

Pastor W. J. Mencarow

EX 20:14 "Thou shalt not commit adultery"

If unfaithfulness in marriage was all the seventh commandment forbids, many unmarried people would be blameless. They could say, "I'm not married, so its impossible for me to commit adultery, therefore this commandment doesn't apply to me."

Sorry. You don't get off the hook that easily. And, if unfaithfulness in marriage was all the seventh commandment forbids, most of us, I trust, would be able to say, "I haven't broken it." Well, we don't get off the hook either.

From the Heidelberg Catechism:

Q. 108. What doth the seventh commandment teach us?

A. That all uncleanness is accursed of God: and that therefore we must with all our hearts detest the same, and live chastely and temperately, whether in holy wedlock, or in single life.

Q.109. Doth God forbid in this commandment, only adultery, and such like gross sins?

A. Since both our body and soul are temples of the Holy Ghost, he commands us to preserve them pure and holy: therefore he forbids all unchaste actions, gestures, words, thoughts, desires and whatever can entice men thereto.

The scope of the 7th commandment is not only of unchastity in marriage, but also of unchastity in single life, which is committed when an unmarried person has sexual relations with another person. By such abominations the land is defiled. (Lev. 19 :27).

In the seventh commandment God forbids not only the outward sins of adultery and similar crimes, but also all that which "can entice men thereto." Let's dissect the answer to Q. 109:

(1) all unchaste actions, those are the unfruitful works of darkness, against which the Apostle warns us in Eph. 5:11.

(2) unchaste gestures. What are they? They vary from culture to culture, but all cultures apparently have gestures with the fingers, hands or arms that communicate crude insults. God's Word speaks of this in 2 Peter 2:14 — sinners "Having eyes full of adultery..."). That suggests lustful and obvious stares, winking to suggest something titillating or lewd, and such. The Lord says of the lewd daughters of Zion in Isa. 3:16 that they are "haughty and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet."

(3) unchaste words. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth," says Paul (Eph. 4:29.) The Apostle admonishes, "But fornication, and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient." (Eph. 5:3, 4).

(4) Unchaste thoughts. A child of God is not to give free reign to his thoughts. We are not to believe that it is only what we do that can be sinful. No, we are to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience to Christ, 2

Cor. 10:5.

The Lord not only owns our soul, he owns our bodies and He owns our thoughts: He knows every thought we have and what we do with it. He knows whether or not we indulge sinful thoughts or go to Him in prayer when they invade our minds. If you play around in your mind with sinful thoughts, they will cause you to commit sin in your body. James 1:14: 14 " But every man is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death."

It may surprise you, but even the most sanctified saints are tormented by unclean thoughts and by the filthy lusts of the flesh. Moreso, I believe, than the average Christian. Why? When the pure white light of Christ draws near to you, the clearer you can see the sins that stain your soul.

(5) whatever can entice men thereto. There are things that especially entice fallen man to the lust of the flesh. And with those things the world is filled as perhaps never before, so that we all must pity the children. Poor children, to be born into such a world as this in the 21st Century. How will you come through a world so full of temptation?

What are "the things that entice thereto?" One example among many is the way some mothers and their daughters dress and behave. How many mothers dress, talk and act like a teenage tramp, as though they are in competition with their daughter to see who can be more shameless? Is it a wonder that her children have no respect for her? They are only giving permission and approval to their daughters to engage in debauchery and end up pregnant, on drugs or worse. That's enticement.

Another example is beauty contests for little girls, even toddlers.

And have you seen some clothing for infants with slogans that are supposed to be cute? One I saw said, "I'm too sexy for my diaper"

From a recent newspaper column:

"Stilettos for babies! Yes, really – some stilettos for babies! Super cute pink ones with straps that'll make their legs look super-svelte."

Parents buy sleazy clothes for their pre-teens and even toddlers and infants and allow their teenagers to dress like prostitutes -- and they wonder why there's an epidemic of child predators.

Here's a letter to the editor published in the New York Times a few years ago that sums it up, from a Barbara Adams of Hillsdale, N.J.:

"Surely the correlation between two articles in The Times shows a very disturbing cultural change in our society. One on the front page depicted the rise of child pornography catering to pedophiles of all types. The other in the Styles section — "Fashion Aims Young" — reported that the fashion industry is luring younger and younger children with sexy clothes and posing their ads in sexy postures more suitable for young adult women.

"Heedless and indulgent mothers may laugh off this demand for such clothing or think it's "cute," but they are encouraging dangerous behavior that may affect many innocent children."

And this is from an Internet blog site:

"It seems strange that parents would want their children dressing so old, especially with all the reports of pedophilia on the news and cable television, the last thing they should want to do is give someone a reason to look at their child sexually. Of course, no mother is standing on line at the department store hoping the clothes

she buys her child will make her happy, help her fit in, and then get her kidnapped and molested. Parents who buy these clothing for their children simply aren't thinking.”

Children’s clothing is only one example. It’s simply one of innumerable examples that our sexual appetite has gone haywire...it is corrupted by sin and this corruption is fed by modern society. What do I mean, it has gone haywire? In his book *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis writes that "the Bible gives every man and woman two choices: sex within marriage or total abstinence. Since that is so completely at odds with our instinct, either one of two things is wrong. Either the Bible is wrong, or our instinct is wrong. Since the Bible is God speaking, and God cannot be wrong, obviously it is our instinct that has gone haywire. Far beyond what, say, our instinct or appetite for food is. If we eat whatever we want whenever we want and as much as we want, we will probably overeat — maybe we’ll eat enough for two, but most of us will not eat enough for ten. Our appetite for food goes a little beyond what our body needs, but for most people, not enormously. But if a healthy young man indulged his sexual instinct whenever he wanted and each time a baby was born he could easily populate a small town. My point is that the sexual instinct is corrupted far, far out of proportion to its biological function and incomparison to the other instincts...

"You can get a large audience together for a strip tease act. Suppose you go to a country where well-fed people flock to the theatre to see someone bring a covered plate onto the stage, slowly lift the cover, so as to let everyone see, just before the lights go out, a leg of lamb. Would you not think that in that country something had gone wrong with the appetite for food?

"And would not anyone who had grown up in a different world think there was something equally wrong with the state of the sex appetite, the sex instinct, among us?

"Here is another way of looking at it. There are very few people who want to eat things that aren’t food or do things with food other than eating it. In other words, perversions of the food appetite are extremely rare. But perversions of the sex instinct are numerous "

Probably the most obvious one is the homosexuality epidemic today. There is something very, very wrong with the sex instinct of modern man. It is grotesquely twisted by sin.

But don’t make the mistake that unbelievers, and even some well-meaning but legalistic Christians, do, and think that the Bible says that sex, or the body, or pleasure, is wrong in themselves. Lewis says, there are many people who say, “Sex is nothing to be ashamed of” and that is true, with the boundaries of marriage that God has set. But if they mean 'the state into which the sexual instinct has now got is nothing to be ashamed of,' then they are wrong. There is nothing to be ashamed of in enjoying your food: there would be everything to be ashamed of if most people made food the main interest of their lives and spent their time looking at pictures of food and dribbling and smacking their lips...

"In fact, Christianity is the only faith that esteems the body, because it is the creation of God. And remember, God Himself took on a human body. Would He have done that if the body was dirty, was evil? And after His death on the cross He appeared back on earth not as a spirit but in a body — Lk. 24:39: 'Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.'"

Christ took on His resurrected body after His death and ascended into heaven with it, He still has it, and we are going to have a body in the New Earth forever, our resurrection body. If you want to learn more about what the Bible teaches about this and what heaven and the New Earth will be like, listen to my series “Life After Death” at sermonaudio.com.

No, Christianity is the only faith that approves of the body, sex and pleasure within the boundaries for which God created them, which perfects them. Outside of those protective boundaries is misery. Those boundaries are not meant to restrict you, they are meant to keep evil out. Did you ever think about it that way? The sexual

instinct is confined within the walls of marriage in order to keep evil out of your life. If you ignore the boundaries you are opening yourself up to a world of hurt and misery — arguments, jealousies, hatred, divorce, physical abuse, broken homes, children scarred for life, the list goes on and on, and often ends in STDs, alcoholism, drug addiction, even sometimes murder and suicide. All because we ignored the boundaries, which are set by God to protect us and keep evil out. We thought by ignoring the boundaries that we would have freedom, but what we find on the other side is the worst kind of evil imaginable.

C.S. Lewis wrote in *Mere Christianity*, “We grow up surrounded by propaganda in favor of unchastity” (and he wrote this in the early 1940s!)...“There are people who want to keep our sex instinct inflamed in order to make money off of us. Because, of course, a man with an obsession has very little sales-resistance. God knows our situation; He will not judge us as though we had no difficulties to overcome. What matters is the sincerity and perseverance of our will to overcome them. Before we can be cured we must want to be cured. Those who really wish for help will get it; but for many modern people even the wish is difficult.”

A famous Christian told us long ago that when he was a young man he prayed constantly for chastity; but years later he realized that while his lips had been saying, “oh Lord, make me chaste,” his heart had been secretly adding, “but please don’t do it just yet.”

For those of you who are unmarried, there are 2 reasons why it is especially difficult for us to desire, let alone achieve, complete chastity. The first reason is that the world, our flesh and the devil constantly tempt us. We are assaulted with the propaganda that our desires are “natural,” expressing them is “healthy” and repressing them is “unhealthy.” This is a lie. Like all the most convincing lies, it is based on truth. Our sexual desire is natural, since God created it in us. The lie is that it is natural to do anything you want to satisfy this desire, as long as it’s not illegal: and the sex lobby is working as hard as they can to repeal all laws against sexual perversion.

I remind you, as many have found out, that sex outside of marriage leads to jealousies, lies, diseases, heartaches, broken homes, abandoned children, and even physical violence, murder and suicides. Satan just loves it when people fall for this lie.

The second reason chastity is so difficult is that we make it so ourselves. We think chastity impossible. I once asked Col. Scott Carpenter, one of the first astronauts, “During the long training, or when you were on the launching pad ready to be fired into space, were you ever afraid, did you ever think, “this is not possible”? He said, in effect, “You put all that out of your mind. You can’t afford to have such thoughts, you have a job to do.” Christian, if you are unmarried, you can’t afford to think chastity is impossible. You can’t clutter your mind with such thought. You have a job to do. And you cannot do it alone, through your own power — you must have the power of the Holy Spirit living in you.

You must be crucified with Christ, Gal 2:20: “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

Sometimes, and it may be for long times, you think God is not answering your prayers, is not really with you. What you think or feel is irrelevant — if you truly repent of your sins and trust in Christ as your savior, His Spirit is in you whether you feel He is or not. Your feelings have nothing to do with it.

After each failure, ask forgiveness, pick yourself up, and try again, bathed in prayer. “Very often what God first helps us towards,” C. S. Lewis reminds us, “is not the virtue itself but just this power of always trying again. For however important chastity (or courage, or truthfulness, or any other virtue) may be, this process trains us in habits of the soul which are more important still. It cures our illusions about ourselves and teaches us to depend on God. We learn, on the one hand, that we cannot trust ourselves even in our best moments, and, on the other, that we need not despair even in our worst, for our failures are forgiven. The only fatal thing is to sit down content with anything less than perfection.”

Did you know that the Bible says that a society awash in sexuality like ours is a sign that society is sold out to a false religion? Did you know that both the Bible teaches and history demonstrates that acceptance of homosexuality is one of the last stages of the decline and sure destruction of a society? Rom 1:22-25:

"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen."

Prof. John Murray explained this text: "Religious degeneration is penalized by abandonment to immorality; sin in the religious realm is punished by sin in the moral sphere," that is, the world. In other words, when the church does not do its job, when churches become nothing more than social clubs for the adults, teen groups for young people and free daycare, when worship becomes entertainment, when music in worship tries to compete with the world's music by simply pasting over the name of Christ onto the lyrics, when preaching is little more than a comedy act spiced with motivational platitudes, when people like their church because it makes them feel good about themselves, that's when God judges both the church, first, and then He brings His hammer down on the society.

I Pet. 4:17: "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" And that is what we are seeing in the church and in the United States of America right now. Promiscuous sex, perverted sex, says the Bible, is a sign of man's revolt against God.

The explosion of sexual immorality in this country is one of the consequences of having a generation grow up being taught in government schools, and in many churches and homes, that morality is relative, that right and wrong depend on circumstances, time and geography. You will recognize some of the buzz phrases of moral relativism: "Hey, what is wrong for you might be right for me." Or, "Don't preach to me." Or, "You have no right to force your morality down other people's throats." Or, "Live and let live." Or, "Keep your religion to yourself," Or, "Religion belongs in church." Or one of my favorites, "Separation of church and state!" (By the way there cannot be such a thing — that's why those words are not found in the United States Constitution. What those who think it says that are referring to is the First Amendment, which says in part, "'Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion . . ." That simply means that the U.S. is not to have an official religion.)

What those who reject God's Word think about Christians is this: We are trying to force them to live by the standards of the Bible. And you can see why they think we are trying to force the Bible down their throats. But we are not — or we certainly should not — try to convince, cajole, or certainly not force, anyone to live any other way than what they choose to live. Let me say that again — Christians should never try to convince anyone to live any other way than they choose to live. That is not the Gospel. There is a vast difference between proclaiming the Gospel and engaging the culture for Christ on the one hand, and lecturing people about their sins on the other hand. Yes, there are some people who do that in the name of Christianity, but that is wrong and damages the cause of Christ. You can't force people to be moral except by the power of civil government, and that's not to save them, it is to protect the rest of society from them.

Jesus said in what we call The Great Commission of Matthew 28, "go into all the world and lecture them on their sins, tell them to live a moral life and that's how they will be saved." No, He didn't! He said, "make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you." We are called to make disciples by teaching them about the risen Christ. If you think witnessing to people is pointing out their sins and telling them that how they live is wrong, you don't understand the Gospel. You deserve to be called "holier than thou." First pull out

the log from your own eye so you can see clearly to help others with the speck in theirs (Mt. 7:3-5).

Moral relativism is the faith of modern man — it means essentially that everyone should be judged according to their own standards. One example: The Polynesians of the South Pacific. We think of them as an idyllic, gentle people. Their history, even recent history, is one of being warriors and their religion was until recently a cannibal cult.

Because he is so representative of modern man, I want to quote the famous anthropologist Bengt Danielsson, who was a crew member of the *Kon-Tiki*, Thor Heryerdahl's primitive raft that they sailed from the West Coast of South America to French Polynesia in 1947, which voyage is memorialized in the best-selling book of the same name, *Kon-Tiki*. Danielsson wrote, "To accuse the Polynesians of being immoral according to our Christian Western standard is of course as unreasonable as it would be for them to condemn us because we do not observe Polynesian taboo rules..."

Since Dr. Danielsson was a world-famous anthropologist and influenced countless others who have influenced countless others in their teachings, we should look carefully at what he wrote: "To accuse the Polynesians of being immoral according to our Christian Western standard" — remember, he is talking about adultery, murder, cannibalism, child sacrifice, being burned alive and who-knows-what-else horrific practices under the name of religion — and note how he inserts the words "our" and "Western"— "our" Christian "Western" "standard, as though God's Word does not apply to everyone, everywhere, it's just something Westerners came up with, which is what, if you read the rest of this, he does believe, that there is no objective truth, there is no right and wrong for all peoples at all times. But let's look at his words again..." "To accuse the Polynesians of being immoral according to our Christian Western standard is of course — note the propaganda phrase, "of course," as though every sane person would agree with what he is about to say — "To accuse the Polynesians of being immoral according to our Christian Western standard is of course as unreasonable as it would be for them to condemn us because we do not observe Polynesian taboo rules." In other words, there are no objective standards, no ultimate truths. If you condemn cannibals, they can condemn you based on their own way of living. And everybody is right in their own way. In other words, live and let live.

But fasten your seat belt — Dr. Danielsson, who so speaks for modern man, has even more:

"Elementary justice demands that we shall employ every people's OWN moral code as a standard in trying to judge their conduct, and if we make this our starting point and compare the Polynesian's...with our own moral standard, it is we who must be ashamed."

Yes, he not only says we must not judge the Polynesians' cannibalism, but that we who try live by God's Biblical law-word are the ones who must be ashamed! He is saying that the Polynesians law-word is cannibalism, and they live by it, where our law-word is the Bible, yet we do not live by it as well as they live by theirs, so we are to be condemned.

Here is what Daniellson, an apt representative of 21st century man, is comparing us to: In the early 1800s Herman Melville in his book *Typee* wrote of the Polynesians, with whom he had lived: "human victims are daily cooked and served up upon the altars: heathenish cruelties of every description are continually practiced; and these ignorant Pagans are in a state of the extremest wretchedness in consequence of the grossness of their superstitions." According to Prof. T. Walter Herbert, "All Western observers were horrified by Polynesian cannibalism, and the peoples of the Marquesas Islands, where Melville stayed, had long been infamous as maneaters."

And these are the people that we, according to the moral relativists, cannot call immoral, and if we compare their morality with ours, it is *us* who must be ashamed.

And we have now at least two generations that have grown up being taught this moral relativism.

Prof. Herbert also wrote, “Protestant missions in the South Seas were uniformly of Calvinistic slant; their express purpose was to destroy the tyranny of Satan over his Polynesian victims.” And they were largely successful.

What’s wrong with Dr. Danielsson’s argument? Here is the essence of it. He says it himself: “Elementary justice demands that we judge people according to their own moral code.” If somebody says this to you, ask them: who says? How do you know this is “elementary justice”? Who decided? Obviously, it’s an opinion. In fact, Prov. 28:5 says that evil men do not understand justice. "Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD understand all things."

The statement “Elementary justice demands that we judge people according to their own moral code” is pure humanism, man playing God, deciding for himself what is good and what is evil, precisely just as the serpent told Eve would come upon mankind if she disobeyed God. Gen. 3:5: "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."

But when you are a Christian, you are to have no opinions that come out of your own brain — all your opinions come out of the Bible. If your reason disagrees, you know the Bible tells you that your reason is corrupted by sin. And the Bible says nothing about judging people according to their own moral code. It says just the opposite — that we all, including Westerners and Polynesians — will be judged by God’s moral code. Rom. 14:10 “ we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.” And if we don’t have the covering of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, we will be found guilty. “For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of (breaking it) all.” James 2:10.

If you believe in living by your own standards of morality, whether it is giving yourself over to lust, greed, sloth or whatever the sins are, you have given yourself a license to do anything you like. Prov 21:2a: “Every way of a man is right in his own eyes.” Hitler’s last will and testament, written in the Berlin bunker hours before he killed himself, is interesting reading in light of Prov. 21:2a. Hitler declared that everything he did was right and tried to justify it.

Prov. 21:2 doesn’t end there, however. It goes on to say, “But the Lord weighs the hearts.” The Lord doesn’t care what *you* think is right or wrong. “Evil men do not understand justice, But those who seek the Lord understand all.” Prov. 28:5. Man cannot decide for himself what is just and unjust. Civil governments cannot decree justice apart from the Lord: “Many seek the ruler's favor, But justice for man comes from the Lord.” Prov. 29:26. Only the Word of the Lord, the Bible, tells us what is justice, what is right and wrong. It is Satan who deceives man into thinking that he can determine right and wrong for himself, apart from God’s Word. the Bible (Gen. 3:15). And so many fall for it.

Rather, listen to the Word of God: Gal 2:20: “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

Let us pray.