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ADULTERY

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Recent statistics have revealed that 50% of partners in marriage have committed adultery. Thirty-seven percent of pastors have done the same. Without question we live in adulterous society. Our Lord accused the people of his day of being "a wicked and adulterous generation (Matt. 12:39)." Reflecting on the statistics I have quoted above our generation is no different. Still there is no outcry against it. Christians should cry out because it is a sin. God felt that it was such a damaging sin that he made the commandment one of the "big ten." he understood what its consequences could be. The Bible speaks out against it over and over again.

Solomon said, "a man who commits adultery lacks judgment; whoever does so destroys himself." The same is true for women. In my career I have been called to counsel persons whose wives and husbands have committed adultery. On some occasions I have had a few of the people who committed the act. I can tell you truly that those who are involved in adulterous relationships all too often have their marriages and their lives ruined. Solomon is right. The person who does this destroys himself and often the lives of others. We need to ask then what happens when a person is discovered in an adulterous relationship? How does the destruction come about?

The first thing that happens is that the aggrieved mate is filled with negative emotions. First there is jealousy. Jealousy is the first cousin of anger. It likes anger; it mutes or kills love. It is almost impossible to love someone unconditionally who has betrayed their marriage vows. Elsewhere I have written that when we fall in love with someone we in time become one with them. When this has happened we expect them to be true to us. If they are unfaithful they have become one with someone else. We can base this statement on the biblical injunction of Paul who said, "Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, 'The two will become one flesh.'" When it happens the marriage bond is defiled. No man or woman wants to share their relationship with another person. This is even true when a husband or wife has a same sex (homosexual) adulterous relationship.

Jealousy is a strange emotion. It creates in the mind of the aggrieved person a desire to know why the person committed the sin. Therefore, they become obsessed with knowing every detail of the event(s). They will force the perpetrator to review the details over and over again. Most of the time they do not believe that they have told them the whole truth so they continue to give them the third degree in the hope that they will learn more. This can go on for weeks or

even months. In many marriages that survive they will from time to time bring up the subject hoping that the perpetrator will finally tell them the whole truth.

The second thing that happens is that trust is destroyed. Humans are not absolutely trustworthy, but when they marry they expect their mate to be faithful. In our age humanists have tried to make extramarital sex a perfectly acceptable activity. Unfortunately, they cannot exorcize the emotion of jealousy and anger so even when persons have thought it was acceptable behavior they still get jealous. It is also true that women like their sex to be in an exclusive relationship bonded by love. They do not enter into extramarital relationships with relish.

Some years ago I read a book that described the activity of wife swapping clubs. Groups of couples would rent a motel and they would indulge in an orgy or extramarital sex. In a few instances orgiastic homosexual activity was included. It is interesting that this occurred in the 60's when there was a profound attack on the conventional mores of our society. It is even more interesting that these events are no longer known to exist. The reason was that it destroyed so many marriages that other people could not be lured into participating. There was no enthusiasm for it anymore. These orgies had come about because of the humanist position that monogamous marriage was an anachronism. They recommended other alternatives to marriage.