

## AFFAIR-PROOFING YOUR MARRIAGE

### INTRODUCTION:

1. It would be wonderful to think that Christians never have trouble with the sin of adultery. When we become children of God, we are supposed to lay aside the old self with its evil practices. Those deeds include fornication! **Col.3:5, 9**- *"Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. 9) Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices,"* It ought to be true that every Christian would *"possess his vessel in sanctification and honour."* **1 Thes.4:3.**
2. Real life does not live up to that ideal. The sin of adultery does exist even in Christian marriages.
  - a) Adultery can never be justified or excused. "I'm only human!" is neither reasonable nor acceptable. God holds us to a higher standard of morality than giving in to basest instincts.
  - b) While recognizing that this temptation is stronger for some than others, we must recognize the power of sexual temptation. Jesus warned against looking with lust (Matthew 5:27-28) and Peter described people who had "eyes full of adultery" (2 Peter 2:14). Flirting or anything else that opens the smallest crack in our armor against adultery is extremely dangerous!
  - c) Since this is a problem even in many Christian marriages, we should do everything we can to protect ourselves. The purpose of this lesson on **"Affair-Proofing Your Marriage"** is to help us **understand the power** of temptation and to help **develop a strategy** to *resist that temptation!*

### I. CASE STUDY: DAVID AND BATHSHEBA

- A. **David was a man of God.** However, he did many things wrong. In **2 Sam. 11**, we find the story of David's adultery with Bathsheba.
- B. **David stayed in the wrong place!** **2 Sam.11:1**, "And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem.")
- C. **David looked at the wrong thing.** **2 Sam.11:2**- *"And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself."*
- D. **David thought the wrong thoughts.** **vs.11:2b**,- *"..and the woman was very beautiful to look upon."*
- E. **David took action with his wrong thoughts.** **2 Sam.11:3-4**- *"And David sent and inquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite? 4 And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her...."*
- F. **David compounded his sin by trying to cover up what he had done.**
  1. When he learned that Bathsheba was with child, he tried to arrange for her husband to come home and sleep with his wife.
  2. When Uriah refused, David then sent him to death by having him killed in battle.
  3. When Bathsheba's time of mourning was past, David brought her into his house and she became his wife. **2 Sam.11:5-27**
  4. The Scripture comments on David's behavior in **v. 27**,- *". . .the thing that David had done displeased the LORD."*

### II. THE LESSON OF NATHAN'S PARABLE

- A. God sent Nathan the prophet to talk to the king. Nathan didn't openly rebuke the king at first.
  1. Instead, he told a story about two neighbors, one rich, the other poor. The rich man had many cattle and sheep. The poor man had only one little ewe lamb. The poor man loved his little lamb

- very much. **2 Sam.12:3** says the lamb *"did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter."*
2. One day a traveler came to visit the rich man. Instead of taking from his own flock or herd to get a lamb to serve his guest, the rich man stole his neighbor's little ewe lamb.
- B. When King David heard the story, he was **SHOCKED WITH ANGER**.
1. He thought Nathan was telling him about something which had really happened. He declared, *"As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die!"* **2 Sam.12:5**.
  2. Nathan then delivered his punch line -- "YOU ARE THE MAN!"
    - a) David had not stolen a lamb; he had stolen a man's wife.
    - b) To accomplish his thievery, the king had killed the husband.
  3. The Lord's punishment upon David and Bathsheba included the death of the child they had conceived in adultery.
- C. NOW, let's look at Nathan's parable more carefully and learn some lessons about how we can guard against the sin of adultery in our marriages.
1. Someone once said that *parables start off like pictures, then become mirrors, and then turn into windows*.
    - a) We first see only a true-to-life story. Then we see ourselves reflected in the story.
    - b) Finally, the story becomes a window to see the message of God for us. When David finally **looked through the window**, he confessed, *"I have sinned against the LORD!"* **2 Sam.12:13**.
  2. Nathan had depicted Uriah's wife as a *"cuddly little lamb."*
    - a) A husband should treasure his wife as a **"beloved lamb"** who shares his table, his bed, and his heart.
    - b) The author of **Prov.5:18-19** compares a man's wife with another lovable animal. He says, *"Let your fountain be blessed, And rejoice in the wife of your youth. 19 As a loving deer and a graceful doe, Let her breasts satisfy you at all times; Be EXHILARATED always with her love."*
      - 1) **This word** ["exhilarated" = KJV; "ravished" = NIV; "captivated" or "enraptured" = NKJV; "infatuated" = RSV;] **should describe the satisfaction of marital love.**
      - 2) The next verse warns against seeking that satisfaction from another woman. **Prov.5:20**- *"For why should you, my son, be exhilarated with an adulteress, And embrace the bosom of a foreigner?"*
        - (a) **Seek excitement** and **exhilaration** and **satisfaction** from your partner at home.
        - (b) **Give excitement** and **exhilaration** and **satisfaction** to your partner at home. **1 Cor.7:3-5**- *"Let the husband fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. 4 The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. 5 Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again lest Satan tempt you because of your lack of self-control."*
  3. Nathan pictured temptation as a friendly traveler stopping to stay a while.
    - a) The Bible illustrates temptation in many ways.
      - 1) For Cain, temptation was a wild beast at the door. **Gen.4:7**- *"sin lieth at the door."* **If the door were to be opened, disaster would rush in.** When a married person feels an attraction for another, DON'T OPEN THE DOOR!
      - 2) James describes temptation as bait on a hook. **Jas.1:14**- *"But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."* The word for "entice" here in this verse literally means **"TO CATCH BY BAITING."**
      - 3) Temptation is the situation which provides the occasion [motive] and opportunity for sin. In Nathan's story, that occasion arose when the travelling guest came to the rich man's

door. Hospitality demanded that the guest had to be fed. Where would the rich man get the food for this traveler? He could use one of his own animals. . . OR he could steal his neighbor's prized lamb.

- b) **TEMPTATION** is very subtle [*indirect or disguised*] in the way it works its influence over us.
- 1) The **right motive** of giving hospitality soon turned into the **wrong action** of stealing another's property.
  - 2) I am persuaded that very few Christians actually start out with the specific intention of being unfaithful to their mates. **Many affairs have begun from honorable desires to "help" another person.**
  - 3) It is a dangerous mistake to allow appetites to go UNCHECKED! **Prov.9:17**, "*Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.*" The lure of adultery can certainly become sweet, as the wise man aptly describes in **Prov.5:3-4**- "*For the lips of an adulteress drip honey, And smoother than oil is her speech; 4 But in the end she is bitter as wormwood, Sharp as a two-edged sword.*"
3. Nathan pictures the true character of adultery -- it is robbery, **AND IT IS WRONG!**
- a) **Prov.6:30-35**- shows the foolishness of stealing another's mate: "*Men do not despise a thief if he steals To satisfy himself when he is hungry; 31 But when he is found, he must repay sevenfold; He must give all the substance of his house. 32 The one who commits adultery with a woman is lacking sense; He who would destroy himself does it. 33 Wounds and disgrace he will find, And his reproach will not be blotted out. 34 For jealousy enrages a man, And he will not spare in the day of vengeance. 35 He will not accept any ransom, Nor will he be content though you give many gifts.*" (NASB)
  - b) There are times when true repentance and forgiveness occurs after adultery occurs.
  - c) Much more often, marriages end and homes are torn apart. There are lifelong consequences for the brief moments of physical pleasure.
    - 1) David suffered the rest of his life for what he had done. **2 Sam.12:9-12**- "*Why have you despised the word of the LORD by doing evil in His sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the sons of Ammon. 10) 'Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.' 11) "Thus says the LORD, 'Behold, I will raise up evil against you from your own household; I will even take your wives before your eyes and give them to your companion, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. 12) 'Indeed you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and under the sun.'"*
    - 2) Christians today must think soberly. People today have affairs for a number of reasons
      - (a) Sometimes it's simply for **SELFISH PLEASURE**
      - (b) Retaliation - desire to hurt one's mate
      - (c) Because their "**lovers**" give them something their mates do not -- **affection, tenderness, respect.**
      - (d) It's a pretty sad commentary on the society in which we live when SOME counselors even ADVISE people to have affairs. Friends, **no possible benefit** could be worth the pain and problems brought on by infidelity.

**CONCLUSION:** The New Testament gives a clear call for sexual morality - inside and outside of marriage. **1 Thes.4:3-7**- "*For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: 4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; 5 Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: 6 That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. 7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.*"

1. We must "possess our vessels" in sanctification (holiness) and honor. Three possible meanings:
  - a) **VESSEL = BODY**, according to passages like **1 Cor.6:18-20**- *"Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. 19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."*
  - b) **VESSEL = WIFE**, in scriptures like **1 Pet.3:7**- *"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered."*
  - c) **POSSESSING YOUR VESSEL = CONTROLLING UNLAWFUL DESIRES** in passages such as **Heb.13:4**- *"Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge."*
2. We need to always REMEMBER the seriousness of our wedding vows -- Did you stand before God and man, dressed in your finest clothing, and solemnly AFFIRM POSITIVELY that you would *"forsake all others and keep yourself unto HIM [or, HER], so long as you both shall live?"* Most everyone who is married has spoken words similar to these. Let's be determined to keep that promise .-. **NO MATTER WHAT.** Because **your mate** EXPECTS it; because **God** DEMANDS it; and because **Truthfulness** will **NOT ALLOW IT ANY OTHER WAY!**