

## **7th Commandment: "Be Pure and Holy as God is Pure and Holy!"-You Are A Covenant**

### **Holy People**

<sup>ESV</sup> **Exodus 20:1** And God spoke all these words, saying, <sup>2</sup> "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. <sup>3</sup> "You shall have no other gods before me. <sup>4</sup> "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. <sup>5</sup> You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, <sup>6</sup> but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments. <sup>7</sup> "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain. <sup>8</sup> "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. <sup>9</sup> Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, <sup>10</sup> but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. <sup>11</sup> For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. <sup>12</sup> "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. <sup>13</sup> "You shall not murder. <sup>14</sup> "You shall not commit adultery. <sup>15</sup> "You shall not steal. <sup>16</sup> "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. <sup>17</sup> "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's." <sup>18</sup> Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off <sup>19</sup> and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die." <sup>20</sup> Moses said to the people, "Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin." <sup>21</sup> The people stood far off, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was. <sup>22</sup> And the LORD said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the people of Israel: 'You have seen for yourselves that I have talked with you from heaven. <sup>23</sup> You shall not make gods of silver to be with me, nor shall you make for yourselves gods of gold. <sup>24</sup> An altar of earth you shall make for me and sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen. In every place where I cause my name to be remembered I will come to you and bless you. <sup>25</sup> If you make me an altar of stone, you shall not build it of hewn stones, for if you wield your tool on it you profane it. <sup>26</sup> And you shall not go up by steps to my altar, that your nakedness be not exposed on it.'

### **Scripture Lesson**

<sup>ESV</sup> **Genesis 2:15-25:** The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. <sup>16</sup> And the LORD God commanded the man, saying,

"You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, <sup>17</sup> but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." <sup>18</sup> Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." <sup>19</sup> So out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. <sup>20</sup> The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. <sup>21</sup> So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. <sup>22</sup> And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. <sup>23</sup> Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." <sup>24</sup> Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. <sup>25</sup> And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

<sup>ESV</sup> **Hosea 2:1-23**: Say to your brothers, "You are my people," and to your sisters, "You have received mercy." <sup>2</sup> "Plead with your mother, plead- for she is not my wife, and I am not her husband- that she put away her whoring from her face, and her adultery from between her breasts; <sup>3</sup> lest I strip her naked and make her as in the day she was born, and make her like a wilderness, and make her like a parched land, and kill her with thirst. <sup>4</sup> Upon her children also I will have no mercy, because they are children of whoredom. <sup>5</sup> For their mother has played the whore; she who conceived them has acted shamefully. For she said, 'I will go after my lovers, who give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, my oil and my drink.' <sup>6</sup> Therefore I will hedge up her way with thorns, and I will build a wall against her, so that she cannot find her paths. <sup>7</sup> She shall pursue her lovers but not overtake them, and she shall seek them but shall not find them. Then she shall say, 'I will go and return to my first husband, for it was better for me than now.' <sup>8</sup> And she did not know that it was I who gave her the grain, the wine, and the oil, and who lavished on her silver and gold, which they used for Baal. <sup>9</sup> Therefore I will take back my grain in its time, and my wine in its season, and I will take away my wool and my flax, which were to cover her nakedness. <sup>10</sup> Now I will uncover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers, and no one shall rescue her out of my hand. <sup>11</sup> And I will put an end to all her mirth, her feasts, her new moons, her Sabbaths, and all her appointed feasts. <sup>12</sup> And I will lay waste her vines and her fig trees, of which she said, 'These are my wages, which my lovers have given me.' I will make them a forest, and the beasts of the field shall devour them. <sup>13</sup> And I will punish her for the feast days of the Baals when she burned offerings to them and adorned herself with her ring and jewelry, and went after her lovers and forgot me, declares the LORD. <sup>14</sup> "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her. <sup>15</sup> And there I will give her her vineyards and make the Valley of Achor a door of hope. And there she shall answer as in the days of her youth, as at the time when she came out of the land of Egypt. <sup>16</sup> "And in that day, declares the LORD, you will call me

'My Husband,' and no longer will you call me 'My Baal.'<sup>17</sup> For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, and they shall be remembered by name no more.<sup>18</sup> And I will make for them a covenant on that day with the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the creeping things of the ground. And I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the land, and I will make you lie down in safety.<sup>19</sup> And I will betroth you to me forever. I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy.<sup>20</sup> I will betroth you to me in faithfulness. And you shall know the LORD.<sup>21</sup> "And in that day I will answer, declares the LORD, I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth,<sup>22</sup> and the earth shall answer the grain, the wine, and the oil, and they shall answer Jezreel,<sup>23</sup> and I will sow her for myself in the land. And I will have mercy on No Mercy, and I will say to Not My People, 'You are my people'; and he shall say, 'You are my God.'"

<sup>ESV</sup> **Hosea 3:1-5**: And the LORD said to me, "Go again, love a woman who is loved by another man and is an adulteress, even as the LORD loves the children of Israel, though they turn to other gods and love cakes of raisins."<sup>2</sup> So I bought her for fifteen shekels of silver and a homer and a lethech of barley.<sup>3</sup> And I said to her, "You must dwell as mine for many days. You shall not play the whore, or belong to another man; so will I also be to you."<sup>4</sup> For the children of Israel shall dwell many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or pillar, without ephod or household gods.<sup>5</sup> Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God, and David their king, and they shall come in fear to the LORD and to his goodness in the latter days.

**Matthew 5:27-32**: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.'<sup>28</sup> But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.<sup>29</sup> If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell.<sup>30</sup> And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.<sup>31</sup> "It was also said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.'<sup>32</sup> But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery. And whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

**John 3:25-31**: Now a discussion arose between some of John's disciples and a Jew over purification.<sup>26</sup> And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, he who was with you across the Jordan, to whom you bore witness- look, he is baptizing, and all are going to him."<sup>27</sup> John answered, "A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven.<sup>28</sup> You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before him.'<sup>29</sup> The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is now

complete. <sup>30</sup> He must increase, but I must decrease." <sup>31</sup> He who comes from above is above all. He who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks in an earthly way. He who comes from heaven is above all.

<sup>ESV</sup> **Ephesians 5:21-32** submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. <sup>22</sup> Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. <sup>24</sup> Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. <sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, <sup>26</sup> that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, <sup>27</sup> so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. <sup>28</sup> In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. <sup>29</sup> For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, <sup>30</sup> because we are members of his body. <sup>31</sup> "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." <sup>32</sup> This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

## Introduction

***Relationships are hard! Every time I trust someone and get close, I get burned!***

***THE RELATIONSHIP of Marriage is hard! He/She doesn't understand me! He/She doesn't know how to meet my needs! God doesn't care for me because I am not content and satisfied as I thought I would be, etc. (Anti-Covenantal language)***

### **Relationships Covenant and Adultery**

**Not what you might think about at first, but...Covenant and the sin of adultery go hand in hand.**

**We worry about "lines that we might cross" (legalists always do!), but we are to be concerned about a condition. Not merely lines to cross "into sin" but a condition that hold potential adultery within the heart constantly!**

#### **I. COVENANT AND ADULTERY**

- a. **Covenant of Creation**- Creator and Creature in Fellowship (relationship) Together.
- b. **Covenant of Marriage**- In context of covenant of creation between God and man, Creator and creature, we have the covenant of marriage (marriage relationship) (before the taint of sin by the fall). Part of the creation mandate is for man not to be alone.

***Adultery attempts to enjoy the pleasures of the marriage covenant without the responsibility of the marriage covenant (Mike Horton, pg. 186, The Law of Perfect Freedom).***

- c. **Covenant of Redemption** (beginning in history in Gen. 3:15, awaiting the Seed of the Woman)- Marriage signifies and symbolizes the relationship between God and his people (a relationship of unity and Spirit because of Christ), particularly even clearer in the New Testament between Christ and the Church, who is his bride. (Temporal nature of marriage as Jesus teaches in Mark 12:25; also see Matthew 22:30).

***Don't fail to miss the context of covenant and marriage. God's relationship with man is shown in man's relationship to woman. We see this throughout the Scriptures, especially when God's people are called "His Bride".***

## II. ACTUAL ADULTERY AND SPIRITUAL ADULTERY, OR “ACTUAL ADULTERY IS DERIVED FROM SPIRITUAL ADULTERY...FIRST!

### a. Scripture on Actual Adultery and the Consequences

<sup>ESV</sup> **Leviticus 20:10** "If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

<sup>ESV</sup> **Proverbs 6:32** He who commits adultery lacks sense; he who does it destroys himself.

<sup>ESV</sup> **Jeremiah 29:23** because they have done an outrageous thing in Israel, they have committed adultery with their neighbors' wives, and they have spoken in my name lying words that I did not command them. I am the one who knows, and I am witness, declares the LORD."

### b. Scripture on Spiritual Adultery and the Consequences

<sup>ESV</sup> **Jeremiah 3:9** Because she took her whoredom lightly, she polluted the land, committing adultery with stone and tree.

<sup>ESV</sup> **Jeremiah 5:7** "How can I pardon you? Your children have forsaken me and have sworn by those who are no gods. When I fed them to the full, they committed adultery and trooped to the houses of whores.

<sup>ESV</sup> **Ezekiel 23:37** For they have committed adultery, and blood is on their hands. With their idols they have committed adultery, and they have even offered up to them for food the children whom they had borne to me.

Book of Hosea on the Spiritual Adultery of Israel and how God in Christ will one day cleanse, purify, and marry them.

<sup>ESV</sup> **1 Corinthians 6:15-18**: Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! <sup>16</sup> Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, "The two will become one flesh." <sup>17</sup> But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. <sup>18</sup> Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.

## III. ADULTERY AND THE MATTER OF THE HEART- MATTHEW 15:19-

Yes there is Illicit SEX out there, but what about “*in here*” (that is, within every heart)? Remember what Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones wrote: “[Regarding the Ten Commandments] we must start with ourselves; we must start at the beginning, we must observe the law of God in our own personal, individual lives. And then, and then only, will we be entitled to trust nations and peoples, and to expect a different type of conduct and behavior from the world at large.” –‘Sermon on the Mount’, pg. 261.

<sup>ESV</sup> **Matthew 15:19** For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander.

- a. Idolatry
- b. Lust (one of the Seven Deadly Sins for a reason!)- “Impure Desires” (Part of the fall and the characteristic of this present age. More of the ongoing desires we have to “go back to Egypt” even though we are in the Spirit).

**Romans 1:21-25:** For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. <sup>22</sup> Claiming to be wise, they became fools, <sup>23</sup> and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. <sup>24</sup> Therefore God gave them up in ***the lusts of their hearts to impurity***, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, <sup>25</sup> because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

<sup>ESV</sup> **Proverbs 6:25-27:** Do not desire her beauty in your heart, and do not let her capture you with her eyelashes; <sup>26</sup> for the price of a prostitute is only a loaf of bread, but a married woman hunts down a precious life. <sup>27</sup> Can a man carry fire next to his chest and his clothes not be burned?

- c. Impurity (literally “Uncleanness”, or a state of being in the flesh):

Entire Book of Leviticus is concerned with our impurity or uncleanness before God (Isaiah sees God and says he is an impure man, or unclean man who lives among an impure and unclean people; says ‘impure lips’ or ‘unclean lips’ but the lips are just revealing the true impure or unclean heart).

<sup>ESV</sup> **Romans 1:24** Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to ***impurity***, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves...

<sup>ESV</sup> **Romans 6:19** I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to ***impurity***

and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.

<sup>ESV</sup> **Galatians 5:19** Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality,

<sup>ESV</sup> **Ephesians 5:3** But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.

<sup>ESV</sup> **Colossians 3:5** Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

- d. **SEX:** Notice how we all think of something ugly or dirty, whether we are deriving this connotation from late 19<sup>th</sup> century Puritanical Victorianism and all its baggage, certain Roman Catholic views of sex only for propagating children, or ugly and dirty sex that you have learned from this present age.
- e. Regardless: Sex is good and created by God in the marriage covenant (“They were both naked and unashamed” – Genesis 2:25)
- f. **Sex is a seal of the marriage covenant** and thus why in and of itself outside of marriage in adultery, it is unfulfilling and empty. Much like the sign of the sacraments that are not seals because not received by faith in covenant relationship to God.
- g. Imaginations (thought life): Take every thought captive (2 Cor. 10:3-5)

***Think of the relationship between what the covenant calls us to with God, in marriage, to one another, and how adultery perverts this close bond and relationship.***

- i. Adultery, particularly sexual sins of the mind and imagination are because we don't want to commit to covenant relationship with someone else. It is called “auto-sexuality” for a reason and it is related to another “auto”, “autonomous”: a law unto oneself with no regard for God's Law.
- ii. Not “What can I get” in self-centered, selfish language, but covenant language of love: **“What can I give to another person?”**

iii. **Those who are most self-fulfilling and self-centered seem as men to find it hard to love a woman because it takes sacrifice and giving, and for women it seems it is hard for them to be submissive.** Both are problems for “what I can get” rather than “what I can give” in the way God has ordained it in marriage (more in Ephesians 5:21-32).

1. Thought lives of men: Pornography (discontentment at heart)

- a. Pornography is addictive!
- b. Internet pornography industry alone generates \$12 billion in annual revenue- - larger than the combined revenues of ABC, NBC, and CBS.
- c. Do whatever you can do to flee this addiction! (Pastor, accountability partner who truly believes in grace, confess and repent).
- d. Young or old can and do struggle with pornography or lust.
- e. Calvin on merely outward obedience: “And let him who does not touch a woman not flatter himself, as if he could not be accused of immodesty, while in the meantime his heart inwardly burns with lust.”
- f. **Dangers of Internet:** Porn sites, chat rooms, etc. (Think of King David in 2 Samuel 11, he didn't have the internet, but he was in the “wrong place at the wrong time.”)

**Quotation from an internet expert in a letter to his pastor:** “I'm deeply concerned about the avenues for decadent content that have been opened in my home. I'm fortunate to have many good Christian male friends that I can confide in and talk openly with about their faith and areas in their life where they are struggling. What has been alarming to me is that out of a dozen or so close friends that I have talked to, all but one has admitted that they struggle in this area and frequently fail.

All of these friends are very committed followers of Christ, many involved in full time Christian service. What I see is that Christians who would have never even considered going into an adult pornography store, renting an X-Rated movie, or dialing a 900 number, are now continually failing in this area because of the anonymity and free and easy access to this type of content on

the Internet. What is worse, is seeing the grip and pull it has on people once they start down this path.” (Quoted in Ryken, Exodus Commentary, pg. 637).

2. Thought lives of women: Fantasy lives or a different kind of lust (discontentment at heart)

#### **IV. UNDERSTANDING MARRIAGE AS A PICTURE OF CHRIST AND THE CHURCH**

- a. Exegesis of Ephesians 5:21-32

<sup>ESV</sup> **Ephesians 5:21** submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. <sup>22</sup> Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. <sup>24</sup> Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. <sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, <sup>26</sup> that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, <sup>27</sup> so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. <sup>28</sup> In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. <sup>29</sup> For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, <sup>30</sup> because we are members of his body. <sup>31</sup> "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." <sup>32</sup> This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

- b. Enter covenant of marriage with understanding the covenant with God, and how to give, rather than merely what you can get.

**Those who are most self-fulfilling and self-centered seem as men to find it hard to love a woman because it takes sacrifice and giving, and for women it seems it is hard for them to be submissive.** Both passive men and strong women are problems for “what I can get” rather than “what I can give” in the way God has ordained it in marriage (more in Ephesians 5:21-32). (When couples bring this up to one another, the blame-shifting games begin!) which is exactly what Genesis 2-3 teaches us.

- c. If you are preparing for marriage and think more about what you will get, you are not thinking covenantally and you will suffer harm and difficult circumstances in your marriage.
- d. Marriage and Sex: God has given us the pleasure of sexual intercourse to be united as “one flesh”.

- e. It is never too late no matter how long you have been married to go back over your vows in the marriage covenant, re-read Ephesians 5 (and other Scriptures), repent, ask forgiveness of your spouse, and by His grace, starting this day, begin to give and not merely “get”. (Re-read 1 Corinthians 13 since you probably had this read the day of your wedding!)

<sup>ESV</sup> **Hebrews 13:1-5:** Let brotherly love continue. <sup>2</sup> Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. <sup>3</sup> Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body. <sup>4</sup> ***Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.*** <sup>5</sup> Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

## **V. BEING PURE AND HOLY AS GOD HAS CALLED US AS HIS COVENANT PEOPLE**

- a. Confess and repent
  - i. **Have really committed adultery in the present or past?** “Hear the sweet and forgiving words of Jesus: “Go, and sin no more.” These wonderful words were spoken to the woman who was **caught in adultery** (rather than her being stoned to death).
  - ii. **Haunted by the past in this area?** Know that Jesus is with you forever, and when he forgives your sins, he cleanses you from all impurity and tosses your sins in the ocean of his forgiveness as far as the east is from the west.
  - iii. **Living in the sin of adultery now in word, thought and deed?** Seek the LORD for his help and know that when you confess your sins to the LORD he is faithful to cleanse you and to forgive you all transgressions.
  - iv. **Pray Psalm 51:**

***Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. <sup>2</sup> Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!*** <sup>3</sup> For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. <sup>4</sup> Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your

sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.<sup>5</sup> Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.<sup>6</sup> Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.<sup>7</sup> Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.<sup>8</sup> Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice.<sup>9</sup> Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.<sup>10</sup> **Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.**<sup>11</sup> Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

b. **NEVER TOO GUILTY AND FULL OF SHAME TO COME TO THE CROSS!**

Jesus is the only truly wholly and pure man who can serve as our Mediator between God and ourselves.

c. Know your identity as the Bride of Christ!

**A BRIEF REDEMPTIVE-HISTORY OF YOU THE LORD'S BRIDE (LIVE COVENANTALLY, RELATIONALLY WITH ONE ANOTHER AS ONE BODY).**

<sup>ESV</sup> **Isaiah 61:10** I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

<sup>ESV</sup> **Isaiah 62:5** For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your sons marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.

<sup>ESV</sup> **Revelation 19:7** Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready;

<sup>ESV</sup> **Revelation 21:2** And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

<sup>ESV</sup> **Revelation 21:9** Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, "Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb."

<sup>ESV</sup> **Revelation 22:17** The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.

***There are no "marriages made in heaven", either in the home or the Church- - but there is forgiveness and mercy in Jesus Christ! Don't have unrealistic expectations of sinners- -you're not so great yourself!***

**What is love?**

***It acts different, it looks different, it thinks differently, it is giving ourselves covenantally to God and to our neighbor.***

I find it interesting that in a popular song, the words ask “What is love...?” then go on to say: “Baby don’t hurt me...no more.” That is the so-called “love” of the present age that has nothing to do with covenant, and everything to do with self!

Love is...

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant<sup>5</sup> or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;<sup>6</sup> it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.<sup>7</sup> Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.<sup>8</sup> Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away.<sup>9</sup> For we know in part and we prophesy in part,<sup>10</sup> but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away.<sup>11</sup> When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways.<sup>12</sup> For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.<sup>13</sup> So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

***YOU ARE THE NEW JERUSALEM, THE BRIDE OF THE LAMB- -GO AND LIVE LIKE WHO YOU ALREADY ARE IN JESUS AS PURE AND UNSPOTTED, REDEEMED NEW CREATIONS!***