either. It doesn't sound at all like some people look at it, - as something nice to get into. Verse 9 of Proverbs 5 says, "Lest thou give thine honor unto others, and thy years unto the cruel." A person loses his honor when getting into adultery. It is gone. People can't trust them. Honor they used to receive, now becomes dishonor. The honor is gone. Their honor goes to someone else. Others now are honored like they used to be before they got

into adultery.

That is not the end of it. It says that you give your years to the cruel. How many people wonder why their jobs always go bad? How is it that bosses always pick on them? Why do they always suffer on the job? Why do their neighbors turn against them? Why is there trouble in their family? If they had only known that they are going to give years to the cruel! This is what God says the real cost is. This is a high cost, - giving your years unto the cruel! Do you want to give your future years to cruel people? Then just get into adultery. It is a higher price than you will want to pay, but pay it you must if you get into adultery. God has already told us this in His Word, and He has had it there for 3000 years. He told you that this would be the cost before you got into it. If you didn't read it, that is your problem. It has been there, and you have been in this nation where you have had freedom to read it.

Verse 11 says that you'll mourn at the last. You'll not be happy at the end. It looks like it will be happy and joyful, but it will result in weeping and mourning like there has been a death. There will be many areas that will dry up and die in your soul. It will affect your thought patterns, your personality.

Then there is the matter that your flesh and body are consumed. It will affect your body. This is not just talking about venereal diseases like AIDS, syphilis, or gonorrhoea. About the time the doctors get some medicine for one, they find there is something new. Perhaps an old one has come up that is resistant to the medicine. Sometimes they find diseases that they won't even tell us about for a year or two until they can get a name on them and explanation for them. Meanwhile they rage. Who knows what is raging out there today that the doctors won't tell us about for another year or two? God says that you can be preserved from most of this if you'll live holy and stay pure.

Down in verse 14 of chapter 5 we read, "I was almost in all evil in the midst of the congregation and assembly." He almost brought sin in among the people of God. When a Christian gets into adultery, it affects their whole church and those they fellowship with.

You may say that the sin was committed miles away. They bring it with them when they come to the

service. They bring it into the midst. I Cor. 5 tells of a man that was committing sin in the city while he was a member of the church. He was "leaven in the lump" of the congregation. The Bible says that the leaven must be purged out. The man had to be put out.

You may ask if that is going to help the man. That wasn't the primary issue. The issue was that if you don't put that man out, everyone in the church will be infected with that disease. There will be a spreading of the disease of immorality, and if tolerated, it will saturate the entire church. Brethren, I have seen this happen. When this sin of immorality was tolerated in a church, it wasn't long before teenagers and adults were falling into it. They had put up with it in one person, and before long they all had the disease. It was a plague that had come.

You must put it out to protect the church. Then you see if you can help the sinner. That is what the Word of God teaches in I Cor. 5. I know that won't match up with a whole lot of this loose-living, psychological appeal from the Freudian crowd, and the professing Christian crowd, but it is the Word of God. It is God's church, God's truth, and His commandments that we are dealing with. We better get back to God instead of going with what Dr. So-and-so has to say on the matter. We had better believe what God said and that He knows what He is talking about.

There is more to the cost of adultery. Let us look at Proverbs 6:26. "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." She will actually chase a man down. She'll find somebody who is precious, and like a hunter she'll hunt for that one and try to catch him. "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 into his neighbor's wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent." (Prov. 6:27-29)

God said that the person who goes into his neighbor's wife shall not be innocent. God said so. Don't blame me for that. God said they shall not be innocent. That is part of the cost that is involved when a person gets into adultery. Verse 32 says, "But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding, ..." In other words they don't under-



stand. They are ignorant. They don't know what they are getting into. They don't understand what it is going to cost them. They might think they are smart, they might think they are wise, they might think they are knowledgeable about the Bible and God, but God says they are ignorant. They are lacking in understanding. Verse 32 continues, "... He that doeth it destroyeth his own soul." A person who commits adultery is intentionally and willfully destroying their own soul. They are not developing it. They are not protecting it.

A person that would commit adultery and destroy their own soul is surely not going to be able to help anyone else's soul. They don't understand the value of a soul. If they don't appreciate their own, how are they going to help anyone else's?

Verse 33 states, "A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away." You can't wipe it away. That reproach fastens on them just like a scar fastens on the skin. It is there, and cannot be wiped away. It is as if a burned scarlet "A" were put right on their forehead. They bear the reproach, and it will not be washed away. It will not be wiped away. They shall not be innocent! Listen, one act of adultery will cost you more than you ever want to pay. Just one time! I beg of you, don't do it. Don't do it! Stay out of it. It will cost you far more than you ever dreamed.

In Chapter 7 you can read about the ignorance of people that get into it, and how it leads to death. They are wounded and go down into hell. You can read in Chapter 9 about stolen waters that are sweet and break eaten in secret. You don't realize death and hell are the results of it.

In Proverbs 22:8 you'll find, "He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity: and the rod of his anger shall fail." One of the things that happens when a person commits adultery is that they sow their sin like seed. The crop they reap is vanity. It often shows in their clothes, their walk, their attitudes, their desires, their value system, their emotions, and their friends. The taste of the world has a grip on their being. Pride, vanity, and flesh go together. Anger is strong and senseless. They strike wrathfully at others, but to no purpose. Adultery is not an end in itself, but the sowing of flesh and a whirlwind.

Prov. 30:20 tells of "the way of an adulterous

woman; she eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness." This sin so hardens the heart that eventually those in it deny that they have done any wrong! The conscience is dead and all feelings of guilt are gone. They actually deny that there is anything they need to repent of!

Such is some of the high cost of crossing the scarlet line into the sin of adultery!

### Chapter 3

God said, "Thou shalt NOT commit adultery", because He know it was good for you to stay out of adultery, keeping that special relationship totally within the boundaries of a marriage partner. You see the marriage bed is undefiled, but whoremongers God will judge. Thus a question mark rises over the head of anybody that commits so much as a single act of adultery. It may take time to find out whether there is reason for that question mark to become an exclamation mark, or whether they are truly saved and under the judgment of God.

Secondly we dealt with some of the personal costs of getting into adultery.

Now we want to look at a man that God set as an example and warning against ever committing adultery. I have been amazed in recent days since I have studied this, at how many people go running to the very place they ought to be avoiding. Many people say, "Well, David did it." That is true, and it is also true that God used David. How did God use David? He wouldn't let him build the temple, would He? He never did get peace in the borders. That was for his son. He was never able to get many other things either.

I'll tell you how God used David. He used David as an example of why not to commit adultery. You say, "He was a leader." That is true, but God recorded the act, -had it written down and publicized. David did it privately, secretly, and God made it public. When a leader gets into adultery, what might have otherwise been kept a little more private, must be advertised. God has been advertising David's adultery for about 3000 years, and it continues. The account has been translated into thousands of languages. In most every country of the world people still read and hear that David committed adultery once. He committed adultery once, and God is still telling everybody about it!

Not only that, but God made David repent. When he repented, He made him write his repentance down. Then God put that repentance into the Bible and had that translated into the various languages. People not only read of the sin, but they read of the heart agony and repentance that he went through.

Do you want to get into adultery and have it advertised in newspapers and church pulpits? Then

do you want to have your repentance written out, read, studied, and discussed in Sunday School and preached about in churches, -for a one-time case of adultery? That is not an argument for it, but rather an argument against it, a strong argument against it. What he did secretly couldn't be kept secret because he was a leader.

Let's look at the account in II Sam. 12:10. David has been exposed. He thought he had hidden it, gotten away with it, and that nobody was going to find out about it. But be sure your sin will find you out. If it doesn't find you out in this lifetime, mark it down that you are lost. It will find you out at the judgment. What a frightening thought that ought to be! In this case God showed it to a preacher, and he sent the preacher by, knocking on the door.

I had to do that once. The couple thought they had gotten by, and they were hidden away on the back of a mountain. God helped me find the place and find them. He had me knocking on the door when they thought nobody knew. You can imagine the shock it was to them.

This is how it was with David. There stands Nathan, and he has come to deal with David. When Nathan tells his story, he gets David to expose himself. David's anger surfaces as often happens with adultery, according to Proverbs. In verse 7 Nathan said to David, "Thou art the man." David committed this thinking nobody knew, but it was known.

Notice what it is going to cost him, according to verse 10, "Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife." The cost to David was not only public exposure thirty centuries, but it also cost him in his home. The sword would never depart from his household. What does that mean? It means that the children would turn against each other, and the grandchildren would turn against each other. The peace in the family was forfeited. It was destroyed, and he would have to face the kids bickering, fighting, fussing, and feuding, even into the adult years. One killed the other. Solomon had to kill his half brother because of David's adultery. The brother had tried to have him killed, and so it went on throughout the book. When you read about it you may wonder why they are doing that when they are related? It is because one day David committed adultery. God said, "Thou shalt

NOT", and David said, in essence, "I don't think it will cost me that much. I think I'll do it." God showed us how much it would cost.

But there was more to pay. Verse 11 continues, "Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbor, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of the sun." God said that there was going to be evil come up against David out of his own house. When trouble came it would come by his own family members. They would not only turn on each other, but on David himself. Remember how Absalom ran David out of Jerusalem? He tried to steal the throne from his own father. Children will try to steal money from their parents. They will try to steal position. They will try to destroy their very own parents, because the parents were unfaithful, committing adultery. Adultery in one parent is enough to turn loose the wickedness inherent in a child's heart. It will be aimed at the very one who committed the adultery.

That is not all. The wives were to be taken by others. A man who has committed adultery has no reason to be surprised or shocked if somebody rapes his wife, abuses her, or tricks and traps her. She may be treated like he has been treating some other woman. That is what the example says. This is a high cost! It is not something a man does to prove his masculinity, thinking he'll keep his wife faithful at home and always have her to come back to. God warns that somebody might walk off with her right in front of his face, doing it publicly.

People ought to study David to be warned against committing adultery. Verse 12 explains, "For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun." God said He would do it in front of everyone, and that wherever a person would go, he would be able to hear about it.

You may commit the sin secretly, but it will cost you publicly. David would experience public embarrassment the rest of his life over this. Everyone would remember. He committed it secretly, but everyone would find it out. He would have to face them, be looked at, and always know it would be in the back of their minds. You committed adultery, David. It will be known! It will be known! It will be known when Amnon acts up that you can't say much about it.

You're guilty. It will be known when Absalom acts up that you can't do much about it. You're a guilty man! It will be known when others act up that you can't do much. Your hands are tied, David. Everybody is going to watch your move and wonder whether you are over-reacting, trying to cover something they already know about. Oh, David! You have lost something you will never get back. You are handicapped for life, having to live the rest of your life in dishonor because of this.

In verse 13 we read, "And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme,..." You thought you did it secretly, David, but God's enemies have been able to blaspheme the gospel you hold to. They have been able to blaspheme the faith that you follow. They have been able to blaspheme the God you claim to serve, because you committed adultery once. They can say that there is nothing to it, looking at how you lived and acted. Continuing in verse 14, "The child also that is born unto thee shall surely die." You have given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, and a child will lose its life because of your adultery, David.

I'm thinking of a man who committed adultery. He had a precious little child at home die just a few days after its birth. At the graveside he told me with tears in his eyes, "It was my sin that killed this child." I have to wonder how many little babies have died, how many children, how many teenagers, have died seemingly tragic deaths because a mother or father had committed adultery. They thought they could use David as an example to cover it up. God told David that it would cost him the life of his child.

I wonder sometimes how much weeping and mourning at the casket is not over the death of the child, but over the sin that caused the death of the child. Oh, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. There is a mighty God who said, "Thou shalt NOT commit adultery."

I want to show you another scripture using David as an example. This one is in Deut. 23. Oh brethren, listen to me. If there is anything I can do to keep you out of adultery, -any way I can help you obey the New Testament command, "Flee fornication", I want

to do it. I want to see you stay pure. I want to see you stay out of sin. I would hate to see these judgments ever fall on you, or your friends, or your children, or anybody you know. Get hold of what God says. Tell others! Warn them! It will help them stay out of sin.

When I was preaching this at my own church at home I had a man call me the next week and say, "I needed that message." I told him I was glad God told me to preach it. He said, "You don't know how much I needed it. I was on the verge of going out and committing adultery. I had some problems that were too big for me, and I just couldn't contain myself. I couldn't handle it. When you preached that, I knew it would cost me too much. I can't afford to do it. I have stayed out of sin. That kept me from getting into sin."

Oh brethren, if it would help you do the same, this would be most profitable. Deut. 23:2 states, "A bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; even to his tenth generation shall he not enter into the congregation of the Lord." A child born because of an adulterous act is handicapped. God says, in essence, "I hate this sin so much that I'm going to put limitations on those born of such and on their descendants." The Devil knows the Bible. That is why he wants immorality in America. It will hinder future generations in their usefulness for God. I don't know all that is involved in entering into the congregation, but it seems to have to do with an office of spiritual leadership and effectiveness. God said this would extend for ten generations.

Let me illustrate. Judah, the patriarch, got into incest with Tamar, his daughter-in-law. A child was born. That child had a son, that son had a son, and that one had a son, - on down the line. God said that it would take ten generations to deal with that. Meanwhile the Israelites went into Egypt, came out and went into the wilderness, crossed the Jordan, and went into the promised land. Then they occupied the land, had the judges, and finally said, "We want a king." God had told them that when they had a king, it would be from the tribe of Judah. Again they asked for a king, and Samuel told them God hadn't called for one. They insisted upon having a king so God gave them one, but not from the tribe of Judah. He gave them King Saul from the tribe of Benjamin. Strange! But He had said it would be out of Judah.

Here is the problem. The Israelites couldn't count. Boaz was in the line, but he wasn't to the tenth generation. Jesse was number nine. It was David that was number ten. You can count it there in the New Testament. It was in David they they could finally have someone from the tribe of Judah on the throne. They wanted a king one generation too soon. David should have known that. Finally he was the one freed up to be able to sit on the throne because of this ancient act of wickedness.

Most sins only affect to the third and fourth generation. When it comes to adultery it can sometimes have profound influences as far as the tenth generation. God hates the sin. He truly hates it.

Listen, I didn't write these things. God wrote them, and He wrote them for our warning and our benefit.



## Chapter 4

What happens when somebody violates the 7th commandment, and they cross the scarlet line? God said, "Thou shalt NOT commit adultery." If angels could weep I'm sure they would weep. If demons could rejoice I'm sure they would throw a party whenever a saint gets into adultery. You can be certain that God is grieved when one of His own gets into adultery. The church is always hurt when a professor commits adultery. The kingdom of God suffers scandal, and the wagging of tongues. The power of the individual and thus of the church is greatly lessened. The enemies of the kingdom will be able to blaspheme our faith and our gospel, when a Christian commits adultery.

Those of you who are my brothers and sisters, flee fornication. "Thou shalt NOT commit adultery". You'll find that when a Christian commits adultery they destroy the picture of Christ and the Church. They destroy the picture of the security of the believer, and picture that of an on-again, off-again relationship. They create the picture, Biblically, of idolatry. They create the picture of worldliness and apostasy. They undermine the very foundational stones of civilization by one act of adultery. They undermine the very principles of morality by which we live. They attack the concepts of purity. They destroy virtue. They attack decency, and the very idea that there are absolutes like, "Thou shalt NOT commit adultery." They would like to get rid of absolutes and make everything relative, adjusting the Word of God to how they want to live. When a person who is a Christian commits adultery, they weaken the family structure, the church, and the gospel message. It is evidence that they have given in to the flesh, they have given in to the world, and they have given in to the Devil for just a few moments of sinful pleasure. This they did in rebellion against the clear commands, teachings, and warnings of God. They have rejected all of that to please their flesh for just a few minutes.

Most of you are going to be tempted. I don't doubt that. You'll be tempted, and it may be soon. Let this build a wall between you and that temptation. Let this help keep you pure, virtuous, and innocent that you might stand right before a holy God. Don't just excuse sliding into the cesspool of sin. God says it will cost you and cost you terribly. It will disqualify you for some areas of usefulness. It will lessen your usefulness in other areas. You'll not be the kind of example you might have been. You'll

not have the honor you might have received. When you have committed adultery you'll not be worthy of trust that could have been placed in you.

Then to you that are men, young men or older men, - it may well disqualify you as far as certain areas of usefulness in the future. I am speaking of what the Bible teaches and what God says. I know that many men have lower standards than God. Some churches have standards in contrast to God's. They don't think God knew what He was talking about. They have softened God's holy standards. They have lowered them.

God laid down some requirements as far as the gospel ministry. I would like to spell some of these out to sound a warning and keep young men pure, that God might have a group that He could call into His ministry. I want you to look at the requirements for a pastor in I Tim. 3. This is what God says. Man would like to overlook this and just go on. In some places they do this, but it has brought a blight on the community and region.

I can cite church after church that has paid a terrible price because they have tried to rewrite God's qualifications. They got a man they wanted though God said he was disqualified. It has cost their members and members' children. Oh, be careful that you never back off from the pure Word of God and God's high standards on this.

In I Tim. 3, beginning in verse 2, "A bishop then must be blameless,..." A man who has committed adultery, particularly as a Christian, can no longer be classified as blameless. He has failed on the first qualification. The second one I would point out, mentions husband of one wife, and then it says, "Vigilant". A person is not vigilant or watchful of their morals and their obedience to God if they have gotten into adultery. They have failed a second qualification, that of being vigilant.

The next qualification is, "Sober". A person who is sober minded doesn't get into adultery. Perhaps some have allowed their eyes to look at pornography or filthy things in magazines or on television. They may have allowed their minds to store up some filthy and off-color stories. The mind has been prepared to slip them into sin. One doesn't go into adultery without a thought ahead of time.

The next qualification is, "Of good behaviour". How is a person who has committed adultery ever to meet the qualification of good behaviour?

Toward the middle of verse 3 in I Tim. 3 it says, "Not greedy of filthy lucre." You may be thinking that doesn't apply. But God said that the love of money is the root of all evil. I have never known a person to get into adultery that didn't have a wrong attitude on money. I didn't understand this when I was young, but I saw what the Bible said, and I just had to bow my knee to God. I had to bow my heart to what God said. When I did that, I got my eyes open, and I started looking at case after case. I saw each one had a wrong attitude on money. Remember, God said that the love of money is the root of all evil. The minister is not to be greedy of filthy lucre because that will open him up to all evil. A person who gets into adultery has money problems in their mind and heart. They might have plenty of money, but their attitude toward it is wrong.

A further requirement in verse 3 is that he be patient. But a person getting into adultery is an impatient person. They are not patient and satisfied with their lifetime partner. The marriage bed is undefiled according to Hebrews 13:4, "but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."

Back in I Tim. 3:3 it points out that they are not to be covetous. An adulterer is covetous of some other man's wife or daughter.

On down in verse 7 we find, "Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without;..." He must have a good report of not only those within the church, but those on the outside of the church. How is a person who got into adultery ever going to have that? Do you know that many churches will give a good report inside while the world is giving a bad report outside? The world has higher standards than many professing Christians. They expect us to walk closer to the Bible than many church people do. God says that the minister must measure up before the world as well as before the church.

So we find at least 8 disqualifications for a pastoral ministry for someone who has committed adultery. Don't do it! It can destroy your qualifications for pastoring any church that is following God's standards. You may ask, "well, what about a preaching ministry? Maybe it would not be pastoring, but perhaps

I could be something else as far as a minister. I could be ordained and used in some other capacity." The Apostle Paul wrote to Titus in chapter 1, verse 5, "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee." These were not just pastors, but some other preachers to handle other preaching ministries.

What is the first thing he is to look for in men that weren't going to be pastors, but preachers to help in the churches in various ways? Titus 1:6 begins, "If any be blameless ...." In other words, if they are guilty of certain sins don't even consider them for ordination. Certainly adultery would rear up its ugly head at a time like this, and disqualify a man, not just from being a pastor, but also from being an ordained minister in any other capacity. He fails on the very first qualification. He was telling Titus to look him over. When he found someone who was blameless, then he was to find out if he was the husband of one wife and had faithful children "not accused of riot or unruly".

Continuing, Titus 1:7 states, "For a bishop must be blameless, ..." Actually these preaching ministers must meet many of the same qualifications that the pastors do. They certainly have to meet the matter of being blameless.

Peter was one of the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. In I Peter 5 he was giving some instruction as far as the elders. In verse 1 he said, "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: (vs. 2) Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; (vs. 3) Neither by being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."

God expects all elders (preachers) to be examples to the flock (church). Surely adulterers are not the kind of examples our children, teens, and adults need. They need someone who can overcome temptation. When the standards of the examples are lowered, the level of vital Christianity falls. God certainly doesn't want churches following the examples of adulterating preachers.

God's command was not harsh denial, but rather,

a fence of love for our protection. "Thou shalt NOT commit adultery." The cost is too high. The loss is too great. Purity is too precious. Virtue is too valuable. Victory is too necessary. The testimony of Jesus is too important.

Our God deserves great glory from our lives.