

Further up, Further in

Resources for Continued Study



LOOKOUT
MOUNTAIN
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

"THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT: DON'T COMMIT ADULTERY"

For individual study or group discussion

While studying Deuteronomy, we have learned that the *Ten Commandments* were given to the Israelites by God as rules of life for a liberated people. These rules defined a communal ethic for God's people, where they would be marked by a certain kind of life together, reflecting God's glory to the world (Deuteronomy 4:6-8). In Deuteronomy 5:18, the seventh commandment "You shall not commit adultery" is an important and weighty topic for the church today. Like the other commandments, we see that "**Don't Commit Adultery**" has a broader scope than just adultery.

The Goodness of the Command

The command intends to cultivate God-defined love in the family for the sake of human flourishing and in order to reflect God's relationship with his covenant people. Theologian Stanley Hauerwas explains, "By our faithfulness to one another, within a community that requires, finally, loyalty to God, we experience and witness to the first fruits of the new creation. Our commitment to exclusive relations witnesses to God's pledge to his people, Israel and the church, that through his exclusive commitment to them, people will be brought into his kingdom."¹

- Read Matthew 19:4-6, Isaiah 62:5, Hosea 2:14-20, and Ephesians 5:25-33. Discuss the ways the relationship between a husband and wife reflect the relationship between God and his people.
- Read Proverbs 5:18-20, Zephaniah 3:17, and Jeremiah 31:33. Sex within marriage is meant to be wonderful, an earthly union that hints of heaven. How does this covenantal union that promises "I belong completely and exclusively and permanently to you" point to our union with Christ?

The Vastness of Our Failure and Fight to Keep This Command

According to [The Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 109](#), the broad scope of breaking this command includes the forbidding of "everything which incites unchaste behavior, whether it be actions, looks, talk, thoughts, or desires." Although the primary purpose of the commandment is to protect marriage, the commandment also forbids the other sins that lead up to and give rise to adultery. The reality of these sins is that they are ultimately unfaithfulness to God (Psalm 51).

- Our failure to keep God's commands finds its origins in the heart. According to Jesus, in Matthew 5:27-29 and 15:19-20, how does the 7th commandment call for more than a mere restraint from sexual activity outside of marriage?
- Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-10. It is a common viewpoint in our culture (and even within the church) that adultery is only wrong because it hurts the spouse, but sex between two loving, consenting adults is okay. How serious is God about "sexual immorality"? (cf. Galatians 5:19-21, Hebrews 13:4)

The Faithfulness of God in the Gospel of His Son

The Gospel offers the hope of restoration for all those who have failed to keep the 7th commandment. Adultery is not the unforgivable sin. Jesus, although perfectly pure and faithful, experienced betrayal and endured the cross for adulterers such as ourselves, so that he might cleanse us with his blood and give us the gift of his perfect record and empower our lives unto purity by his Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:11). God offers redemption and restoration to the tempted, the wayward, and the broken-hearted. We will mess up in a multiplicity of ways, but thankfully our kingdom standing is based on the faithfulness of our covenant-keeping God.

- Based on the story of the woman caught in adultery (John 8:1-11), what charge does Jesus give to us once his Spirit confronts and convicts us of our sins? (cf. Isaiah 1:16-17)
- Read Hosea 2:16-23. Discuss the future hope and promise of renewal we have in Christ.

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SPEAKER: Aaron/Brian

SERIES: Deuteronomy

PASSAGE: Deuteronomy 5:18

Family Dinner Table

Simple Truths

As the age of cell phone ownership for our children lowers, the threat of exposure to porn increases. The average age of exposure to pornography is 12 years old, with 15% of kids first viewing porn at 10 years old or younger.² In her book *Simple Truths*, author Mary Flo Ridley walks parents through the process of talking with your young children about God's design for sex. "Seize the opportunity while your children are young to start having conversations that will forever shape their sexual character. If you don't, someone else will."³ One of the simple ways for parents to talk about the seventh commandment is to explain to children that God's design for sex is that it should be private and to be between a man and a woman within the boundaries of marriage.⁴ These guidelines can assist in helping them to understand the various ways to guard their hearts when using technology.

- Read [WCF Larger Catechism Q&A 138-139](#). Explain how the simple principle that sex must be "private and within marriage" can assist us in discerning what we should/should not view on TV or with technology.
- It is also important to teach children of the hope they have of forgiveness whenever they find themselves in a place of sin and shame. Read Psalm 103 and encourage them of the immense love of their Father in heaven.

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¹ Hauerwas, Stanley. *A Community of Character: Toward a Constructive Christian Social Ethic*. 1981, University of Notre Dame Press. 190-91

² Common Sense Media. *Teens and Pornography*. January 10, 2023. <https://www.common Sense Media.org/research/teens-and-pornography>

³ Ridley, Mary Flo. *Simple Truths*. 2009. Just Say YES Publishers. 15, 74