

The Sanctity Of Marriage

Exodus 20:14

Pastor John Miller

Exodus 20:14 is the Seventh Commandment. It says, "You shall not commit adultery."

Back in 1631, there was a translation of the King James Bible that was being printed and massively produced. Somehow, somehow—they don't know how it happened—when they printed the Bible and the bishop was examining the Scriptures and was reading the Ten Commandments, verse 14 read, "Thou shalt commit adultery." That one little word "not" was omitted in that verse. So that Bible became known as "the wicked Bible."

Today if that Bible were printed, it would probably become a best seller. Everybody would want that one, because we live in a culture that has rejected God, rejected God's Word and we're suffering as a result of it. Nothing will destroy a life, a marriage, a family, a church and a nation more quickly and completely than sexual immorality.

I've watched marriages struggle in this area for many years. This sin of adultery is so painful. We pay a terrible price in America in the church today. Nothing will destroy a life, a marriage, a family like this sin of breaking the Seventh Commandment. And at no other point is contemporary morality more obviously in conflict with God's law than in the standard found in the Seventh Commandment, "You shall not commit adultery."

Marriage is a sexual union between a husband and a wife, and it is God's gift to humanity. Marriage is God's idea. Sex is God's idea. Some people are surprised by that. Some people are surprised to hear a pastor use the word "sex." But the subject is in the Bible, and sexual immorality is rampant in our culture.

So what we will learn is what God has to say about the sanctity of marriage, sex within marriage and how this sin is so rampant in our culture today.

In Genesis 2, God made man in His image and likeness. He caused the man to fall asleep, took from Adam's rib and made a woman. Then God brought the woman to the man.

Can you imagine Adam taking a nap and then waking up to find he's married?! But Adam had been looking at the animals all day long, and when he saw the woman, Eve, he said, "Wow, man!" so he named her "wo-man." That's not so far off from the original Hebrew. "I'd been looking at aardvarks and guinea pigs all day, and Lord, this is what I was lookin' for!" Adam could look up to God, down at the animals, but he could look straight into the eyes of this beautiful woman that God had created for him.

The first marriage was performed by God for man's good and for God's glory. And the sexual union in marriage is described in Genesis 2:24, where it says, "and they shall become one flesh."

So the sexual union is a gift to the husband and to the wife. It is to provide procreation, pleasure and intimacy in a marriage relationship. And sexual intimacy is only for the covenant relationship of marriage.

Let me be a little more specific. Marriage is the heterosexual union between a man and a woman. Jesus said, "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." The Bible also say, "Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate," Matthew 19:5-6. So this is how God has designed the marriage relationship.

Hebrews 13:4 is a great passage on this subject. It says, "Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge." So the marriage bed is to be undefiled, "but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."

I've always felt that 1 Corinthians 7:1-5 is an important passage that ties into the Seventh Commandment and an important area of marriage that I think every married person needs to see in the Bible. Paul begins by saying, "Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me." The believers lived in the Greek culture in Corinth, and there was so much sexual immorality that they apparently wanted to know about that from Paul the Apostle. So he said to them, "It is good for a man not to touch a woman."

When Paul says that "It is good for a man not to touch a woman," in the context he is referring to sexual relationships outside of marriage. That becomes clear when you read the whole passage. So it is good for a man not to get sexually involved with a woman or a woman with a man outside the covenant of marriage.

Now notice what he says in verse 2: "Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality...." Or Paul is saying "to avoid fornication," which is the Greek word "porneia," from which we get our word "pornographic," that has a very broad, general concept of any sexual immorality or illicit sex."

Paul goes on to say in order to avoid sexual immorality, "Let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband." This is the description of marriage from the Bible.

Then in verse 3, "Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband." This verse describes conjugal rights in the marriage relationship. "The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time...."

If you're not going to be sexually intimate in your marriage relationship, here is the basis for it: You both agree for a short time, a limited time, "...that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control."

If that isn't needed in marriages today, I don't know what is. This is something that God laid out

for the marriage relationship. To avoid sexual immorality, every man is to have his own wife and every woman, her own husband. And render to your spouse due benevolence. You don't have power over your own body, but your body belongs to your spouse.

But if you do abstain, it is something that is mutually agreed upon, so you can pray and fast and seek the Lord. Then come back together again quickly "so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control."

Paul is talking about sexual intimacy in marriage, and then he throws the devil into the mix. That's because the devil hates marriage. He does all he can to destroy your marriage. And sexual immorality will destroy your marriage like nothing else. Infidelity is a horrible thing.

If we follow the Seventh Commandment, in Exodus 20:14, as God's design for marriage, we will bring blessing to ourselves, to our marriage, to our children and grandchildren, to the church and to the nation around us. Remember that God's laws are for our good and for His glory.

Now I have four questions I will ask and answer about the Seventh Commandment. First, "What is this law prohibiting? What are we not to do according to this Commandment?" There are five, sinful things. Number one is adultery. The verb "to commit adultery" in the Hebrew is used of either a man or a woman. Sometimes we think that this is a verse for men only, but it's also for women. When a man or a woman commit adultery, both have broken this Commandment.

Adultery is any kind of sex outside the marriage relationship, as God has designed it, that is committed by either the husband or the wife. So for any married individual, sexual intimacy is to be reserved only for your spouse. It is only for the husband and wife. It is never to go outside your marriage relationship.

Proverbs 5:15-21 instructs young men. Verse 15 says, "Drink water from your own cistern, and running water from your own well." And verse 18 says, "Rejoice with the wife of your youth." I like that.

Hebrew 13:4 says, "Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers..."—the same as the Seventh Commandment—"...God will judge."

Also, Jesus said in Matthew 15:19, "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." Jesus listed adultery and fornication as sins that come from the heart of man.

The sin of adultery is a great sin. You say, "Well, isn't all sin equal?" All sin is equal, but sins are not all equal in their damage and affects. Adultery is a grievous, wicked sin, and we should understand its gravity.

It is a great sin because, first, it is a sin against God the Creator. God created sex for marriage only, and when you have sex outside of marriage, you dishonor God. That's why this sin is

sacrilege. It's why we speak of "the sacredness or sanctity" of marriage. So it's a violation of God.

When David committed adultery with Bathsheba and his sin was exposed by Nathan the prophet, in 2 Samuel 12, David later wrote Psalm 51 in repentance. Nathan asked David, "Why have you despised the commandment of the Lord?" Then David, in Psalm 51:4, said, "Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight."

That's what we need to understand. When we sin, we sin not only against our spouse, against the person we sin with and their spouse, against our children, against the body of Christ and others, but we also sin primarily and most importantly against God.

This is why nothing is more important for us to have than the fear of the Lord. The Bible says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." That's why the first tablet of stone deals with our relationship to God, because when we're right with God and then loving our neighbor as ourselves, we won't be killing them, we won't be committing adultery, we won't be lying or stealing or coveting their things.

It says in the Tenth Commandment, in verse 17, "You shall not covet your neighbor's...wife." That's adultery. So it's condemned very clearly in the Bible.

When Joseph was tempted by Mrs. Potiphar, he said, "How...can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" So this is a sin against God.

Secondly, the sin of adultery is a sin against your neighbor. You're not "[loving] your neighbor as yourself." We have such a perverted definition of love in our culture today. Love is always pure, kind and obedient to God's Word. And love is not a passing emotion; it's a continual devotion. It's not a feeling. It's not "as long as we both shall love." "As long as we get tingles when we touch one another, we'll stay married." I don't think that would last very long.

You make a decision, a commitment—it's called "the covenant of marriage"—to love, "in sickness and health, for richer, for poorer, for better, for worse, as long as we both shall live." It's not "as long as you both shall love" or "as long as you both meet each other's needs." No. It's a commitment you make to seek the highest good of the object loved. So it's loving your neighbor and not coveting his wife.

Thirdly, it's a sin against your body, 1 Corinthians 6:16, 18. Paul makes an amazing statement here. In writing to the Corinthians—the city of Corinth was known to be one of the most licentious and wicked cities in all of the Roman Empire—Paul said, "Do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her?...Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality..."—or "adultery"—"...sins against his own body."

Fourthly, it is a sin that brings great pain, sorrow and destruction. For so many years I've watched the hurt, the pain, the anguish, the destruction, the damage done by what the world calls "a fling" or "an affair." What utter destruction! Sin brings forth death. For some people, it

would be better if they found out their spouse was killed in an automobile accident than to find out they had violated their trust.

Whenever I do premarital counseling, one of the things I make very clear is never, ever violate your spouse's trust. It's like a very fragile vase, and once it's broken, it cannot be fully repaired. Never begin to go down that path. It's very, very painful.

And to put it in New Testament context, Jesus said in Matthew 19:8-9 that divorce was a basis or God's divine concession to human sin, namely, sexual immorality. The Bible doesn't say that you need to get a divorce or you should get a divorce, but God allows divorce when sexual immorality has taken place in a marriage relationship. And I think divorce breaks the heart of God, because Jesus said, "What God has joined together, let not man separate."

Now this Seventh Commandment has far wider applications than just infidelity or adultery in a marriage relationship. The Commandment also prohibits, secondly, fornication. In the Old Testament, the two sins that are condemned the most are idolatry and adultery. You often find these sins listed together. In the New Testament, the sin that is the most condemned is the sin of fornication. That's the number-one sin that is condemned in the New Testament Scriptures.

Paul, in writing to the believers in Thessalonica, said in 1 Thessalonians 4:3, "For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality." The word is "fornication" in the English Bible. It's the Greek word "porneia," from which we get our word "pornographic."

What is "fornication"? We often think of adultery—and rightly so—that it's the committing of sexual sin of a married man or a married woman with someone other than their spouse outside the marriage relationship. And that's true.

Sexual immorality also applies to the single individual. You're not married, but you say, "Well, we're in love and we're going to get married." So you have sex together. This scenario comes under the umbrella of "fornication." It's sexual immorality.

This is where our culture just freaks out. They can't conceive of or imagine abstinence. We have all these safe-sex programs and sex education in our schools. We're encouraging kids to be intimate with one another. It's insanity! It's destructive! It's destroying the very soul of our nation, of our country.

Fornication is a damaging sin against God and the body. It is premarital sex and any sex outside of marriage.

This Commandment includes and prohibits, thirdly, homosexuality. I believe that all these sins I've listed come under the Commandment, "You shall not commit adultery."

Leviticus 18:22 says, "You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination." Leviticus 20:13 says, "If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have

committed an abomination.” These Old Testament passages clearly condemn homosexuality.

You ask, “What about Sodom and Gomorrah?” Yes; I believe that’s a picture of this sin and of the destruction and judgment of God. But the Leviticus passages are verses that actually say that God condemns homosexuality.

From the New Testament, we have 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, where Paul said that some of the believers in Corinth were homosexuals, but now they were washed and forgiven and restored by the blood of Jesus Christ. “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. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.”

In Romans 1:26-28, Paul said, “For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due....God gave them over to a debased...”—or “reprobate”—“...mind, to do those things which are not fitting.”

In Jude 1:7, God judged and destroyed because of sexual immorality. “As Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.”

1 Timothy 1:9-10 lists those who have been sexually impure, and God will judge them. “The law is not made for a righteous person, but for the ungodly and for sinners...for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers.”

Fourthly, this Commandment includes and prohibits pornography. Yes; I believe “You shall not commit adultery” includes pornographic literature, movies and videos on the Internet. Again, “fornication” is the Greek word “porneia,” from which we get our word “pornographic.” It includes voyeurism, watching others on TV, in the movies or on videos. It’s against God’s Word.

Fifthly, the Seventh Commandment’s prohibition includes lustful thoughts. You say, “Did I just hear you correctly?—‘lustful thoughts’?! I haven’t committed adultery, I’m not a fornicator, I’m not a homosexual, I’m not into pornography, so I was feeling pretty good about myself.”

Isn’t it interesting that Jesus made reference, in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, to “You shall not murder,” verse 21, and then right next to it in the same Sermon on the Mount, He made reference to “You shall not commit adultery,” verse 27. Jesus quotes the Seventh Commandment and gives His interpretation.

Verse 27-28, “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’” So Jesus acknowledges that it’s in the Decalogue. “But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman...”—and that means “anybody” and includes a man looking at a woman, a woman looking at a man, a man looking at a man or a woman looking at a woman—“...to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

The damage done by lustful desires isn’t quite as great as doing it in a bed, but you’re doing it in the heart, and Jesus said that it is the heart that leads to the action. God views that as adultery in your heart.

So just when you’re feeling pretty good and thinking you’ve escaped this message, we’re all guilty. Our sins include all those I’ve mentioned and more. These sins are condemned by God. The Bible says, “There is none righteous, no, not one....All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

My second question I want to ask and answer about the Seventh Commandment is, “What are the steps that can often lead to the sin of adultery?” Different people take different paths, so this is generally speaking.

In 2 Samuel 11-12, is the story of David’s sin with Bathsheba. It will give you insight into why David committed sin with Bathsheba. Instead of David going out to battle with his army—he was in midlife—he decided to stay home. He went up on his roof, which was flat, and he looked over to a courtyard nearby and saw Bathsheba taking a bath. David looked, he inquired and then he lay with her. So we see some of the steps David took along the way toward this horrible sin with Bathsheba.

First, making a devotional application, I would call it “spiritual apathy.” David stayed in Jerusalem sitting around idle. Why wasn’t he out fighting the battle? There is an old saying that says, “Idleness is the devil’s workshop.”

If you’re not reading your Bible, you’re not praying, you’re not seeking the Lord, you’re not going to church, you’re not serving the Lord, you are headed down a path that is very dangerous. “I don’t need to read my Bible anymore; I’ve already read it through once.” “I don’t need to go to church; those Christians are crazy!” “I don’t need to go to church; John Miller’s sermon are too long.” You’re on a dangerous path. That’s spiritual apathy, spiritual coldness.

The second step is undisciplined vision. It says in 2 Samuel 11:2 that David “saw a woman bathing, and the woman was very beautiful to behold.” Now there are times when you can’t help the first look, but you don’t have to take a second or a third look or a fourth look. Some guys have said to me, “Well, I don’t take a second look. I just take one long first look.” Whatever. It’s that lustful look. Guard your eyes. Be careful what goes in your eye gate. “As he thinks in his heart, so is he.”

So you begin to look in places you shouldn’t look. You’re on the Internet looking at things. You’re on the TV, you’re at movies, you’re looking at magazines you shouldn’t look at. You’re

looking at your neighbor's wife or a woman at work. Have disciplined vision. In the book of Job, he said, "I made a covenant with my eyes; why then should I look upon a young woman?"

The third step is undisciplined thoughts. The Bible says, "David sent and inquired about the woman." So he asked one of his servants, "Who is that beautiful woman bathing next to my house outdoors?" And the servant replied that she was "the wife of Uriah the Hittite." He probably said it like this: "the wife of Uriah the Hittite, one of your soldiers who is out fighting the battle." Then David went a step further and called for her, and "he lay with her."

So it started with spiritual apathy that lead to undisciplined vision that lead to undisciplined thoughts that yielded to sin. David didn't nip this in the bud.

In James 1:13-15, it says, "Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am tempted by God'; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away..."—it is a fishing term; it is a lure to draw a fish to the hook—"...by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived..."—you take the hook—"...it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death."

If you commit adultery, you have no one to blame but yourself. You've sinned against God. It's a great wickedness and you need to repent. And God will forgive your sins.

Nathan finally came to David, who tried to cover his sin by having Bathsheba's husband, Uriah, killed. So by coveting, you lie, you murder, you commit adultery. David coveted, David committed adultery, David lied, David stole another man's wife and then David murdered her husband. It started with covetousness in the heart, that lustful desire. So when you break one sin, it leads to the breaking of another and not loving your neighbor and being disobedient to God.

Nathan came to David and told him a parable about a rich man who had many flocks and herds. Someone came to visit him, and instead of taking a lamb from his own flocks to serve as dinner for his friend, he went to his neighbor and took his one, little, ewe lamb and had it slain. It wasn't to be eaten because it was a pet. This rich man took it violently, slew it and fed it to his friend.

When David heard this story, he got angry. He said, "The man who has done this shall surely die!" Then Nathan the prophet said to David, "You are the man!" Then the floodgates were opened in David's heart, and he said, "I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said to David, "The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die." But Nathan also told him that "The sword shall never depart from your house."

God forgave David, but the consequences of his sin remained. God is not going to erase the consequences. The Bible says, "He who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption." David was forgiven, but the sword was going to come into his home.

And that's what happened. David's son raped a daughter of David. A stepbrother murdered the

son who raped her. David's son, Absalom, rebelled against his father. That sword never departed from David's family. Think of the consequences and damage of yielding to the sin of adultery!

I like what R. Kent Hughes said. "When we are in the grip of lust, the reality of God fades. The longer King David gazed, the less real God became. But in the growing darkness he lost awareness also of who he was—his holy call, his frailty, the sin and consequence of it. This is what lust does. It has done it millions of times. Lust makes God disappear in those who are sinful."

When we are lusting, we lose God. And we lose our perspective of who we are—children of God. Then we are violating God's Word and God's commands.

My third question to ask and answer is, "What can we do to resist the temptation of committing this sin of adultery?" This list will not be all inclusive, and there are different paths for different people. Let me give you some things to do to safeguard your marriage against the sin of adultery.

Number one, recognize your potential for moral failure. 1 Corinthians 10:12 says, "Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall." When you think you are beyond sexual immorality—"It's not going to happen to me."—I don't want to watch. But you need to humbly say, "God help me, God protect me, God watch over me, God help me to be vigilant and careful, or I will fall."

Number two, realize that God has promised a way to bear up under temptation, 1 Corinthians 10:13. "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it." Joseph escaped by just running for his life. Sometimes God just give you two feet, and He wants you to use them.

Number three, resolve to be pure. Don't wait until you lose sight of God by your lustful thoughts, and you're in the grip of lust. But rather be a Daniel. In Daniel 1, he "purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself" with the king's food. You have to decide right now, right here that you will stay pure and faithful to your spouse.

Number four, remove all bitterness, Hebrews 12:15. "...looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled." That root of bitterness will sometimes lead to defilement. People begin to justify their behavior, justify their sexual immorality and sin. "My wife doesn't meet my needs," "My husband isn't loving," "He doesn't care about me." So you get bitter toward your spouse and others. You say, "I deserve a little joy and pleasure in my life." Then Satan throws a temptation your way, you seize the bait and you sin. Be kind and forgiving, "even as God in Christ forgave you." Don't hold on to bitterness.

Number five, restrain the flesh. Paul said, "I have been crucified with Christ." How much temptation can a dead man receive? None. "It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me;

and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” David did not deal with the flesh when he was on his rooftop.

Jesus said, “If your right eye...”—or “your right hand”—“...causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you.” Now of course He’s not talking literally; we’d all be blind or without a hand if that happened. It’s sad that some people have misinterpreted this verse. If I lose my right eye, I still have my left one to sin with. If I lose my right hand, my left hand works just fine. Another Gospel mentions your foot—to cut it off.

What Jesus means here is to get radical. If you stumble on the Internet, then just get rid of your computer. Or get rid of your phone. Get rid of anything that causes you to stumble. Burn the magazines. Throw the videos away. If you’re tempted to sin in this area, cut off any source of temptation. If there is someone you are flirting with on the job, if there is someone you are getting too friendly with, cut it off, as you would your hand. “...for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.” So take this very seriously and cut off any temptation.

Number six, resist the devil, James 4:7-8. “Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.” 1 Peter 5:8-9 says, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him.”

Number seven, renew your mind in God’s Word. There is nothing more important. Psalm 119:11 says, “Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You.” Many times Christians stop reading their Bibles, and as a result, they backslide. Then they commit sexual immorality.

It doesn’t happen overnight; you don’t just wake up one morning and say, “I’m going to commit adultery today.” It starts in your heart. “Sow a thought and you reap an action; sow an act and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny.” So guard yourself by hiding God’s Word in your heart. Psalm 119:9 says, “How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.”

Jesus Himself was tempted in the wilderness by the devil. And it isn’t a sin to be tempted, but if you yield to the temptation, it is a sin. Or if you play with it in your mind, you’re starting to sin in your heart. Jesus answered every temptation with “It is written.” So you have to know the Bible in order to be able to use “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” to resist the devil.

Number eight, rely on the Holy Spirit and prayer. Some people say, “Well, you Christians, all you do is pray, and you think the Holy Spirit’s going to help you!” Yes; power through prayer. The Bible says, “The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.” It’s the sincere, earnest, humble, genuine petitioning of God and a surrendering and yielding of your mind, your body and your soul to the Spirit’s power. The Bible says, “Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”

Number nine, rejoice in the goodness of God, Ephesians 5:18-20. It says that those who are

“filled with the Spirit...are giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” It’s a thankful, joyful, submissive heart. Paul goes on to say, “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord....Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her.”

So when you’re thankful for God’s gift of marriage, of your spouse, then you’re not going to be bitter and you’re not going to commit adultery, because you’re appreciating your spouse.

Number ten, run. That’s all you need to put down. You could just put down, “Run for your life!” You could put on your PF Flyers and smoke it outta there. Just get outta there.

I really like the story of Joseph. He was hated by his brothers, thrown into a pit, sold as a slave into Egypt, gets hired by Mr. Potiphar, who has a wife who checked out Joseph. The Bible says that He was “handsome in form and appearance.” She was the first “cougar” in the Bible. She kept tempting Joseph day and day, but he resisted. One day Joseph ended up in the house alone with Mrs. Potiphar. Joseph should have been more careful about that. That’s dangerous.

Then she said to Joseph, “Lie with me.” But Joseph said, “Look, my master...has committed all that he has to my hand. There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?”

I applaud Joseph for that. Joseph was saying, “How can I violate my master’s trust? How can I sin against God? How can I do such great wickedness?” That was a God-centered focus. Joseph’s master trusted him, and he wasn’t going to violate that trust. Joseph realized that God was watching him, so he wouldn’t do this great wickedness against God.

Then Mrs. Potiphar reached out and grabbed Joseph’s garment. All Joseph had to do was go with the flow. But instead Joseph wiggled out of his coat and fled out of the house. And since Mrs. Potiphar held his coat, she called “Rape!” So Joseph was thrown in prison. But he kept his purity intact. And God was with Joseph. Genesis 39:21 says, “But the Lord was with Joseph and showed him mercy.” What a blessing that is.

So sometimes it’s just your two feet that get you out of the temptation. Just run for your life. Some people say, “Well, I can’t help it.” You can walk; can’t you? “Yes.” Then just walk away. That’s the way to resist. 2 Timothy 2:22 says, “Flee also youthful lusts.” Flee or run from youthful lusts.

My last question—and my shortest answer—is, “What if you have fallen?” What if you have committed adultery? What if you are practicing sexual immorality? Number one, remember that God loves you and will forgive you. He is grieved and is broken hearted over your sin, but He will forgive you.

Maybe God brought you here to read this message. Or maybe you’re in the flirting stage or in the thinking stage where you are entertaining the possibility of sexual immorality. Or maybe

bitterness is in your heart, so you think you deserve it.

God is warning you. Turn from your sins. God will forgive you. Repent. The word "repent" means change your mind and turn back to God. And then receive the forgiveness of God. That's so very important.

King David was visited by Nathan. And after Nathan visited him and exposed his sin, it was one year before David finally repented and penned Psalm 51 in the Bible.

If you find yourself having committed sexual sin, read Psalm 51. This psalm is tear stained in so many Christians' Bibles. "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness, according to the multitude of Your tender mercies....And blot out all my iniquities....And do not take your Holy Spirit from Me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation." Everything in this penitential psalm that David prayed, you should pray.

When Jesus was confronted by the religious leaders who brought the woman caught in the very act of adultery, in John 8, Jesus said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first." Then they all slithered away. Then Jesus looked at this sinful woman and said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?"

She said to Jesus, "No one, Lord."

And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more."

So Jesus will forgive you, but he wants you to live a life of purity.