

# END-TIMES ISSUES



**#110** Commandment #7 – Issues and observations (2).

GOD DOESN'T TELL US TO KNOW ALL THE END-TIME DETAILS. HE TELLS US TO BE READY.

**A N D B E Y O N D I**

## PART 2 of: Issues and Observations Related to ...

### THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT.

**You shall not commit adultery.**  
Exodus 20:14 (BSB); also in Deuteronomy 5:18

Last time, we began with:

**A basic principle that needs to guide us:**

**FACTS** are to influence our **THINKING**.  
— They will indirectly influence our **actions**.

**COMMANDS** are to influence our **ACTIONS**.  
— They will indirectly influence our **thinking**.

- ✓ Each passage must be understood within its context.
- ✓ Commands that do not apply to us are treated like *facts*, and must be understood within their context.

**Some additional basic concepts that need to guide us:**

**The mere fact that someone in the Bible does something – even godly people – does not *prove* that we are to do it.**

- **Godly people were born in sin** – just like everyone – and have been influenced by the world and its values.  
Consider: Genesis 8:21; Job 14:4; 15:14-16; 25:4-6; Psalm 14:3; 51:5; 143:2; Proverbs 20:9; Ecclesiastes 7:20, 29; Isaiah 53:6; Romans 3:10-12, 23; 5:12; 7:18; Galatians 3:22; Ephesians 2:2-3; 1 John 1:8-10.
- ✓ It's not that saved people are *sinlessly perfect*, but that (with God's help) they *oppose* the world and its values, and they *fight* sin – rather than going along with the world and choosing to stay in sin. (This fighting is a *process* that takes time.)
- **Other issues may have also influenced the person's conduct** – such as ignorance of God's will, and influence of the world around them. Also, we now have more revelation from God, than in the Old Testament era.

- **How should we respond to this?**
  - ✓ The *commands* and *instructions* given by God (taken within their context) are to influence *how* we interpret the rightness or wrongness of the actions of people.
  - ✓ Even when God *commanded* someone to do something – that doesn't *prove* that the command applies to us. We must consider the *context* of the command.  
**EXAMPLE:** The fact that the prophet Hosea was *commanded* by God to marry a prostitute does *not* mean that we are to do so!

When the LORD first spoke through Hosea, He told him, "**Go, take a prostitute as your wife** and have children of adultery, because this land is flagrantly prostituting itself by departing from the LORD."  
So Hosea went and married Gomer daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son.  
Hosea 1:2-3 (BSB)

**People's choices have *consequences*. These consequences often affect others who did not make the choice.**

- People don't like to think about this – especially if the consequences are bad – but it is inescapable. We see it all around us.
  - ✓ Consequences may be predictable or unpredictable; we might not even recognize them. But they cannot be stopped (though other factors may also influence what happens).
- Even when: ① it is not obvious, or ② it does not happen immediately, or ③ it only happens *indirectly*, people can *still* experience consequences that are caused by another person's actions – whether those actions are good or bad, and whether they realize it or not.

**THE TWO MOST EXTREME EXAMPLES OF CONSEQUENCES:**

- Adam and Eve sinned ... BAD consequences affected all of us.
- Jesus Christ was perfectly righteous ... GOOD consequences affect all who are willing to repent, trust and follow him.

**The issue of "damage control."**

- There may be times when sin has occurred (regardless of who did it), and it has left us with no *good* options. At this point, the best we can do is to *minimize* the negative effects of the sin.
- The need for damage control is due to *sin* or its effects. (Don't blame God.) It may be due to consequences beyond our control. It may occur when the *good* options have been ignored by someone. It leaves us in a situation where we have to pick "the lesser of two evils" ... but they are *still* evil. Our goal must be to *minimize* the *bad* consequences.
- We might not be the one who caused the situation; but we may still need to deal with the consequences of it. **EXAMPLE:** If an unsaved partner is determined to get a divorce, let him – 1 Corinthians 7:15-16.
- If *we* are the *cause* of the situation, we need to *repent* of our sin. We can (and should) *encourage* others to repent when they are guilty; but we cannot *force* them to do so.

### Some MYTHS about sexual sin:

"I can't help it! ... It's 'me'! ... It's just what I do!"  
[Implied: "Therefore, it's OK if I do it."]

- We live in a society that often treats sexual sin as though it's something they "have to do." They may treat it as "normal" and "socially acceptable." They may even go so far as to blame their conduct on "genetics" or "misfunctioning brain cells" – *anything* to "justify" it! ★ *In all this, their goal is to define sin as "not sin."*

#### There are several issues here:

- God says that sexual sin is a *choice*. The urge to do it may be an *impulse*, but a person needs to *choose* whether or not to *yield* to that impulse. God also warns us that sin is *enslaving*. When we choose to live in sin, we become *slaves* to sin... and it then becomes easier to yield to more sin.

[ MORE ISSUES ] →

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- We sin, because we are *sinners* – and we *choose* to sin. We may want to pass the blame back to our ancestors (Adam and Eve, the *first* sinners), and say that *our* sin is the consequence of *their* sin. Yet every time we *choose* to sin, we are demonstrating our "solidarity" with *their* decision. We are expressing approval of what they did, by doing it ourselves.

People who claim they "can't help it" are, indirectly, blaming God (who made them) for what they are doing.

- To whatever degree that we have the ability for conscious reflection, God has embedded within us a basic understanding of right and wrong – a "conscience" that condemns us when we choose to sin.
- ✓ Our tendency is to *suppress* this awareness, to *corrupt* it, to "*sear*" it to the point that it is basically dead (or at least greatly distorted). *Only to the extent that our minds are "renewed" by Scripture (Romans 12:2) can this be reversed.*

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"It was an 'accident'!"

WE HAD AN  
"ACCIDENT," AND  
NOW I'M  
PREGNANT!

- People will do anything to downplay the seriousness or deliberateness of their sin – especially when they get caught.
- An "accident"? No, it was a *choice* – often made after a long series of other sinful choices, leading to that "ultimate" sinful choice.
- Usually, this response is made after a sin that was done in secret is forced into the light.

#### An "accident"?

- This is what an accident would be like... *and it doesn't happen!*
- God has *designed* human sexuality in such a way that it is *impossible* for it to be "accidental."

WE WERE WALKING DOWN  
THE STREET, AND TRIPPED ON  
A CRACK IN THE SIDEWALK.  
NOW I'M PREGNANT!

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It doesn't hurt *me* if others do it, as long as I myself don't do it.

- Sexual sin is like a cancer that will continue to grow, unless it is removed. Scripture compares the influence of such sin to *yeast* that eventually permeates whatever it is in:

Don't you know that a little yeast [= the unrepentant sinner] leavens the whole batch of dough [= the community]? Get rid of the old yeast, so that you may be a new unleavened batch—as you really are.

1 Corinthians 5:6b-7a (NIV)

- Our willingness to tolerate or ignore such sins communicates to others that we don't consider it to be a serious matter. Indirectly, we are *encouraging* others to join in the sin.
- In both Old and New Testaments, *ignoring* sexual sin was often the basis for God's judgment against Israel (in the O.T.) and the church (in the N.T.). God also said that *the land itself* would be contaminated by their sin, if it wasn't purged out of the land (Leviticus 18:24-30; Deuteronomy 22:22-24). This applied both to Israel, and to other nations.

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- We are also sinning against God, who *requires* us to deal with it.

Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather **expose them**.

Ephesians 5:11 (NIV)

*Their sins have consequences, as much as our response to them does.*

- In the past, we examined the significance of sexuality and marriage. On the basis of what we saw, we can say that such sin is against *God himself*. But it is also against Christ and the church; so the New Testament contains many exhortations for the church to have it *removed* from the church.
- ✓ In the New Testament, consider: 1 Corinthians 5-6; Revelation 2:14-16, 20-23; Jude 1:4-8; and 2 Peter 2:1-3, 13-14.
- ✓ Other passages mention the *need* for God's people to try to bring those who live in sin back to repentance – for even if those people *claim* to be saved, they are in danger of *eternal* death. James 5:19-20; Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5.

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### An Old Testament event that some people use to *excuse* their sexual sins.

"King David committed adultery with Bathsheba... yet God called him "a man after my own heart"!"

- Here are the verses where David is described this way. (The "Bathsheba event" occurred *many* years later.)

SPOKEN  
TO KING  
SAUL.

"But now your kingdom will not endure; **the LORD has sought a man after His own heart** and appointed him ruler over His people, because you have not kept the command of the LORD."

1 Samuel 13:14 (BSB)

"After removing Saul, [God] raised up David as their king and testified about him: 'I have found **David** son of Jesse **a man after My own heart**; he will carry out My will in its entirety.' "

Acts 13:22 (BSB)

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- **About these verses:**

- ✓ They do not say that David was sinless and that he accomplished God's will flawlessly. Instead, it describes *the basic orientation of his heart* (and mind). This is in total contrast to King Saul.
- ✓ Rather than using this statement to downplay the seriousness of sin (as some do), we should use it as an encouragement to pursue God and his will, and to *return* to God any time we do sin. (And to recognize that the horrible consequences are *real*.)

**David vs. Saul:**

- ✓ **David** wanted to know and do God's will. When he sinned, he repented and turned back to God. The way he responded to rebuke (over his sin) showed that his repentance was genuine. His sins did not *define* his allegiance to God.
- ✓ **Saul** wanted to promote himself and gain the approval of people. When he sinned, he made excuses for it. Occasionally, he would have remorse for his sins; but he would soon go back to them. His life was essentially *defined* by his sins.

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**Concerning David's sin with Bathsheba – some observations:**

It proves that sin has consequences... and that some of them can be quite horrible.

- **You can read about it in 2 Samuel 11-12.**

- ✓ This tells us about the event (though it might not answer all the questions we may have).
- ✓ We shouldn't forget that the matter also included Bathsheba's husband, Uriah the Hittite. (David arranged for his death in battle.)
- **This event, though terrible, does not "define" David's life.**
- ✓ Yet it was serious enough that it wasn't to be ignored. It was a dark blemish to a generally praiseworthy life.

For David had **done what was right** in the eyes of the LORD and had **not turned aside** from anything the LORD commanded all the days of his life, **except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.**

1 Kings 15:5 (BSB)

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- **Instead of making excuses, when confronted, David confessed his sin – that it was ultimately against God** (2 Samuel 12:13).

- ✓ Psalm 51 expresses his repentance – and acknowledgement that God's judgments are right. (No excuses on David's part.)

**Against you, you only, have I sinned**  
and done what is evil in your sight;  
so you are right in your verdict  
and justified when you judge.

Psalm 51:4 (NIV)

- **David suffered the rest of his life because of this sin.**

- ✓ Violence and tragedy would characterize his family life for as long as he lived.

"Now, therefore, **the sword will never depart from your house**, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.' This is what the LORD says: 'I will raise up adversity against you from your own house.' "

2 Samuel 12:10-11a (BSB)

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- **Walking on the roof? Bathing outside?**

- ✓ In that culture, both of these were normal practices.
- ✓ Roofs were flat with a parapet (railings) for safety. They were used for many activities – especially during the summer, when the houses themselves were quite hot.
- ✓ It was also a common practice to do bathing in an enclosed courtyard. They did not have indoor plumbing!
- ✓ Unfortunately, the roof was too close to the courtyard... and David made no effort to move away from the temptation. (Also: David could have kept himself out of sight; so Bathsheba might have had no idea what was happening.)

Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death.

James 1:14-15 (NLT)

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**David's sin had horrible consequences.**

- **According to the Law, David *deserved* the death sentence.**

- ✓ Had Bathsheba been a *willing* participant, she also would have deserved death. But this does *not* appear to be the case, because God condemns *only* David.

- **If David *had* been put to death, would God's previous promises to David have been broken?** (See 2 Samuel 7:4-17.)

- ✓ We call these promises the "Davidic Covenant." In it, God promised that David's throne (or kingdom) would last *forever*.
- ✓ God's promises *cannot* be broken. He would have still kept his promise. But he would have accomplished the promise through one of the other sons who had already been born to David.

**What was Bathsheba's role in this matter?**

Scripture does not say, but it is quite likely that she was *not* complicit or guilty in this matter. Since David was the *king*, it is quite likely that she didn't have any say in the matter.

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- **So, why wasn't David put to death?**

- ✓ The most popular answer seems to be the claim that God, as the one who gave the Law, can cancel or change the penalties found in it, as he sees fit. *But would he actually do this?*
- ✓ Perhaps a better answer is simply the fact that *there were not enough witnesses.*

**On the testimony of two or three witnesses a man shall be put to death**, but he shall not be executed on the testimony of a lone witness.

Deuteronomy 17:6 (BSB)

- **Still, God did not let David get away with it.**

- ✓ Since David had *genuine* repentance, the *eternal* consequences were paid for by Jesus, on the cross.
- ✓ But during his lifetime on earth, David paid dearly. He suffered because of his sin for the rest of his life – which shows that sin can *still* have consequences, *even after repentance*. God even had David unwittingly pronounce his own judgment upon himself.

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### • What was David's punishment?

- ✓ God sent the prophet Nathan to present to David a situation that needed judged. David did not realize that it was a "parable" of his own situation. See: 2 Samuel 12:1-4.
- ✓ David was incensed at the evil actions of guilty person (who Nathan described), and pronounced judgment on him.

David burned with anger against the man [who Nathan had just described] and said to Nathan:

"As surely as the LORD lives, **the man who did this deserves to die!** Because he has done this thing and has shown no pity, **he must pay** for the lamb **four times over.**"

2 Samuel 12:5-6 (BSB)

DAVID  
ALSO  
DESERVED  
DEATH

DAVID  
ALSO  
WOULD  
PAY THIS

- ✓ David's judgment was in accordance with the Law, which said:

"If a man steals an ox or a sheep and slaughters or sells it, he must **repay** five oxen for an ox and **four** sheep for a sheep."

Exodus 22:1 (BSB)

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- ✓ Once the judgment was pronounced by David, Nathan said to him: "You are the man" – and continued by describing how the judgment would come about (based on what God told him – see 2 Samuel 12:7+).
- ✓ In the end, *four* of David's sons would die. In addition, the sins *he* had committed would haunt him for the rest of his life. See the rest of the judgment, in 2 Samuel 12:9-12.
- ✓ David's repentance was genuine (verse 13+). But though God would be able to bless him and would still use him, *the consequences of David's sin could not go away.*

### Something to consider ...

- ✓ Were the consequences worth it? Can we use what *David* did as an excuse for *our own* sins?
- ✓ Be aware that, if we *choose* to use this as an *excuse* for our own sins, *we can't claim to have the repentance that David had.*

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### WHAT HAPPENED TO BATHSHEBA?

- Most likely, she experienced a lot of trauma and sorrow, because of: ① the sin David committed against her, as well as ② the deaths of her husband Uriah and the child that was later born.
- The sin could not be undone. Yet God later restored her, and even exalted her far above what she had been.
  - » He gave her other children. One would become king over Israel.
  - » He made her a prominent figure in the land (even sitting on a throne next to King Solomon).
  - » He made her an ancestor of Jesus – both through King Solomon (the source of Jesus' *legal* right to be King over Israel – Matthew 1:6), and through another son, Nathan (the source of Jesus' *biological* right to be King – Luke 3:31). [This "Nathan" was perhaps named in honor of the prophet who had rebuked David.]
- God even used David (after his genuine repentance), to provide part of this restoration – which was a demonstration of God's *grace*. Yet none of this justifies David's sin – which also resulted in horrible consequences for David, for the rest of his life.

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### What should we learn from these things?

1. **God's instructions take precedence** over people's actions. Even people who are "good examples" can have faults.
2. **Sin has consequences**, even if we have repented and are forgiven. These consequences can affect us, as well as others who are not guilty of the sin.
3. If **good choices are ignored**, that may leave us and others with only **bad** choices. We may find ourselves in a situation where all we can do is try to minimize the **bad** results.
4. **Excuses, self-justifying and ignoring the sin issue** – the various "myths" we looked at – all don't work.
5. **God, in grace, may use the sin to accomplish good.** But that neither excuses the sin, nor erases all the bad consequences.

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## OUR MISSION: Focus on the BIBLE!

Use **SCRIPTURE** to *reinforce* a godly perspective on these matters – in both:

- ✓ What we personally do.
- ✓ The way we respond to a society that *loves* to sin.

### NEXT TIME ...

We plan to finish looking at various questions and issues that are related to this Seventh Commandment.

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