

## Snares and Nets

“New” things are exciting. Who of us has not lain awake at night, too excited to sleep as we enjoy dreaming, planning, and imagining our life with some desirable “new” thing? It’s fun to search for a new piece of electronics, a house, or clothes. We love the smell of a brand new car, the sparkle of new jewelry and the excitement of opening the box of a new computer. These are experiences common to all of us—but we also share the common experience of becoming so accustomed to that new thing that it loses its excitement and turns into another “ho hum” part of our life. All too quickly the house becomes too small, the jewelry looks outdated, the car ends up a donation to charity and the computer becomes obsolete. What was once highly desirable loses its emotional appeal until it is ready to be tossed out or sold at a garage sale.

The newness of “relationships” can be equally pleasurable as the newness of “things.” The joy and wonder of a new baby, the delight of welcoming a new pastor, or the excitement of meeting a new friend who is a true “kindred spirit” are highlights in our lives. Like other more tangible “new things” in our life, however, new relationships also lose the excitement of their newness as time goes by. The highly intense excitement of “newness” always melts away leaving the real “core” or basis of the relationship. If the relationship is established and nurtured on the basis of what is true, honest, just, pure, lovely, virtuous, and praise worthy, it can be sustained and blessed by God. (Philippians 5:8) However, if the relationship is built upon the sandy foundation of physical attraction alone, deceit, self-interest, or ungodly motives of any kind, it cannot be sustained or blessed by God.

Many new relationships can be treasures that are given by God to brighten and enrich our lives. Yet others can be a snare with the potential of entrapping us and eventually bringing destruction and misery into our lives. Though one new relationship may be pure and another sinful, they both can be equally exciting and fun—at least initially. We read in Proverbs 9:17 that “Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.” Initially, a forbidden relationship is as enjoyable as any new relationship would be, but later, it is a different story altogether. We read in verse 18 that partakers of “forbidden fruit” fail to recognize they are walking into the house of eventual death and destruction.

What makes “forbidden” relationships so dangerous is their deceptive nature and power to blind its participants spiritually. The initial emotional exhilaration hides the hook that eventually enslaves and destroys. The Bible not only warns us to steer clear of friendships with foolish, angry, or rebellious people, but plainly warns us not to form an attachment with someone of the opposite sex when one is married to another. Adultery never begins with sexual intercourse—it begins as a tiny seed of attraction that attaches itself to emotions and then silently grows into a full blown emotional entanglement, physical desire and then physical indulgence. When the dangers of emotional entanglement are ignored or minimized, people soon learn that it is excruciatingly difficult to free themselves from its tenacious grasp.

### **It Doesn’t “Just Happen”**

Christians do not suddenly “fall into sin” or commit adultery. It happens in a progressive order. Long before adultery ever crosses one’s mind, one follows a particular path and mindset that makes one vulnerable to temptation. Discontent with one’s spouse, self-pity, unreconciled

offenses, loneliness, or rejection often precede a forbidden relationship and lay the foundation for it to flourish. Others become dangerously vulnerable when they embrace the philosophies and ways of the world. One who willfully places himself in the presence of impurity will eventually become comfortable there—and once the allurements of the world’s ways and the powerful lusts of the flesh and mind are indulged, the love for spiritual things fades until wisdom and discretion disappear, and understanding is obscured. The Word of God will no longer be a delight, reproof will be abhorred, and one’s carnal love for a particular self-indulgence will take over.

In this condition, one no longer has a sense of God’s immediate presence and loses any healthy fear of God. This leaves a person unprotected and spiritually blinded, making him easy prey for the evil one, self-deception and the enticements of sin. It is by the fear of the Lord that men depart from evil, and by the lack thereof that people indulge their sinful appetites believing they can do so without consequence. The Bible describes how essential the fear of the Lord is to living successfully, making wise choices and enjoying the blessings of God. “The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.” (Proverbs 14:27) We read that it is by mercy and truth that iniquity is conquered, “and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil.” (Proverbs 16:6) God plainly declares what kind of person becomes entrapped by the snares and nets of a seductive relationship, and also describes the one who escapes. We read that he who pleases the Lord will escape the allurements of a sexually immoral person. (Ecclesiastes 7:26)

The heart must depart from loving the Lord before it will ever be receptive to loving and indulging the lusts of one’s sinful human nature. One cannot possibly love God and love sin at the same time. The things of the Lord must be pushed “to a back burner” in order to accommodate temptations and in the end, embrace the sin. Only then will thoughts of adultery become a pleasant pastime, savored and rehearsed in the mind until acts of adultery become a burning desire. Once an individual has arrived at this point, anything that “gets in the way” will quite likely be pushed aside and treated with disregard or even contempt. The only voice an unrepentant adulterer hears is his own and the only path that he follows is the one that caters to his sinful desires. Love for self is on the throne and love for God and others taken a low place on his priority scale. His words might profess love for God and others, but his actions betray his self-deception and love for the idols of his own heart.

The person that remains, once sin has taken hold, is a stubborn and prideful adulterer. He has taken a path that has led him into the black darkness of self-deception and he can no longer see the light of God’s ways. He is now a person who will not listen, will not regard warnings, and will not willingly give up the sin he is emotionally attached to. Marriage vows mean little or nothing—the object of desire means everything. Warnings of God’s judgment will evoke anger, not repentance, and the loss of God’s favor will seem like a small concession if he can have what his heart wants. By now discontent and bitterness will have been honed into blatant blame shifting and he will be convinced his behavior is actually justified or is “understandable” given his circumstances. Whereas the adulterer may have restrained himself and felt enough compassion for a spouse to keep himself from cruelly abandoning his home and family, now he can become sufficiently hardened to leave his spouse, believing “it will all work out eventually.”

He is willing to bring untold devastation upon his own family, church and children just to have what he wants so badly.

God addresses both men and women who “treacherously” abandon their spouse and their marriage vows. An unfaithful wife is used as an illustration in Jeremiah 3:20. “Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the LORD.” In Malachi 2:14, the unfaithful husband is the one described as “treacherous.” “Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.”

The word “treacherous” implies one is acting deceitfully and is dangerously embarking on a path marked by hidden dangers and peril. Betrayal of a spouse is not viewed lightly by God, but rather, evokes His wrath. One who abandons his marriage partner and violates the vows he made before God may expect no answer to his prayers. Passages such as James 4:3, Luke 11:13, Isaiah 59:1-2, Ezekiel 14:3, Proverbs 21:13 or 1 Peter 3:7, all explain why the adulterer forfeits a relationship with God and the joy of answered prayer when he treacherously abandons a spouse. One can not have an adulterous relationship and a relationship with God at the same time. God does not excuse adultery for *any* reason.

### **Doesn't God Always Discipline Adulterers?**

What happens next depends on whether or not God gives the adulterer over to his own lust and self-destruction or whether God mercifully intervenes and brings him to repentance. The adulterer often does not know that he is in great spiritual peril and stands precariously on the edge of destruction. He imagines God is not rejecting him when things appear to be going his way and is often giddy with excitement, believing he has obtained his heart's desire. He couldn't be more mistaken—but he does not care. Like the scriptures declare, he or she wipes his mouth and then says, “I have done no wickedness.” (Proverbs 30:20) The adulterer or adulterous will often imagine that God is actually permitting the relationship because it gives so much happiness.

When God leaves adulterers alone and does not intervene or bring them to repentance, it is not a good thing. It doesn't mean God is “OK” with it, or “understands” or isn't going to bring it into judgment. Rather, it reveals God is rejecting the adulterer and allowing him to live in his deception and destroy his own life, or that he is not God's child. (Hebrews 12:8) The Bible tells us that some men's sins are judged and dealt with immediately, while other men's sins are revealed and judged after their life on earth is over and there is no more chance to repent or be restored to spiritual usefulness and blessing. (1 Timothy 5:24) The adulterer who is given his own way experiences the inevitable destructions and sorrows that will result from his deception and spiritual error. What a frightening thing to have God say about an adulterous couple what He said about Israel, “So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels.” (Psalm 81:12)

We read in the Old Testament how God instructed Hosea to show Israel their sin of spiritual adultery and unbelief. God told him that Israel erred and left their God because their hearts were given to their idolatry. Even though they talked about the God of Israel and engaged in a form of

hypocritical worship, they loved their own ways and refused to repent. Interestingly, God tells them their daughters would be ensnared with sexual promiscuity and their wives would commit adultery, but He wasn't going to punish or correct them because none of them would turn to Him for understanding or give up their sins. (Hosea 4:12-15)

To be without chastisement is chilling and ought to bring the adulterer trembling to his knees begging God not to withdraw His hand of correction or leave his heart cold and indifferent. If he could see how his own sin has the power to corrupt his family and bring upon himself the same treachery he has brought upon others, he would be horrified. Amazingly, this doesn't seem to trouble the hardened adulterer. He is capable of imagining he is going to be the exception and that he can circumvent reaping what he has sown. He or she tend to mock warnings and resent those who speak truthfully to them out of concern for their souls. No wonder God said, "But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul." (Proverbs 6:32)

The adulterer makes a choice to live his life the way he pleases rather than deny himself and live as God is honored and pleased. In doing so, he loses his life while the true follower of Christ gains a blessed life and eternal rewards. "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it...For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." (Matthew 16:24-25,27)

### **Adultery is Connected to Unbelief**

The adulterer who professes faith in Christ must first harden his heart against his Lord and betray Him before he will betray his spouse and commit sexual adultery against her. When adultery is mentioned in the Bible it is always linked to other sins that have preceded it, but none is as obvious as the sin of unbelief. To embrace sin, one must first depart from trusting and believing God. The adulterer does not believe God is sufficient to meet all his needs. He does not believe God has a righteous and effective way to deal with problems in his life, nor does he believe he will suffer severe consequences if he does not turn from his sinful pursuit immediately. Adultery starts long before it culminates in sexual intercourse and long before it is ever imagined in one's mind. It starts when a believer's heart wanders from His God and he is enticed by the reasoning of a sexually indulgent world and his own sinful human nature. One must distrust God in order to trust his own heart.

God uses the powerful word "cursed" in Jeremiah 17:5, when he declares the consequences of one who trusts human reasoning. God declares, "Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh [human reasoning] his arm [strength], and whose heart departeth from the LORD." Before any Christian follows Satan's enticements, the world or his own sinful human nature, he departs, emotionally, from the Lord. He trades trust in His God for trust in his own heart and forgets the warning that the human heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. The end result is always the same—spiritual destruction and misery.

The Bible compares the "tumbleweed" person who trusts himself to the person who puts his trust in the Lord in Jeremiah 17:6-8. Those who trust human reasoning apart from God are like a dry,

dead tumbleweed blowing listlessly in the desert, rooted in nothing and producing nothing. Unlike the tumbleweed, the one who trusts God is described as a thriving tree, rooted in the ground next to a river, unaffected by drought, growing and producing delicious fruit without a care. One life is blessed and happy, the other is cursed and miserable. One puts his trust in the Lord, the other puts his trust in his own heart. One is wise, the other foolish.

A wise person is able to navigate well around life's dangerous rocks and cliffs, but a fool sets sail in troubled seas without a moral compass or any means of navigating around the dangers that crush the unsuspecting. It is only a matter of time before his ship drifts into perilous places and is dashed to pieces in the storms of life. It doesn't "just happen"—it happens because foolish decisions were embraced and the ways of wisdom were rejected. The fool without navigation is like the foolish man who built his house on sand with no foundation underneath it.

The foolish man's house looks exactly like the wise man's house, though one is built on sand and the other has its foundation anchored in solid rock. By its outward appearance, the house built on sand looks as strong as the house built on rock. The difference becomes apparent only when the storms of life assail the two houses and the house on the sand collapses in total destruction while the other stands secure. Jesus said everyone who hears His Word and ignores it is like the foolish man who builds his house upon the sand. (Matthew 7:26) He has no wisdom or understanding so he hears, but he goes his way unchanged and unmoved to implement what he has heard. When life's trials and difficulties come, his world collapses and he experiences utter destruction.

When God describes an adulterer He tells us he is like this foolish man. The adulterer lacks understanding, discretion and wisdom—the spiritual navigation tools for life. In essence, he has no means of foreseeing or avoiding danger and no God given ability to apply God's Word to his own life in practical ways. He is destroyed, not because he doesn't know the Word of God, but because he does not believe or apply the Word of God in his life. He doesn't apply it because he lacks the understanding and wisdom that would enable him to do so.

- Without wisdom we do not see evil and do not avoid it.  
“A prudent [wise] man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished [destroyed].” (Proverbs 22:3)
- Without wisdom we are easily deceived by those who rebel against God's ways.  
“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...” (Proverbs 2:10-12 10)  
“And I find more bitter than death the woman, whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands: whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her.” (Ecclesiastes 7:26)
- Without wisdom we become entrapped by sin.  
“The law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death. Good understanding giveth favour: but the way of transgressors is hard.” (Proverbs 13:14-15)
- Without wisdom we cannot build a happy, blessed marriage relationship.  
Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established: and by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches. (Proverbs 24:3)

The mark of a wise man is humble obedience and dependence on the Word of God. The mark of a fool is prideful self dependence and disregard for the importance of wisdom that only comes from God and from dependence and love of His Word. Without submission to the Word of God and God Himself, there can be no wisdom and no God given enablement to produce the fruit of the Spirit. There is no other way to find wisdom than to zealously seek for it in God's Word and from God Himself. "Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth [Word of God] cometh knowledge and understanding." (Proverbs 2:2-6 2)

### **Why do so many adulterers commit adultery repeatedly?**

There are many reasons why adultery is so often repeated. Sometimes adulterers become whoremongers (people who remain enslaved to sexual immorality) because they are not truly born again. The problem can be one of unbelief, an inordinate love for the sin, an unwillingness to give up the sin, a lack of understanding about biblical repentance, or failure to deal with the sins that underlie adulterous behavior. Adulterers who confess their sexual sin but do not deal with the sins that preceded the act do not stay pure for long. They slide right back into the same enticements because they have no more wisdom or understanding than they did before. Counseling must address adultery from start to finish and deal thoroughly with the sins of the heart that are connected to it and feed it, otherwise, counseling will be in vain. The ship can be repaired but if it sets sail once again without its crucial navigation tools, it will end up crushed once again on the rocks of life.

Following is a list of sinful problems that the Word of God connects to the sin of adultery, whether the adulterer is a man or a woman. These are things that need to be addressed and conquered, otherwise, there will be no true victory over sin. The Bible tells us the adulterer and adulteress...

Lacks understanding	Pro 9:16; 6:32;7:7	Is deceitful	Job 24:15; 2 Pet 2:13-14; Jer 23:14; Pro 9:17
Lacks discretion	Pro 2:16	Is unstable	Pro 5:6; Gen 49:4; Jas 1:8; 2 Pet 2:14
Lacks wisdom	Pro 5:1-13; 7:4-5	Is covetous	Exodus 20:17; Eph 5:3; 2 Pet 2:14
Lacks knowledge	Pro 5:1-2	Is disobedient	Tit 3:3; 1 Tim 1:9; Eph 5:6
Lacks love for others	Rom 13:9-10	Is presumptuous	2 Pet 2:10
Lacks self-control	1 Cor 9:27	Is self-willed	2 Pet 2:10
Loves self	2 Tim 3:2	Is self-deceived	Job 31:9; Tit 3:3
Loves pleasure more than God	Titus 3:3	Is hypocritical	Pro 7:14-15

Delights in and makes friends with the world	Pro 2:14	Is prideful	2 Tim 3:2 Pro 13:10
Enjoys uncleanness	Rom 1:32	Is worldly	Tit 2:12
Seeks comfort in illicit sex	Pro 7:18	Is subtle of heart	Pro 7:10
Hates instruction, reproof	Pro 5:12	Is stubborn	Pro 7:11
Forsakes and neglects the Word of God	Pro 6:20-24;7:1-5	Is simple/willfully ignorant	Pro 9:13
Pleases self, not God	Psa 81:12; Ecc 7:26	Is self-indulgent	Gal 5:16; Jas 1:14
Follows heart rather than Christ	Ecc 11:9; Rom 1:24; John 8:12	Treats vows lightly	Rom 1:31; Pro 2:17
Neglects spouse	1 Cor 7: ;Pro 5:15-20	Uses flattery to manipulate others	Pro 2:16; 5:3; 6:24; 7:5; 7:21
Has thoughts filled with lust, sensual desires	Rom 1:28; Mat 5:28; Jas 1:14; Eph 2:3	Seeks those who have a good reputation, are honorable	Pro 6:26
Refuses to repent	Jer 23:14	Does not fear God	Pro 16:6

### **Patterns of Adultery**

Not all adultery is committed with the same motives and intentions. Different adulterers are motivated by different sins. Men and women both engage in adulterous behavior and both become ensnared by sexual filth and immorality, but they tend to be motivated by desires and sins that reflect their gender differences. When Eve made a decision to eat the forbidden fruit, the Bible tells us she was deceived. She believed the lie Satan told her and imagined the fruit would give her the wisdom and knowledge she desired. Convinced she was right, she insisted on doing things her way and urged her husband to follow her. Adam was standing beside her while this conversation was going on and he wasn't fooled by it. The Bible tells us that he knew it was a deception, but he took the fruit from his wife and ate it anyway—perhaps to keep family peace.

Several thousand years later, women are still more easily deceived by spiritual error than men, and men are still more prone to failures in the area of leadership and confrontation than are women. We see the pattern down through the pages of the Bible. Consider Sarah and Abraham. Sarah saw a problem, came up with a solution she believed was wise and urged her husband to follow her advice, taking spiritual leadership of her home. Abraham failed to lead his wife to wait on God, failed to confront her with her error and went along with the plan, which not surprisingly ended in disaster for them both.

The pattern tends to repeat itself as men and women interact with one another and become ensnared with the lusts of their sinful human natures. Women tend to be most often deceived by their emotions, by the intentions of the men they become involved with and by the expectations they assume will come out of the relationship. They often rationalize the relationship to the point they believe it is good and beneficial rather than deceptive and destructive. Men tend to enter into an adulterous relationship knowing full well it is sinful. They often minimize the fact that they are most interested in sexual gratification and are willing to use deception to obtain it. The

fulfillment of sexual fantasies fuels most men's passion, while the fulfillment of emotional fantasies more often fuels a woman's passion. She's more often looking for the perfect companion and he's more often looking for the perfect sexual partner who adores him and makes him feel valued.

Not only do gender differences produce differing motives, but so do personality, past sexual experiences, individual sexual habits, and differing problems in existing marriages. In fact, a variety of motives can often play a part in what attracts and ensnares him or her. While the motives can be numerous, three different patterns of adultery tend to emerge in most cases. The predator, the romantic, and the comfort seeker all commit the same sin and are snared in the same spiritual errors, but they are each attracted and snared by different "bait." There are certainly others, but these are the most common and predictable.

### **The Predator**

This individual learns early in adulthood that he (or she) derives tremendous gratification, both emotionally and sexually, from seeking out and conquering an initially reluctant or hostile sexual "victim." This pursue and conquer activity often becomes an emotional "fix" when experiencing extreme pressure, loneliness, fatigue, or guilt. Typically, the predator tends to lose interest in a sexual conquest once he's established a sexual relationship with her, after which time he'll transfer attachment to another woman who attracts his attention. What provides the sexual "charge" for this adulterer is the "hunt."

Predators tend to lack the ability to see the long term consequences of their sinful behavior and choices. This individual typically has a strong tendency towards self-indulgence, self-centeredness, deceitfulness, and covetousness, even in areas not related to sexual impropriety. Though it may be disguised, they are usually arrogant and highly manipulative. They are often unwilling to admit the level of their deception even when they are caught "red handed" and rarely provide any information other than what has been discovered. In the opinion of the author, this type of adulterer is the most difficult to deal with, and most resistant to repentance. He, or she, tends to have multiple adulterous relationships that are relatively short in duration. Though this individual is adept at initiating relationships, he is ill equipped to sustain them.

### **The Romantic**

This individual often has no intention of becoming sexually involved but allows him or herself to be in situations where he or she forms an emotional bond and intimacy with someone of the opposite sex. Women are most often "romantic" adulterers who tend to fantasize about and covet the attention of confident men who are honorable, successful, and respected by others. Men who are in romantic pursuit tend to fantasize about an attractive woman in his acquaintance, believing his own imaginations about the woman rather than reality. This individual often seeks to marry the person he or she becomes emotionally entangled with and often ends up deeply disappointed once divorces are final and the second marriage has become routine.

The progression towards physical involvement involves many little steps that lead from friendship to emotional intimacy, inappropriate familiarity, physical attachment and at the last, sexual involvement. These types of individuals become extremely attached emotionally and will typically pour their energies into pleasing and wooing those they desire. Their "love" is based on

need and a desire to find fulfillment and security in a relationship. They give sex to win affection and love, while those they get involved with tend to give love and affection to win sexual favors. In the end, the romantic is most often “dumped” and is devastated by the loss and disappointment. Incredibly, he or she will often recover out of depression only when interest is sparked by yet another potential lover.

### **The Comfort Seeker**

Believing ones spouse to be insensitive and unreasonable, or believing one's loneliness is overwhelming, this adulterer's initial desire is to find comfort or compensation by seeking a meaningful, comforting, caring friendship with a member of the opposite sex. This type of person is most vulnerable to being pursued by the perceptive "predator." He or she typically harbors deep rooted bitterness or resentment toward his or her spouse and easily convinces himself that his marriage is hopeless or that his spouse does not love or appreciate him. Quite often this type of person has been genuinely wounded by those he loves, but is unwilling or afraid to confront offenses and broods about them instead. He is often a poor problem solver who prefers to withdraw and engage in self-pity when he faces problems in his marriage or when his efforts are met with resistance.

It is not uncommon for the comfort seeker to be a basically fearful person who is constantly worried and pessimistic. Rather than seek comfort in righteous ways or cultivate the faith that would enable him to find comfort in the love of God, he seeks reassurance in people and is easily manipulated by someone of the opposite sex who is all too happy to “rescue” him and comfort him. This individual is easily deceived and blinded by insincere partners who are attracted to his tenderness and sensitive nature and who deceitfully flatter him and appeal to his search for confidence.

### **A Common Progression of Adultery**

1. The first step toward adultery is a breakdown in one's personal walk with the Lord Jesus Christ. Sometimes unresolved bitterness, resentment, or self-pity precedes the insidious and incremental development of spiritual coldness. Often spiritual activity continues or even increases, though devotion to the Lord becomes increasingly more superficial and mechanical. People who begin to see their spiritual life as consisting of works they do and don't do are in the greatest danger of zealously projecting themselves as warriors for righteousness while at the same time allowing their heart to become cold and indifferent—and ripe for temptation. Worldly amusements and sensual enticements begin to look good to those who neglect their spiritual walk with God.
2. As faith in God and spiritual coldness set in, a spirit of discontent begins to pervade. A lack of thankfulness with God's providential provisions or ones spouse begins to take root in the heart and nit picking and petty criticism become outlets for venting anger and discontent.
3. Next, there is commonly a breakdown in one's thought life, with a tendency towards wishful thinking and fantasizing, accompanied by justification for one's desiring what God has forbidden or not given. It is not altogether uncommon for men to begin planning or plotting an escape or adulterous involvement at this stage—while women more often engage in wishful thinking, imagining themselves with someone other than their spouse.

4. Tentative crossing over normative lines of appropriate behavior between unmarried individuals or individual follows. Subtle flirtations or overly affectionate behavior with one or more individuals of the opposite sex develops.
5. Un-admitted or disguised courting behavior begins with a selected individual, and includes increasing shared emotional and verbal intimacy. Emotional entanglement results with attachment growing as emotions are allowed to grow unchecked.
6. Thoughts become extremely focused on the person who is becoming the object of affection. Adulterous individuals tend to mentally rehearse pleasant and/or arousing interactions when alone, and look forward to the next opportunity to interact together. Thoughts very commonly include imagining the spouse's death, thus legitimizing thoughts of marriage with the surviving spouses. The thoughts will conform to what the person deeply desires in a relationship, not necessarily what is really true. This is one reason why so many second marriages end in divorce once the involved parties realize the person they "fell in love with" (became emotionally attached to) is not the same person they actually married. The perfect mate is all too often a tremendous figment of the imagination and heart's desire.
7. Obvious emotional detachment from spouse with increasing attachment to, and dependence on an adulterous partner builds an increasingly strong bond in the adulterous relationship.
8. Casual touching, hugging becomes frequent and increasingly more passionate.
9. Involved individuals begin manipulating circumstances to be alone privately with one another.
10. Touching, hugging, and kissing increases to more prolonged contact and petting.
11. When the opportunity develops, sexual involvement takes place.
12. Recognition of sexual and emotional dependency are accompanied by possessiveness and an obsessive desire to be with one another.
13. It's at this point that the couple often becomes increasingly more careless about secretiveness until they are discovered or become bold enough to leave their marriage partners in order to live together. When this happens, friends and family are often stunned by the arrogance and level of anger the adulterer will display toward a spouse or concerned family and friends. It shouldn't surprise us, because fools commit adultery and the nature of the fool is to blindly rage at those who reprove him. "A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident." (Proverbs 14:16)

### **Can adultery ever be "cured"?**

Everything that has been said thus far paints a very bleak picture of adultery. If we are truthful and look at it through God's eyes, the picture is far worse than any of us could ever imagine. As if this isn't sobering enough, we learn from God's Word that God considers adultery so wicked it is worthy of death. "And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death..." (Leviticus 20:10) Pondering the seriousness of this sin ought to bring us to confess as sin our oft flippant treatment of adulterous betrayal and broken wedding vows. It should never be the topic of humor nor should we reduce the harshness of the word "adultery" by referring to it

as “an affair.” It is far more than a little indiscretion or “affair.” It is a sin worthy of capital punishment.

This is the bad news—now let’s consider the good news. The same God who created us and loves us is immeasurably gracious and merciful and has provided a way for the adulterer and adulteress to be forgiven and changed by His power. *God’s grace does not reduce the seriousness of the sin or His opinion of it.* What it did is move Almighty God to express His love for guilty sinners enough to pay the death penalty for adultery Himself on the cross of Calvary. The work and sacrifice of Christ makes it possible for God to extend mercy and forgiveness to those who genuinely repent of their sin and turn to God in obedience. The hard part isn’t admitting the sin or asking God’s forgiveness, the hard part is humbling ones self before God, seeking the change of heart, repentance, forgiveness and cleansing that only God can give.

No sinner has ever received God’s forgiveness or grace that did not first admit his helpless condition and humble himself before God. The Scriptures tell us God resists (is opposed to) the proud, but gives grace to the humble. (James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5) No sinner has ever repented without God’s grace giving Him the ability to do so. We read, “...In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;” (2 Timothy 2:25) Without God given repentance, the heart of the adulterer is not transformed, though he may be sorry for his sin and desire reconciliation with his spouse. Yet *with* genuine repentance, the heart of the adulterer can be wonderfully and miraculously transformed into one that loathes the sins of lust and adultery and loves moral purity and ones spouse.

The story of a woman caught in adultery, found in the Gospel of John, gives us a glimpse of the compassion and mercy of Christ toward a repentant adulterer. In it you see the consequence the sin deserves—death. You see the hypocrisy of those who want to condemn the adulterer rather than restore her when the scribes bring the woman, but not the man, and demand Jesus pronounce judgment. Then we see the ones who point the finger being convicted of their own guilt as they walk away, unable to cast the first stone. We see the tender compassion of Christ as he asks the guilty woman where her accusers are, and there are none left. And finally, we see the grace and forgiveness of God when Christ tells her, “Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.” What hope the repentant adulterer has in coming to Christ for mercy! What hope a betrayed spouse has, knowing God can transform hearts and create out of nothing one that truly loves as Christ loves.

The very next statement Jesus made to the crowd that stood by watching this drama unfold helps us grasp the lesson Jesus wants all of us to learn and understand. Jesus turned to the crowd and said, “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” The message is that those who follow and obey Christ live in the light of His truth and aren’t blinded by the deceptions of sins such as adultery, hypocrisy, and pride. Those who walk in the light live in open honesty and have no compulsion to hide their inner life in dark corners. They run to God for forgiveness, not run from Him in fear. They overcome the pull of sin and temptation by “walking in the Spirit” (Galatians 5:16-17) not depending on their own “will power.” Those who walk after the sinful desires of human nature live in dishonesty, hiding

their sin in darkness, unable to see the glorious light of God’s truth and unwilling to give up their sin though it be the cause of their destruction.

Those who see the devastation and miseries of adultery need to be warned by what they see for they too can be sucked into the darkness of “deceitful lusts” of many kinds if they do not follow Christ and walk in His light. “And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.” (John 3:19-21)

### **Distinguishing the Difference between True Repentance and Worldly Sorrow**

Charles Spurgeon once said, “It cannot be that pardon of sin should be given to an impenitent sinner. This would only confirm him in his evil ways and teach him to think little of evil. If the Lord were to say, "You love sin and live in it, and you are going on from bad to worse, but all the same, I forgive you," this would proclaim a horrible license for iniquity. The foundations of social order would be removed and moral anarchy would follow. I cannot tell what innumerable wrongs would occur if you could divide repentance and forgiveness, and could pass by the sin while the sinner remained as fond of it as ever.

“If we understand the holiness of God, we know we cannot be forgiven if we continue to sin and refuse to repent of it. We will reap the consequence of our obstinacy. According to God's infinite goodness, we are promised that if we will forsake our sins, confess them, and by faith accept the grace which is provided in Christ Jesus, God "is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). But as long as God lives, there can be no promise of mercy to those who continue in their evil ways and refuse to acknowledge their wrongdoing. Surely no rebel can expect the King to pardon his treason while he remains in open revolt. No one can be so foolish as to imagine that the Judge of all the earth will put away our sins if we refuse to put them away ourselves.” (*All of Grace*)

### **2 Corinthians 7:9-11**

9—Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance; for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.	Repentance is not just being sorry for something, but being sorry enough to turn away from the sin.
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10—For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world worketh death.	There are two kinds of sorrow: worldly sorrow and godly sorrow. Worldly sorrow is painful regret, which focuses on our feelings, is self-condemning, and frustrating to us. Godly sorrow is concerned first for the good of others and the honor of God, seeks to right wrongs and to change behavior. Most people will quickly admit they are sinners—few ever admit they are HELPLESS sinners, unable to save or change their own hearts. Worldly sorrow simply admits a wrong—godly sorrow recognizes man’s helpless, sinful condition and turns to God to forgiveness and cleansing.
11a—For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness	True repentance produces a diligence to do right.
11b— it wrought in you, yea what clearing of yourselves	True repentance produces a cleared conscience.
11c—yea, what indignation	True repentance produces displeasure over sin,
11d—yea, what fear	a fear and awareness of God,
11e—yea, what zeal	an eagerness to serve God,
11f— yea, what revenge	and a willingness to carry out restitution.

**Isn’t the devil responsible for luring people into adultery?**

While it is true that Satan is the arch enemy of Christ and His kingdom and it is true that he does deceive people, it is not true that Satan *makes* people sin. The Bible clearly says that we are tempted when we are drawn away by our own lust, and enticed. (James 1:14-16) Satan may provide “bait” but he can’t force us to take the hook. We are to be aware of Satan’s “baiting” tactics and understand we are engaged in spiritual warfare in this world, yet we are also to remember that Satan is a defeated foe with limitations and limited access to believers. We are instructed not to imitate him or be incited by his tricks of deceit, “Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.” (2 Corinthians 2:11)

Satan’s work is always characterized by deceit. He is a master liar and the father of lies. Satan uses full blown lies, half truth, twisted truth, silent lies, insinuating lies, etc. Satan is the tempter, accuser, and deceiver whose goal is moral lordship over God's creation. To fight this adversary is to simultaneously fight both the world and the flesh. Satan's malice animates the world and beguiles the human heart without ever making humans less than responsible for their sin. To fight conformity to and friendship with the world is to fight Satan. To fight the dark lies and

selfish desires of the flesh is to fight Satan. The three appear in concert. However, God primarily focuses on the flesh, the human heart, and man's vulnerability to sin. The world provides the situations that reveal and test the character of people. The devil provides the antagonist who reveals man's confidence and faith in God or lack thereof.

One of Satan's most successful devices is to divide believers making them easy to conquer. Satan introduces and magnifies disagreements, inciting people to tenaciously maintain their own cause and consider others with contempt, thus destroying unity and relationships God meant to be sweet, making people's opinions more important than God's principles which are designed to produce genuine unity and harmony. This leads to what the Bible calls biting and devouring one another until our relationships are destroyed. Satan's lies, the lusts of our sinful human nature and the philosophies of the world might look something like this:

**Satan's lies:** Contained in this tactic are lies such as, "You can't work together or live together with a spouse who doesn't agree with you. You can't overlook faults that make you miserable. God is a God of love and understands you deserve to be happy. God brought you together and knows divorce and remarriage is your only option."

**The flesh:** "I don't like the ordeal of having to work things out with difficult people. I like to work with people who agree with me and show me how much they love me. I don't like being forgiving and I don't like the time it takes out of my day to communicate with people. Being with someone other than my spouse makes me feel loved and respected. I don't love my spouse anymore so there's no hope of working things out."

**The world:** "I need to look out for #1 - myself. If someone hurts me, it's perfectly normal to want to hurt them back, or curse them. All the experts agree that divorce is sometimes the only solution. I'm not going to be a doormat. I've been told by more than one intelligent person that I need to get out of my marriage and start taking care of myself."

Following are some key passages of scripture that help us understand how Satan works.

**The nature of Satan is to lie, hate, destroy and rebel against truth.**

John 8:44 44 - Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

**We know he is extremely subtle and seeks to distort what is right.**

Acts 13:10 10 - And said, O full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

**Satan twists the Word of God just enough to confuse or mislead people.**

And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

**Satan tries to cast doubt on God's character and goodness so we will not trust Him.**

And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

**Satan hates the Word of God and attempts to keep people from believing it**

Matthew 13:19 19 - When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

**Satan seizes opportunities to provoke us when we are self-willed or fail to obey God.**

1 Chronicles 21:1-3 - And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel. And David said to Joab and to the rulers of the people, Go, number Israel from Beersheba even to Dan; and bring the number of them to me, that I may know it. And Joab answered, The LORD make his people an hundred times so many more as they be: but, my lord the king, are they not all my lord's servants? why then doth my lord require this thing? why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel?

**Satan desires to destroy us, but can not apart from our yielding to our own selfish lusts.**

Luke 22:31 31 - And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:

**Satan loves to influence Christians to lie and sin, so he can mock them and accuse them**

Acts 5:3 3 - But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

1 Corinthians 7:5 5 - Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.

**Satan's battlefield is the mind.**

2 Corinthians 11:3 - But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:4 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

**Satan has limited power--he must have God's permission before he is allowed to oppress us.**

Job 1:11-12 11 - But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

**The way to make Satan flee from you is to submit to God.**

James 4:7 7 - Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you

1 Peter 5:8-9 - Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

**Satan is defeated by the work of Christ at Calvary and our faith in Christ.**

Revelation 12:9-11 - And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

**The only offensive weapon given to Christians is the Word of God**

Ephesians 6:11-16 - Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. and therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

**Satan looks for opportunities to appeal to our flesh or to our pride. Our victory is always in dependance on Crhsit (prayer) and submission to God (the Word of God.) We must always live by the principle, "It is written..." and "watch and pray."**

Matthew 4:1-6 - Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Matthew 26:41 - Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

**A Lesson from one who handled temptation right**

Joseph was a godly man who possessed great leadership qualities, character, and good looks. He was well liked, and respected—just the kind of person both men and women are attracted to. We read about Joseph's ordeal with a tenacious adulteress in the book of Genesis. "And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favored. And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her." (Genesis 39:6-10)

Potiphar's wife appeared to be idle, and quite likely, lonely. Notice she cast her eyes on Joseph, and worked on him day by day, speaking to him, enticing him. Adultery takes place slowly, in small steps. It doesn't "just happen!" The adulterer or adulterous takes delight in winning the affections of a noble and highly respected person. The Bible tells us, " 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." (Proverbs 6:26)

Joseph wisely understood and identified her advances by its right name, "great wickedness, (sin) against God." Notice his determination to do right and refusal to listen to her or even be with her. Perhaps Joseph, like Job, wisely recognized the starting point of adultery and made a commitment not to look at a sexually attractive woman. "I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid? If mine heart have been deceived by a woman, or if I have laid wait at my neighbour's door; then let my wife grind unto another, and let others bow down upon her. For this is a heinous crime..." (Job 31:1,9)

When Potiphar's wife didn't get the message that Joseph wasn't interested and tried to make physical advances, he did what everyone ought to do when tempted by sin—he fled from it. The Bible says, "And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out." There is a time when the only way to resist evil is to flee and remove yourself as far from it as you can get. Paul told believers, "Flee fornication..." (1 Corinthians 6:18) and "Flee youthful lusts..." (2 Timothy 2:22) Joseph was wise enough to know that talking and reasoning with Mrs. Potiphar wasn't going to dissuade her to leave him alone. He cut himself off without another word.

Once someone becomes entangled in an emotional relationship that is inciting the imagination and igniting passions and desires that are unrighteous, the only thing that prevents the physical act of adultery is an opportunity. At this point, one who wants to do what is right must not trust his emotions or passions or fleshly desires—he or she needs to flee the situation and never look back. Talking, reasoning or explaining will not prevent the inevitable. Letting one's partner down slowly or easily will not quench the flames of this fire. One must cry out to God for help and then immediately cut off the relationship cold turkey, refusing to talk, see, or communicate in any way with one who has an emotional hold on one's affections and passions. Something as simple as a phone message, little note, or smile reignites passion and prevents one from severing the emotional tie and regaining control and perspective. The relationship can never "go back to being friends." It is like toothpaste that cannot be put back into the tube—it will never work. "Fleeing" may include changing jobs, friends or a church home. These are drastic and painful decisions, but absolutely necessary—with no exceptions.

### **Marriage is build one day at a time, one decision at a time**

When love is the ruling motivation of whatever decision a husband or wife makes in regards to meeting the needs of a spouse and marriage, the relationship will grow stronger year after year. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor." (Romans 13:10) That means, every decision or action a spouse makes should be for no other reason than the good of ones marriage partner and honor of the Lord Jesus. Whatever one says or does, one might ask first, "Is it loving?" Romans 15:2-3 tells us, "Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ

pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.” True love always demands self-sacrifice.

Two people stand before the preacher or other qualified person, and in the presence of witnesses vow to love, honor, and cherish their spouse. The marriage vow is made, not just to a husband or wife, but to God. The wedding vow is a very sacred and binding promise that one will love ones husband or wife self-sacrificially, and be his or her lifetime companion—no matter what. Two people vow to love one another as long as they both should live—not as long as they both feel like it. And they can do that, by God’s strength, and by the wisdom He’s made available to them in the scriptures—if they choose to—and if they will learn how to by God’s grace. No marriage is hopeless and nothing can destroy a marriage—not even adultery—except an unwillingness to repent or an unwillingness to forgive.

### **Things to remember and discuss**

- Adultery is motivated by what a person desires to get, not by what one wants to give (which is the basis for genuine love).  
For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. Romans 13:9-10
- Adultery begins with the thoughts of the heart. Pity for self, discontent with spouse, unwillingness to build a proper relationship with spouse, or forgive and overlook his or her imperfection makes a marriage partner vulnerable to improper emotional involvements with other people outside marriage. Emotional involvement and entanglement always precedes sexual involvement.  
"Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications..." Mat. 15:19  
"But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies..." Matt. 15:18  
"But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." James 1:14,15
- Worldliness prepares the soil of ones heart to accept an immoral relationship. Sensual humor, friends, conversation, soap operas, romance novels, TV programs, movies, and magazines all stir improper emotions in men and women, and contribute to the development of unrealistic expectations, dissatisfaction, or desire for illicit sexual involvement.  
"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul." I Pet. 2:11  
"Keep your heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." Prov. 4:23  
"And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the words, and it becometh unfruitful." Mark 4:19

- Indulging in a sensual thought life, or fantasizing about a romance do more than arouse sexual passion—it opens the door to adulterous relationships. Contrary to many popular psychological theories, sexual fantasize that are unrighteous are NOT healthy, or innocent. They set the stage for improper affections that easily get out of control. They rob an individual of the ability to achieve great sexual satisfaction through love and respect for ones spouse.

"Make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof." Rom 13:14

"This I say then, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Gal. 5:16,17

"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret." Eph. 5:11,12
- A failure to deliberately build and diligently maintain walls of protection around ones life gives sin (the enemy) a stronghold, which eventually destroys ones life (city). He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls. Proverbs 25:28
- Establishing close or exclusive friendships with the opposite sex breaks down walls of protection and draws people into physical intimacy.

"Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband."
- Adulterous behavior includes more than sexual intercourse. Mental adultery, or adulterous behavior, includes any thoughts of sexual involvement between a married person with anyone other than his or her spouse as well as any intimacy, emotional or physical, that rightfully belongs to a spouse alone. One can be sinfully involved in adulterous behavior without engaging in actual sexual intercourse. (Matt:27-28; Pro. 24:9; Ex. 20:17; Pro. 30:32)

Both the immoral thoughts of the heart and the act of physical intercourse with another person's spouse are forbidden by God. Exodus 20:14 - Thou shalt not commit adultery. Exodus 20:17 - Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.
- Clothes advertise and tease. They communicate messages that encourage sensuality or propriety. Sensuality is enjoyable, but it belongs at home, in the bedroom, with ones spouse—not in the office, at church or anywhere else.

"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." Tit. 2:12

"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." I Tim. 2:9,10

- Neglecting ones marriage and relationship both physically and emotionally invite Satan's temptations and puts marriage partners in danger of being enticed by sin. Physical relations are to be an active part of the marriage commitment and are God's plan for companionship between married individuals. The adulterer is never excused nor his sin mitigated by an inattentive or difficult spouse, but such a spouse definitely sets his or her marriage up for trouble and destruction.

"Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." Heb.13:4

"Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence; and likewise also the wife unto the husband...Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency." I Cor. 11:3

- Ones relationship with Christ is more important than any other relationship in the world. One only loves a marriage partner to the extent one loves God. The sweetest marriages are made when the Lord Jesus Christ is the center of a couples life and serving Him and loving Him the ultimate object of their affection. One cannot have a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and an adulterous relationship at the same time. It will be one or the other.

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth....Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupisence, and covetousness, which is idolatry...put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him..." Col. 3:1-10

"Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish; thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee. But it is good for me to draw near to God..." Ps. 73:25-28

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other... Mt 6:24

- Passages of scripture to study  
Proverbs 2:16-22; Proverbs 5:1-23; Proverbs 6:20-35; Proverbs 2:16-22; Proverbs 7:1-24; Proverbs 9:13-18; Romans 13:9-14; Romans 1:28-32; 1Corinthians 6:13-20; Ephesians 5:3-19; Colossians 3:2-17; 1 Timothy 3:2-9; 2 Peter 2:1-22