

The Seventh Commandment YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY

Jesus said: *“You have heard that it was said to those of old, you shall not commit adultery. But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.”* Matthew 5:27-30

What do you think of this social analysis? I recently came across this commentary: *“Sexual anarchy is here. It has assumed extreme forms and spread throughout a large part of the population, side by side with an increase of sexual perversions; a shameless sexual promiscuity has also increased...adultery, rape and prostitution have greatly increased. Homosexuality has entered the mores of the population and contemporary authors seem to sadistically enjoy the enumeration of a variety of....sexual perversions.”*

When do you think that social commentary was written? Would you suppose it was written by Dr. James Dobson in last month's Focus on the Family bulletin? Could this have perhaps been written by Errol Naidoo to describe contemporary South Africa? No, the writer of this particular article lived 4,500 years ago, approximately 2,500 BC, in ancient Egypt!

Perversion and immorality are not new. Those who assume that everything used to be more moral, and tends to get less moral with time, are ignorant of history. Sexual immorality is as old as sin. There is nothing modern about it. Those people who are promoting promiscuity, pornography and perversion as progress are lying. There is no progress in it. It is regression. It is returning to pre-Christian paganism.

Fidelity, chastity and faithfulness are a fruit of Christianity. The sexual revolution is extremely old news, **True Love Waits** is the real revolution and that is news!

The sexual revolution is revolting in more ways than one. It is an uprising against God Himself. It is a rebellion against His sovereign authority, a rejection of the Law of God. As Randy Alcorn so sardonically put it in *Restoring Sexual Sanity*: *“The moral ice age is over. Exit the dogmatic dinosaurs of sexual repression. Enter the sensuous sirens of sexual expression. We live in the age of sexual enlightenment, presumably but a few years from sexual utopia.”*

The so-called new morality is neither moral nor new. Satan is a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44). If we buy into his lies, we will find that they poison our minds, pollute our hearts and damn our souls.

Take the lie that *“This is a private matter between two consenting adults. What I do in private is nobody else's business. Nobody gets hurt.”*

Actually sexual ethics are not private matters at all. Everyone ends up paying for the private affairs of others. Many people are hurt by what others do in private. Sexual immorality has brought about the birth of literally millions of illegitimate children. Mothers without husbands, or fathers, living on welfare cost the rest of us many hundreds of millions of rand every year. Many of the children who grow up without fathers end up in inner city gangs. A vast amount of the crimes that are committed in this city, are carried out by youngsters who do not even know who their father is.

Police officers have informed me that most of the young men in the gangs on the Cape Flats come from single parents and broken homes. They are just some of the products of the sexual revolution. These gang members are full of anger at a world that has ignored them and abandoned them. Much of the graffiti, litter, pollution, vandalism, housebreakings, muggings, violence and armed robberies are committed by products of broken homes, irresponsible parents, absentee fathers and a result of the prevalence of sexual immorality.

All of us continually pay for the immoral and irresponsible decisions of others.

Not only are there catastrophic social consequences to sexual immorality, but pervasive psychological ones too. As Dr. Braceland, Editor of the American Journal of Psychiatry observed: *“A more lenient attitude on campus about premarital sex experience has imposed stresses on some college women severe enough to cause emotional breakdown.”*

Dr. Francis Braceland is a former president of the American Psychiatric Association. He has noted that sexual permissiveness has caused mental illness to significantly increase. Furthermore, sexual problems, confusions and relational complications that result from permissiveness are now known to be a primary factor that leads to suicide amongst high school and university students.

How then can anyone then believe the lie that *“Nobody gets hurt!”* Those who break the Seventh Commandment open themselves to traumatic mental, emotional and spiritual turmoil. When we break God’s Law we suffer, and we cause others to suffer.

Many studies have confirmed that sexual adventurers demonstrate *“abnormal depression, introversion, nervous activity, and even some delusional thinking.”*

Yet, ANC government policy has been to heavily fund and promote promiscuity and perversion through *“values clarification”*, *“life skills”* and the grossly overfunded *“Love Life”* campaign. In this lust-saturated society the young people of South Africa are being encouraged, by government policy, to be fornicators, adulterers, whoremongers and perverts. Everyone in this country needs to see the Doctors for Life documentary DVD: **In Your Face**. It is not just HIV/AIDS. There are over 65 different sexually transmitted diseases, many of which are untreatable, with symptoms so terrible that I do not even want to describe them here. Suffice it to say that those who buy into the lie of homosexuality being a normal, healthy, alternative lifestyle, forfeit about half of their life. The average lifespan of normal married heterosexuals is double that of the average homosexual. *“What a man sows, that shall he reap”*. *“Those who hate God love death”* (Proverbs 8:36).

The testimony of history is that great civilisations rise and flourish on the basis of strict discipline, self-control and strong family units. However when those societies turn to sexual promiscuity then productivity wanes, things begin to unravel and soon the society plummets to destruction. Historians have studied each of the 26 civilisations, (from the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Medes and the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, etc.). They have found no exceptions to this pattern. No society survives long without strict laws, strong families and stringent self-discipline. Pervasive sexual immorality spells the death of any nation.

So-called *“free sex”* is by no means free. The price tags include: sexually transmitted diseases, syphilis, gonorrhoea, herpes, AIDS, broken homes, broken lives, crime-ridden societies, and the collapse of civilisation itself.

Matthew Henry’s Commentary notes on the Seventh Commandment that this *“concerns our own and our neighbours’ chastity; ‘thou shalt not commit adultery’*. *This is put before the Sixth by our Saviour (Mark 10:19); ‘do not commit adultery, do not kill’; for our chastity should be as dear to us as our lives and we should be as much afraid of that which defiles the body as of that which destroys it.”*

The *Westminster Larger Catechism*, under the Duties Required in the Seventh Commandment includes: The duty to be chaste in body, mind and affections (*“That each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honour”* 1 Thessalonians 4:4; *“I have made a covenant with my eyes; why then should I look upon a young woman?”* Job 31:1)

The duty to be chaste in words and behaviour (*“Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt...”* Colossians 4:6 *“When they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear...”* 1 Peter 3:2)

The duty to preserve chastity in ourselves and others (1 Corinthians 7:2, 35-36)

The duty to keep chaste company (*“To deliver you from the immoral woman, from the seductress who flatters with her words, who forsakes the companion of her youth, and forgets the covenant of her God. For her house leads down to death, and her paths to the dead; no one who goes to her returns, nor do they regain the paths of life – so you may walk in the way of goodness, and keep to the paths of righteousness.”* Proverbs 2:16-20)

The duty to be modest in apparel (*“That the women adorn themselves in modest apparel...”* 1 Timothy 2:9)
“ Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband...Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time...and come together again so that satan does not tempt you...” 1 Corinthians 7:3-5)

The duty to resist temptations (*“Remove your way far from her and do not go near the door of her house.”* Proverbs 5:8)

Under the Sins Forbidden in the Seventh Commandment the *Westminster Larger Catechism* includes:

The sin of adultery and fornication (Galatians 5:19); the sin of rape and incest; the sin of sodomy and all unnatural lusts (*“Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, and the lusts of their hearts, to dishonour their bodies among themselves...men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.”* Romans 1:24-27); the sin of unclean imaginations, thoughts, purposes and affections (*“But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”* Matthew 5:29; *“For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, theft, false witness, blasphemies.”* Matthew 15:19; *“Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire and covetousness, which is idolatry.”* Colossians 3:5); the sin of corrupt or filthy communications (*“But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, not coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.”* Ephesians 5:3-4; *“That they may keep you from the immoral woman, from the seductress who flatters with her words...with her enticing speech she caused him to yield, with her flattering lips she seduced him. Immediately he went after her, as an ox goes to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks.”* Proverbs 7:5; 21-22)

The sin of wanton looks (*“Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with outstretched necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, making a jingling with their feet...”* Isaiah 3:16; *“Having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. They have a heart trained in covetous practices and are accursed children.”* 2 Peter 2:14)

The sin of prohibiting lawful marriages (*“Forbidding to marry...”* 1 Timothy 4:3); the sin of disregarding unlawful marriages (*“For John had said to Herod, ‘it is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife.’”* Mark 6:18); the sin of allowing, tolerating and keeping houses of prostitution or resorting to them (*“And He banished the perverted persons from the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made.”* 1 Kings 15:12; *“There shall be no ritual harlot of the daughters of Israel, or a perverted one of the sons of Israel...for both of these are an abomination to the Lord your God.”* Deuteronomy 23:17-18; *“How shall I pardon you for this? Your children have forsaken Me and sworn by those who are not gods. When I fed them with food, then they committed adultery and assembled themselves by troops in the harlot’s houses.”* Jeremiah 5:7 ; *“Do not let your heart turn aside to the harlot’s ways, do not stray into her paths; for she has cast down many wounded, and all who were slain by her were strong men. Her house is the way to hell, descending to the chambers of death.”* Proverbs 7:24-27); the sin of having more than one spouse at the same time (Matthew 19:5); the sin of unjust divorce (*“For the Lord God of Israel says that He hates divorce...therefore take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously.”* Malachi 2:16; *“But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.”* Matthew 5:32); the sin of unchaste company (*“So it was, as she spoke to Joseph day by day, that he did not heed her, to lie with her or to be with her.”* Genesis 39:10; *“Remove your way far from her and do not go near the door of her house.”* Proverbs 5:8); the sin of using words, pictures or actions which incite to uncleanness (*“Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jestings, which are not fitting,*

but rather giving of thanks.” Ephesians 5:4; “*...harlotry...portrayed on the wall...images...portrayed...lusted...*” Ezekiel 23:14-16; Mark 6:22; “*Lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.*” 1 Peter 4:3)

“The ordinance should be observed. Let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.” 1 Corinthians 7:2

God instituted marriage in Paradise (Genesis 2:22). He gave the man and the woman to each other in marriage. Our Lord honoured marriage with His presence at the wedding in Canaan, during which He performed His first public miracle (John 2:1-11).

“Marriage is honourable and the bed undefiled.” Hebrews 13:4

Marriage is a type and resemblance of the mystical union between Christ and His Church. *“For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.”* Ephesians 5:31-32

The Seventh Commandment is protective. It can save us from being plunged into a world of misery and trauma. It can save us from throwing away priceless spiritual opportunities, from losing vital friendships, from derailing and destroying our lives. The Seventh Commandment is designed to hold us safely within the bonds of faithfulness and chastity.

“For the commandment is a lamp and the Law a light...to keep you from the evil woman, from the flattering tongue of a seductress. Do not lust after her beauty in your heart, nor let her lure you with her eyelids. For by means of a harlot a man is reduced to a crust of bread; and an adulteress would prey upon his precious life. Can a man take fire to his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one walk on hot coals, and his feet not be seared? So is he who goes in to his neighbour’s wife; whoever touches her shall not be innocent...whoever commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding; he who does so destroys his own soul. Wounds and dishonour he will get, and his reproach will not be wiped away.” Proverbs 6:23-33

“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the Kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the Kingdom of God.” 1 Corinthians 6:9-10

“Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? ‘For the two’ He says ‘shall become one flesh.’ That he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him. Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God’s.” 1 Corinthians 6:15-20

Samson had great potential which was wasted through his lack of discipline. Samson had an eye for beautiful women. He loved to look. His roving eyes often got him into trouble with prostitutes. His weakness for women undermined his leadership for his people at a time of great crisis. Then his eyes settled upon a woman who eventually destroyed him. Her name – Delilah – has since been synonymous with beauty and treachery.

Using both her body and her brains, Delilah was out to ensnare Samson. As Samson became captivated by her beauty and his lust, he began to lose discernment and control. Finally he lost all his strength and was unable to resist. Too late Samson realised that he had lost his freedom. Samson learned that sin binds, sin blinds and sin grinds.

Samson never achieved his potential because he refused to live a disciplined life. His character flaws and sin prevented effective leadership. All of Israel suffered as a result. Samson squandered his potential on loose women. Samson dishonoured his parents, diluted his power, disgraced his profession and dissipated his

potential. Samson deliberately exposed himself to the enemy with a self-confidence that bordered on carelessness and recklessness.

He had power without purity, strength without self-control and because he didn't know holiness he would know defeat. While Samson was strong before men, he proved weak before women. Samson strangled a lion, but he could not strangle his own lusts. He burst the bonds of his enemies, but he couldn't break his own self-destructive tendencies. He burned the crops of the Philistines, but he lost his own fruit of virtue by burning with lust for Delilah. The tragic story of Samson in Judges 14-16 teaches us that whoring leads to blindness, slavery and death. ***“Do not be deceived; God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows that he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption.”*** Galatians 6:7-8

Samson did what was right in his own eyes and his eyes were gouged out. He followed the lusts of his eyes and he lost them. He visited a prostitute in Gaza, and he ended up as a prisoner in Gaza. He pursued philistine women, and ended up doing their work - grinding the corn to provide food to strengthen his enemies. He refused to discipline himself, and ended up a prisoner of war and a slave of the philistines. The tragic story of Samson should serve as a object lesson and warning to each one of us.

“Pride goes before a fall.” Proverbs 16:18

As in the life of Samson, so any pastor can tell you in all too many examples that they would have witnessed: adultery not only has a devastating effect on the adulterer personally, but on the families involved. Unfaithfulness devastates relationships and destroys families.

“Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.” 1 Corinthians 10:12

Marriage partners must love one another wholeheartedly, thank God for each other regularly, pray for one another daily, and do everything possible to strengthen and serve one another. In the Bible marital love includes honour, esteem, respect, gentleness, courtesy and affection and these must be treasured, cultivated and entrenched. Faithfulness to our covenant duties will protect us in God's pathway of blessings, multiplying our effectiveness in ministry, resulting in great joy in our families and God's Kingdom.

However, we cannot look at the Seventh Commandment without also considering the very real danger of Spiritual adultery.

Isaiah charges the people: ***“You sons of the sorceress, you offspring of the adulterer and harlot. Children of transgressions, offspring of falsehood, inflaming yourselves with gods under every green tree, slaying the children in the valleys...”*** Isaiah 57:3-5

Jeremiah condemned *“backslidden Israel”* for *“committing adultery”*, for being treacherous and playing *“the harlot also...she defiled the land and committed adultery with stones and trees.”* Jeremiah 3:8-9

Jeremiah describes Israel's idolatry as spiritual adultery (Jeremiah 7:9). Jeremiah condemns the people as ***“all adulterers...treacherous...”*** because ***“they are not valiant for the Truth...they proceed from evil to evil, and they do not know Me...”*** Jeremiah 9:2-3 Jeremiah condemned the idolatry of Israel as ***“...adulteries, lewdness, harlotry, abominations...”*** Jeremiah 13:27

The Prophet Jeremiah condemned the land for being ***“full of adulterers...a curse...evil...both prophet and priest are profane...wickedness...slippery ways...I will bring disaster on them...folly...they prophesied by Baal and caused My people Israel to err...a horrible thing....adultery and...lies...profaneness has gone out into the land.”*** Jeremiah 23:10-15

The Prophet Ezekiel also charges the nations with idolatry: ***“For they have committed adultery, and blood is on their hands. They have committed adultery with their idols, and even sacrificed their sons...”*** Ezekiel 23:37

The Prophet Hosea condemns the spiritual adultery of Israel for looking to other gods and committing idolatry.

The Prophet Malachi condemns the “...*abomination...committed in Israel and Jerusalem, for Judah has profaned the Lord’s holy institution which he loves; he has married the daughter of a foreign god.*” Malachi 2:11

To enter into spiritual alliances with the Lord’s enemies is spiritual adultery – treachery against the Lord.

“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness. And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the Temple of God with idols? For you are the Temple of the Living God. As God has said: I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Therefore come out from among them and be separate says the Lord, do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters says the Lord Almighty.” 2 Corinthians 6:14-18

“Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy with God...God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Therefore submit to God, resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.” James 4:4-8

How can we call lost sinners out of Vanity Fair if we ourselves are intoxicated by its delights? If we enjoy reading the books of those who offend the Lord by their compromises and un-Biblical teachings, or choose to go to Bible colleges where the Word of God is not loved and respected, then we are committing spiritual adultery.

We are called to be faithful to the Lord, and to the husband, or wife, with whom we have entered into covenant commitment. We must also be faithful in all other relationships to which God calls us. Faithfulness is to characterise every Christian.

No exposition of the 7th Commandment would be complete without also considering its prohibition against being unequally yoked.

Webster’s Dictionary defines adultery as “*violation of the marriage bed; a crime or civil injury, which introduces, or may introduce, into the family, a spurious offspring...the unfaithfulness of any person to the marriage bed...all manner of lewdness or unchastity...an unnatural union.*”

Webster’s Dictionary defines *adulterate* as “*to commit adultery, to debase by foreign mixture.*”

Adulterated is defined as: “*Corrupted; debased by mixture of something with less value.*”

Marriage is defined in Webster’s Dictionary as: “*The act of uniting a man and a woman for life; wedlock; the legal union of a man and woman for life. A marriage is a contract, both civil and religious, by which the parties engage to live together in mutual affection and fidelity, till death shall separate them. Marriage was instituted by God Himself...for promoting domestic felicity and for securing the maintenance and education of children.*”

The Moabite women at Shittim enticed and seduced many of the men of Israel into sexual immorality. One man, Zimri, openly brought Cozbi, a Moabite woman, right into his home. The Scripture records that this incited the Lord’s anger to burn against them and a devastating plague hit the community.

One Israelite, Phinehas, had the courage to make a stand and put a stop to the degenerate wickedness which was destroying his people. He refused to be seduced by the Moabites. He was committed to upholding the Law of God and he was angry enough about sin to do something about it (Numbers 25).

Today we have many, including so-called Christians, bringing immoral women into their homes, through DVDs, DSTV, M-Net, MMS, and through the Internet. The epidemic of sexually transmitted diseases bears eloquent testimony to the rampant immorality of our times.

We need more people like Phinehas today. Clean out your cupboards. Tear up and burn the pornographic posters, magazines and books. Crush the offensive videos and DVDs. Cancel that cable channel with “adult” films. Speak to your local store managers that markets modern Moabites. Mobilise other church members to clean up your community. **“Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil, live as servants of God.”** 1 Peter 2:16

“Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience.” Colossians 3:5-6

In the course of my missionary work I have all too often come across the disastrous and tragic consequences of Christians marrying unbelievers. On numerous occasions, while counselling the distraught Christian married to an unbelieving spouse, I’ve heard how the other partner appeared to be a Christian, claimed to be a Christian, made a public profession of faith in Christ, but later revealed that it had been a charade to secure the marriage. On numerous occasions the tearful Christian has asked: **“Why did nobody warn me!”**

Considering how much the Scriptures teach concerning marriage, and the many passages forbidding cross cultural and inter racial marriages with unbelievers and being **“unequally yoked”**, it is extraordinary that there is so little preaching and teaching on this important matter.

Marriage not only involves two individuals, but two families. We need to honour our parents and seek the guidance of our church leaders when we consider marriage. Those who become **“unequally yoked”** are being short-sighted and selfish. They are neither considering their ancestors, nor their descendants. Nor are they placing God’s Word above their own emotions.

The Bible tells us that God seeks **“...Godly offspring...”** Malachi 2:15

“And I will establish My covenant between you and your descendants after you and their generations for everlasting covenant...you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations.” Genesis 17:7-9

“Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; He is the Faithful God, keeping His Covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love Him and keep His Commandments.” Deuteronomy 7:9

Abraham, the Father of the Faithful, commanded his servant to swear by the Lord **“that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell; but you shall go to my country and to my family, and take a wife for my son Isaac.”** Genesis 24:3-4

The Bible tells of Jacob’s twin brother Esau who took Hittite wives.: **“And the were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebecca.”** Genesis 26:34-35

“Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, and said to him: ‘you shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan.’” Genesis 28:1

The Law of Moses declared: **“Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son.”** Deuteronomy 7:3

Joshua warned the children of Israel that if they intermarried with the nations around them: **“Know for certain that the Lord your God will no longer drive out these nations from before you. But they shall be snares and traps to you, and scourges on your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land which the Lord your God has given you.”** Joshua 23:12-13

In Ezra’s great prayer of national repentance he warned against mixed marriages with the daughters of the Canaanites, Hittites, Perusites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians and Amorites **“For they have taken**

some of their daughters as wives for themselves and their sons, so the Holy seed is mixed with the people of those lands....When I heard this thing I tore my garment and my robe and plucked out some of the hair on my head and my beard and sat down astonished....because of the transgression of those ...I fell on my knees and spread out my hands to the Lord my God. And I said: 'Oh my God , I am too ashamed and humiliated to lift my face to You, my God; for our iniquities have risen higher than our heads, and our guilt had grown up to the heavens.'" Ezra 9:2-6

"Now therefore, do not give your daughters as wives for their sons, nor take their daughters to your sons...that you may be strong and eat the good of the land and leave it as an inheritance to your children forever." Ezra 9:12

Intermarrying with the nations around them, Ezra described as: *"our great guilt...our iniquities...these abominations..."* Ezra 9:13-14

When Nehemiah discovered that some of the believers had *"married women of Ashdod, Ammon and Moab and that many of the children could not even speak the language of Judah (but spoke according to the language of one or the other people). So I contended with them and cursed them, struck some of them, and pulled out their hair, and made them swear by God, saying you shall not give your daughters as wives to their sons, nor take their daughters for your sons or yourselves. Did not Solomon King of Israel, sin by these things? Yet...should we then hear of your doing all this great evil, transgressing against our God by marrying pagan women?"* Nehemiah 13:24-27

The Law of God warns believers against following what is popular: *"You shall not follow a crowd to do evil..."* Exodus 23:2

As part of the Order of Service for marriage, in the Book of Common Prayer, the minister is required to say to the persons about to be married: *"I require of you both, as you will answer on the dreadful Day of Judgement when the secrets of all shall be disclosed, that if either of you knows any reason why you may not be lawfully married you now confess it. For be assured that those who marry, other than as allowed by God's Word, are not joined together by God, and the marriage is not lawful in His sight."*

God's Law is clear. Obeying it protects us from disaster and guides us to blessings.

"So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies..." Ephesians 5:28

"Nevertheless let each of one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband." Ephesians 5:33

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