

# END-TIMES ISSUES



**#106** Commandment #7 – The commandment & sin.

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**

1

## THE SIXTH AND SEVENTH COMMANDMENTS

- These two commandments are directly related to what it means to be "in the image of God" (Genesis 1:26-27). To violate them is ultimately a sin against God, who's image we bear.

**You shall not murder.**

Exodus 20:13 (BSB);  
also in Deuteronomy 5:17

**You shall not commit adultery.**

Exodus 20:14 (BSB);  
also in Deuteronomy 5:18

- The human inclination:** It is our nature, as sinners (rebels against our Creator), to *want* to violate these commandments. We will invent any excuse we need, in order to "justify" our actions.
- God's restraining power:** Many of us will never commit the most extreme forms of these sins, because of the *restraint* that God brings into our lives. He limits our sin through circumstances, the influences of conscience, social pressures, and even the sins of others.
  - ✓ When God restrains our sin, it is an expression of *grace*. This is something that even the *unsaved* experience. Even so, this restraint is undeserved, and we have to give *God* credit for it.

2

## THERE IS A SPIRITUAL DIMENSION THAT PEOPLE TEND TO IGNORE.

- It is no accident* that a rejection of the God of the Bible goes along with violating the commandments given by God – often with a strong emphasis on the Sixth and Seventh Commandments (which point directly to God by way of his image-bearers).
- There are spiritual forces (ignored by many today) that influence the events that occur in the world. This warning is *not* figurative language; rather, it is a factual statement:

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against **the powers of this world's darkness**, and against **the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms**.

Ephesians 6:12 (BSB)

- Down through the ages, there has often been a strong connection between sexual sin and idolatry – not just in the Old Testament, but among people who *claim* to be Christians. (A couple examples can be found in Revelation 2.)

3

## VIOLATING THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT:

### ✦ ARE "LITTLE" VIOLATIONS REALLY THAT BAD? ✦

- The world constantly tells us that it's OK to violate the Seventh Commandment "a little bit." They may even say that *anything* is OK, as long as we can "get away" with it, without being caught.
- Even people in the church find it easy to be influenced by the world's message.
  - ✓ The world's influence can *only* be opposed by developing a "renewed mind" (Romans 12:2), based on the teachings of Scripture.

### PRAISE GOD FOR RESTRAINT!

Romans 1:18-32 illustrates how far a society can fall into sin, when all restraint is removed. Sexual sin is a big part of this depraved condition; but it eventually encompasses *all* sins.

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## Even sinning "a little bit" has consequences.

- Many people (including church-goers) think they can ignore or violate certain commandments "a little bit" without any serious repercussions.
- When they do this, they close their eyes to *reality*:
  - ✓ **The enslaving effect of sin:** Each time a person yields to sin, it becomes *easier* to yield again (and to dive deeper into that sin); and it becomes harder to stop.

Jesus replied, "Truly, truly, I tell you, everyone who sins is **a slave to sin**."

John 8:34 (BSB)

- ✓ **The fact that sin has consequences** – even for people who are (or who become) saved. We may be forgiven by God, as far as *eternal punishment* is concerned; but that doesn't eliminate the potentially *many* consequences that may occur in this present life (both to us and to others).

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## HOW SCRIPTURE TEACHES US ABOUT THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT:

### Old Testament.

- 1A. **God** defines the nature of male-female relationships (Genesis 2) and prohibits the violation of this relationship (Exodus 20).
- 2A. **The prophets** explain the significance of what God said (= the books of the Law and various prophetic writings).  
These things apply to *all* people everywhere; but the Old Testament recipients were mainly *Jews*.

### New Testament.

- 1B. **Jesus (God)** defines the nature of male-female relationships and makes a few comments about the violation of this relationship.
- 2B. **The apostles (mainly Paul)** explain the significance of what Jesus/God said (especially in several of Paul's epistles).  
Paul's focus was mainly on teaching the *Gentiles* what the Jews already knew.

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### PEOPLE LIKE TO MAKE EXCUSES FOR THEIR SIN.

- **EXAMPLE 1:** If Jesus doesn't directly condemn their "favorite" sin, some people claim that it "proves" that it *isn't* sin.
  - ✓ The fact that the prophets and apostles *do* call it sin (as it was their *duty* to do) proves differently.
- **EXAMPLE 2:** In some cases, *new* names have been given to *old* sins. These *new* names won't be found in older Bible Translations; and some people appeal to those older translations to "prove" that what they are doing is *not* sinful. (They may even say that the newer translations that include the more-recently-invented terms are "mistranslations.")
  - ✓ The fact that someone changes the name – often it's to make the sin sound more "acceptable" – does *not* cause it to cease being sin!
  - ✓ (When name changes *are* made, there is usually a time delay before translators begin to use the word in their translations. So for a while, translations may continue to use the *older* term, while people are becoming used to the *newer* one.)

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- **EXAMPLE 3:** We live in a world that totally rejects all that Scripture says about human nature and choice. People have invented a totally opposite view, which (if accepted) can make violations of the Seventh Commandment seem not only good, but *necessary*.
  - ✓ There have been times when the world *counterfeited* the teachings of Scripture. Today, the tendency is shifting toward hostile *opposition* to God's word (rather than imitation of it).
  - ✓ We should not be surprised when the world does this. The world *wants* to view sin as "necessary and good" – and *not* as sin. Its goal is to suppress any remaining conscious awareness of sin's evilness. (That's why atheists are so opposed to the presence of the Ten Commandments in public places – anywhere that people might see the commandments and be influenced by them.)
  - ✓ In all this, the even *greater* sin occurs when people who *claim* to follow Jesus begin to accept and practice these sins. When the church ceases to be "salt and light" in the world, it eliminates its reason to exist – Matthew 5:13-16.

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### GOD DEFINES THE NATURE OF "GOD'S IMAGE" AS "MALE AND FEMALE."

#### IN GENESIS 1: THE "IMAGE OF GOD."

- In Genesis 1:27, God defines "image of God" ...
  - ✓ In terms of **individuals**. Each of us, as individuals, are "image-bearers." This is patterned after the "one-ness" of God.
  - ✓ In terms of **"male-female units."** The union of male and female in marriage (not just physically, but also in spirit/soul) constitutes the "image of God." This is patterned after the "diversity" or "plurality" of God, as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

So God created man in His own image;  
in the image of God He created him;  
male and female He created them.

Genesis 1:27 (BSB)

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- Verse 26 reveals the purpose for which God created humans (both as individuals and as "male-female units").

Then God said, "Let Us make man [= humans] in Our image, after Our likeness, to rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, and over **all** the earth itself and every creature that crawls upon it."

Genesis 1:26 (BSB)

- ✓ Note the word "**all**." This task would encompass the *entire earth* – a task too great for just *two* individuals to accomplish.
- Verse 28 shows us what would need to happen, in order to fulfil this worldwide obligation. This is directly related to one of the functions of the "male-female unit" – and would be necessary for them to obey God.

God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and every creature that crawls upon the earth."

Genesis 1:28 (BSB)

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- Consider the significance of this command!

God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth ..."

Genesis 1:28a (BSB)

- ✓ It's a **command** (within the context of marriage), and is to be done in a way that *glorifies* God!

So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do,  
do it all to the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 10:31 (BSB)

- ✓ It's also a **blessing**!

⇒ Fulfilling this command requires that the children are taught the ways of God. *Otherwise, it is not being done to the glory of God. (And the children also will most likely not glorify God.)*

... bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

Ephesians 6:4b (NIV); see also Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

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### IN GENESIS 2: THE DIFFERENCES; THE NATURE OF MARRIAGE.

- This chapter focuses on the *differences* between male and female, and their union in *marriage*.

- ✓ As *individuals*, both express the image of God; yet there are differences. These differences are brought together in marriage, to complement each other within the *male-female unit*.

Many people in today's society *hate* what Scripture says on this topic. Our goal is to observe what it says, and leave it at that – not to attack or explain-away what it says.

- ⇒ Just as there are differences between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, there are differences between male and female.
- ⇒ These differences are exemplified in Genesis 2 (as well as throughout the rest of Scripture). If we ask the question, "Do such differences exist?" Scripture responds with the statement that "Such differences *do* exist."

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- **Genesis 2:2, 22: Differences in when they were created.**

- ✓ God made the man *first*... and later he made the woman.

Then the LORD God **formed a man** ...  
Genesis 2:7a (NIV)

Then the Lord God **made a woman** ... and he **brought her to the man**.  
Genesis 2:22 (NIV)

- ✓ In modern society, people tend to see no significance in this. In Scripture, there *is* a significance, just as there is a significance related to birth order (except when the sin of the firstborn forced a change). *Even in the New Testament, this issue is acknowledged:*

For **Adam was formed first**, and **then Eve**.  
1 Timothy 2:13 (BSB)

Paul uses this fact as part of the reason for the differences in obligations that he mentions in the passage. The different ways that they yielded to sin (in Genesis 3) is also an issue. (The different responses were due to the differences in their *natures*.)

13

- **Genesis 2:2, 21-22: Differences in how they were created.**

- ✓ In Genesis 1, we see that humans were created *differently* from the rest of creation. Everything else was created by the *command* of God, humans were created by the *direct activity* of God.
- ✓ In Genesis 2, we learn the specific details about how the humans were created; and it is different for each of them.
- ✓ **First**, God formed the man from dust, and personally breathed life into him.

Then the LORD God formed man from **the dust of the ground** and breathed the **breath of life** into his nostrils, and the man became a living being.  
Genesis 2:7 (BSB)

- ✓ At this point in time, there was no woman. The task that God gave (v. 19+) was directed specifically to the man. As he did this task, the need for a "counterpart" (not a "duplicate") would become obvious to him.

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- ✓ **Second**, God formed the woman by using part of the man. (The word "rib" is translated as "side" in most other passages, and, as suggested in v. 23, included more than just bone.)

So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep, and while he slept, He took one **of the man's ribs**\* and closed up the area with flesh. And from **the rib**\* that the LORD God had **taken from the man**, He made a woman and brought her to him.

Genesis 2:21-22 (BSB); Paul affirms this fact in 1 Corinthians 11:8.

\* (Or "took part of the man's side.")

- ✓ The man recognized these differences, and also the *connection* between him and the woman:

The man said,  
"This is now **bone** of my bones  
and **flesh** of my flesh;  
she shall be called 'woman,'  
for she was **taken out of man**."  
Genesis 2:23 (BSB)

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- **Genesis 2:18: Differences in why they were created.**

- ✓ In Genesis 1, we are told that humans were to rule over the earth, as God's representatives (image-bearers).

Then God said, "Let Us make man [= humans] ...  
**to rule over [everything].**"  
Genesis 1:26a (BSB)

- ✓ Genesis 2 shows us that there would be different roles needed for accomplishing this task. The man was given the task; the woman was made *for* the man, to *help* him accomplish it. [Paul also affirms this fact in 1 Corinthians 11:9.]

The LORD God also said, "It is **not good for the man to be alone**. I will make for him a **suitable helper**."  
Genesis 2:18 (BSB)

- ✓ The woman was considered to be *part* of the man – part of his side. Though having a difference in *function* or *purpose*, she was of the same *essence* as him... *for he* is where she came from.

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- ✓ The man (Adam) recognized these differences, as well as the *connection* (and inherent union) between him and her. He also *named* her – which, in Scripture, is an indication of his authority over her.

The man said,  
"This is now bone of my bones  
and flesh of my flesh;  
**she shall be called 'woman,'**  
for she was taken out of man."  
Genesis 2:23 (BSB)

- ⇒ The *creation* of the two involved unique, non-repeatable events. But afterwards, the *uniting* of the two would be a pattern for all future generations.
- ⇒ In this way, humans could obey God's command to multiply and fill the earth, in order to rule over it to the glory of God. (The fact that sin has corrupted much of the way people relate to each other doesn't erase the *obligation* that God has given.)

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- **Genesis 2:24: God defines this union.**

For this reason a man will **leave** his father and mother and **be united** to his wife, and they will **become one flesh**.  
Genesis 2:24 (BSB)

- ✓ **Who said this?** According to Jesus, it was not Adam, but "*the Creator*." And Jesus ought to know, because he did the creating!

Jesus answered, "Have you not read that from the beginning **the Creator 'made them male and female,'** and **said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'?**

So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."

Matthew 19:4-6 (BSB)

This statement, and all it implies, condemns just about everything the modern world wants to promote, in matters related to male and female, the nature (and seriousness) of marriage, and the Seventh Commandment.

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For this reason a man will **leave** his father and mother and **be united** to his wife, and they will **become one flesh**.

Genesis 2:24 (BSB)

✓ **Genesis 2:24 defines the concept.**

- The male *offspring* of a male-female unit (husband/wife) would leave and become part of a *separate* male-female unit, by being "united to his wife" and (therefore) becoming "one flesh" with her.
- "United" is also translated as: cleave (in the sense of being "glued together"), hold fast to, joined together, stick together...

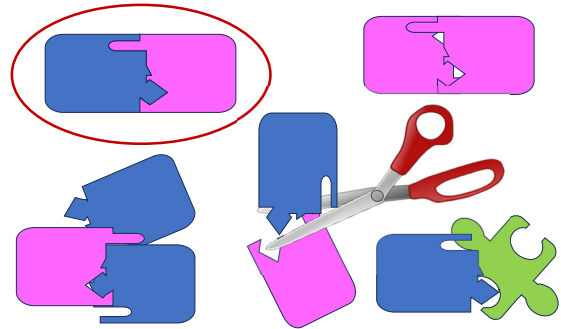
✓ **We call this concept "marriage."**

- The *Old Testament* uses several concepts to describe this concept, most of which can apply to a variety of situations (not just to marriage). To "take (a wife)" is perhaps the most common. (The *New Testament* uses the term "marriage.")
- Genesis 2:24 is also affirmed in Matthew 19:5; Mark 10:7-8; 1 Corinthians 6:16; and Ephesians 5:31.

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**ONLY ONE OF THESE REPRESENTS WHAT GENESIS 2:24 TEACHES:**

This union was intended to last *forever*.  
(Sin and death have complicated matters.)



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**WHAT CAN WE CONCLUDE (FROM GENESIS 2)?**

- What Scripture teaches here, regarding marriage, is the *foundation* for teaching us about the Seventh Commandment *principle* (which involves *more than* just the matter of adultery).
- What we see in this chapter is a reflection of God's own nature (to the fullest extent that *created beings* can do so).
- Because of this, *any* distortion of the marriage concept is ultimately a distortion of the human expression of what God is like – and this is why God *hates* such distortions so intensely.
- ✓ Scripture treats sexual sin as *incompatible* with purity, and with having an honorable attitude toward marriage.

No wonder God considers sexual sin to be such a serious matter!

Marriage should be **honored** by all, and the marriage bed kept **pure**, for **God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral**.

Hebrews 13:4 (NIV)

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- **Regarding sexual sin:** The *world* may call it an "uncontrollable urge." God calls it an act of the will: a choice. That's why he commands us to "abstain" from it, "control" our bodies, etc. Rejecting this command is the same as rejecting God, who makes obedience possible.

For it is God's will that you should be **holy**: You **must abstain from sexual immorality**;

**each of you must know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in lustful passion** like the Gentiles who do not know God;

and **no one should ever violate or exploit** his brother in this regard, because **the Lord will avenge all such acts**, as we have already told you and solemnly warned you.

For God has not called us to **impurity**, but to **holiness**.

Anyone, then, who rejects this command does not reject man but God, the very One who gives you His Holy Spirit.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-8 (BSB)

THIS IS A WARNING,  
NOT A MATTER OF OPINION!

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★ **WHAT SHOULD OUR MISSION BE?** ★

The world is *opposed* to these things. Yet throughout Scripture, you can find them as part of a consistent (and repeated) message:

- ✓ God created *only* male and female. (Harmful mutations may cause confusing deformities; but that is not how God made things.)
- ✓ There are *differences* between male and female – differences in abilities, strengths and weaknesses; differences in duties, functions and roles within marriage and society. There are also different ways that they reflect various aspects of the image of God.
- ✓ The only marriage arrangement that honors God is strictly one male and one female – the way *he* defined it.

The issue *isn't* whether or not the Bible says such things (⇒ *it does*), but whether or not people are willing to accept it (⇒ *most aren't*).

Our mission should be to **accept** and **live by** what Scripture teaches!

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