

Adulterous Christians

Text : **James 4: 1-10 ; I John 2: 12-17**

S#1.

A. Moses received the Ten Commandments written by the very hand of God.

1. These commandments were given as the law to govern God's people, Israel.
2. They were a formal declaration of commonly accepted norms, not new concepts.
3. The story of Cain and Abel demonstrates the existence of a law from the beginning.
 - a. **Gen. 20: 6** .. God told King Abimelech that it would have been a sin to take Sarah.
 - b. Joseph knew it would be a sin against God for him to take Potiphar's wife. **S#2.**
Gen. 39: 9 – **There is no one greater in this house than I, and he has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do this great evil and sin against God?**
4. The code of Hammurabi was written 300 years prior and had similar laws on theft, murder, adultery and conflict resolution. (Limited revenge – eye for an eye)

B. From Moses until now, adultery has been considered unlawful and immoral.

1. Though adultery carries the death penalty in many countries, it still happens.
John 8: 2-11 - **The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery**
2. Although adultery is a misdemeanor in most of the states with laws against it, some categorize the offense as a felony. Punishments vary widely by state. In Maryland, the penalty is a paltry \$10 fine. But in Massachusetts, an adulterer could face up to three years in jail.
3. In Illinois adultery is a crime punishable by up to a year in prison. (*class A misd.*)

C. The moral values of our country are being steadily eroded away.

S#3.

1. The research is extremely depressing because the downhill progression is increasing.
 - a. Dr. Kelly Bonewell's studies show 40% feel an affair is morally acceptable.
 - b. Among Christians, it is 1 in 10, but there is not as much difference in practice.
2. The instances of infidelity are steadily increasing.
 - a. In 1950 only 9% of married people under 25 had had an affair that year.
 - b. In 1983 that number had risen to 29% in the current year.
 - c. Current studies show 25 to 75 % of women and 40 to 80% of men had affairs.
3. 25% of people surveyed do not consider a one-night stand as cheating.
4. In 2010 one third of all divorces were the result of adultery.
5. 60% of all long-term marriages will deal with infidelity at some point.

D. No one is beyond the reach of this temptation of the flesh.

1. Any Christian can commit any sin if sufficient circumstances tempt him/her.
2. The above 60 crowd are more involved in adultery than ever before.
 - a. Viagra and similar products.
 - b. Estrogen products
 - c. Hip replacements
3. In 2000 a Christianity Today Magazine survey showed 23% of Christians admitted.
4. Above 90% of those who lose their marriage over adultery don't marry their lover.

This lesson is about adultery, but not the physical variety;
it's about spiritual adultery.

S#4.

I. In the manor of the prophets, James is more blunt than politically correct.

S#5.

S#6.

A. James set forth a very clear demand that one be emotionally faithful to God.

1. **James 4: 4** – You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.
2. God demands the same fidelity from His followers that a husband does from his wife

B. Even in the O.T. the people of God were presented as being espoused to Him.

1. God pictures Israel as His bride and as His wife.
 - a. **Ezek. 16: 8** – "Then I passed by you and saw you, and behold, you were at the time for love; so I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness. I also swore to you and entered into a covenant with you so that you became Mine," declares the Lord God. S#7.
 - b. **Isa. 54: 5-7** – For your husband is your Maker, whose name is the Lord of hosts; And your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, who is called the God of all the earth. **6** "For the Lord has called you, like a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit, even like a wife of one's youth when she is rejected," Says your God. S#8.
2. When Israel was unfaithful she was pictured as an adulterous wife.

Jer. 3: 1-2 – God says, " If a husband divorces his wife and she goes from him and belongs to another man, will he still return to her? Will not that land be completely polluted? But you are a harlot with many lovers; yet you turn to Me," declares the Lord. **2** "Lift up your eyes to the bare heights and see; where have you not been violated? By the roads you have sat for them like an Arab in the desert, and you have polluted a land with your harlotry and with your wickedness. S#9.
3. This message is repeated over and over in the entire book of Hosea.

S#10.

C. This same figure is carried into the N.T.; the church is the bride of Christ.

1. Christians are betrothed to Christ ... We are committed to Him.

II Cor. 11: 2 – For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin.

2. Christ treats the church as His bride.

Eph. 5: 25-27 – Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, **26** so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, **27** that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.

S#11.

D. The “bridegroom” is used as a figure of Jesus who is Christ.

S#12.

1. John the baptizer who was to prepare the way for Jesus, called Him the bridegroom.

John 3: 29-30 – I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent ahead of Him.'

29 "He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. So this joy of mine has been made full.

30 "He must increase, but I must decrease.

2. Jesus referred to Himself as the “bridegroom.”

Matt.9:15 – And Jesus said to them, "The attendants of the bridegroom cannot **S#13.** mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.

S#14.

E. Thus, when the bride (church) is unfaithful to the groom, she commits adultery.**II. What exactly are we describing as adultery ? It is a condition of heart.**

S#15.

A. The biblical definition of adultery is :

1. Any sexual relationship between individuals where one or both are married, both not to other/s in the relationship.
2. It describes any sexual relationship outside of one's marriage bond.

B. Excellent secular definition with spiritual application from Dr. Phil.

1. A couple was having strong disagreement when the man explained, "She and I have never had any physical intimacy."
2. Dr. Phil replied, "Any time we get something from someone else that we are supposed to get from our spouse, that is adultery."
3. If we get anything from the world that God has promised us, peace, joy, satisfaction, security, that is spiritual adultery.

S#16.

C. Adultery is not just physical, it is a matter of the heart.**S#17.**

1. Adultery always occurs in the heart before it becomes a physical act.
2. **Matt. 5: 27-28** – You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery'; **28** but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.
3. Thus, desiring something and getting it from the world is spiritual adultery.

III. Marriage is an exclusive relationship and so is Christianity.**S#18.****S#19.****A. Note that “friendship” is defined as adultery .. *doesn't we be require confrontational***

1. Almost all adulterous relationships start as friendships.
 - a. It's usually not that someone has lusts and goes looking for a way to fulfill it.
 - b. The friend is supportive and understanding when problems are shared.
2. The more time people spend together the more comfortable they are discussing personal things and the more influence they have over each other.
3. Some wicked people will deliberately spend great amounts of time seducing others.

S#20.**B. Everyone has lust; it's nothing more than a desire that intensifies over time.**

1. Jesus lusted :
Luke 22: 15 – He said to them, “I have earnestly desired { *epithumeo* - lust } to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.”
2. James affirms that their spiritual adultery has been produced by their lust for things.

- a. They have rivalry and discord because of their desire for thing.

James 4: 1-2 – What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? **S#21.**

Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members?

2 You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. (**I John 3: 15**)

You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel.

- b. Their desire for things cause them to lose faith in God.

James 4: 2 – You do not have because you do not ask.

- c. God will not supply the ammunition for our rebellion.

James 4: 3 – You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures. **S#22.****C. God will not tolerate His bride loving someone else.**

1. One must choose to serve God exclusively.
Matt. 6:24 – No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.

2. The bride of Christ cannot also love the world.
 - a. **I John 2: 15-17** – Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone **S#23.**
loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. **16** For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. **17** The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.
 - b. We all have a clear choice ... God or the world.
 - c. **Jas. 4:4** .. Not only can't we love the world, we can't maintain a friendship with it.
 - d. "the things in the world" one can't seek the benefits of the world and also of Christ.
3. Where do you get your fulfillment, your joy, your peace, your security ?
4. Are you more comfortable with the world or with the family of God ? (*eternity*)

S#24.

IV. The Christian must learn to live in the world without becoming OF the world.

- A. It is not the will of God that we be isolated from the world. (**I Cor. 5: 10**) **S#25.**
 1. We must function in the world, while keeping ourselves out of conformity to it.
John 17: 14-17 – I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them, **S#26.**
 because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.
15 I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one. **16** They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. **17** Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.
 2. Being out of conformity leads to resentments and even confrontations.
 - a. **John 15: 19-20** – If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but **S#27.**
 because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you. **20** "Remember the word that I said to you, ' A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also.
 - b. The resentment and opposition from the devil is to be expected. **S#28.**
II Tim. 3: 12 – Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.
 - c. Jesus bore the cross for us; surely we can bear a little adversity for Him.
- B. God has a reason for calling us to lead separated lives. **S#29.**
 1. **I Pet. 2: 9** – But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

2. The world is our mission field.

- a. **Matt. 5: 14-16** – You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be **S#30.** hidden; **15** nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. **16** Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.
- b. As lights in the midst of darkness, we present a contrast.
Phil. 2: 15 – so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and **S#31.** innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world.
- c. **Mark 16: 15** – And He said to them, " Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.

CONCLUSION :

- A. Thus, we have seen that : **S#32.**
 1. Seeking satisfaction from the world is spiritual adultery.
 2. Adultery is a condition of heart, not just a physical relationship.
 3. Christianity is compared to marriage because both are exclusive relationships.
 4. We must live in the world without being seduced by the world, **be different.** **S#33.**
- B. The scriptures state two things that create an adversarial relationship with God.
 1. A mind set on the flesh.
Rom. 8: 6-7 – For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, **7** because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, **S#34.**
 2. A mind that seeks to be friends with God's adversary.
James 4: 4 – You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. **S#35.**
- C. God requires a committed relationship. **S#36.**
 1. **Matt. 22: 37** – He said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with ALL your heart, and with ALL your soul, and with ALL your mind.
 2. Love the Lord with ALL our heart, soul and mind leaves nothing is for the world.

INVITATION :

S#37. ... Communion slide

Lesson Text :**James 4: 1-10**

1 What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? **2** You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. **3** You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures. **4** You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. **5** Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: "He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us"? **6** But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE." **7** Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. **8** Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. **9** Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom. **10** Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

I John 2: 15-17

15 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. **16** For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. **17** The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.