

END-TIMES ISSUES



#123 Commandment #7 – Principles & final comments.

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

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1

The Seventh Commandment – as a principle:

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

- We have seen how this commandment, *as a principle*, represents a wide range of actions – both good and bad.
 - ✓ "Negative" actions – any kind of sexual sin or perversion, whether in deed, word or thought; along with anything that tempts others in these matters.
 - ✓ "Positive" actions – sexually chaste conduct – actions, thoughts and desires; also encouraging such conduct in others (including not tempting them through what you do or say or wear).
- We also examined a number of *issues related to this commandment*: ✓ its foundation based on God's nature; ✓ various situations we find in the Bible; ✓ divorce and marriage issues; ✓ application to our relationship with God.

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TODAY...

- We finish this commandment, with a focus on:
 - ✓ Some final comments about *physical* sexual sin.
 - ✓ More about our relationship to God – described in terms of marriage and family relationships.
 - ✓ Examples of character traits that are related to this Seventh Commandment *principle*.

A FEW COMMENTS ABOUT PHYSICAL SEXUAL SIN:

- We need to emphasize: Sexual sin is *totally incompatible* with holiness.

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 4:7-8 (BSB); see also Ephesians 5:3.

3

- **Who practices sexual sin?** Scripture is quite clear on this matter.
 - ✓ **People who do not know God.** In a passage where Paul warns the Thessalonians to *avoid* such conduct, he describes such people as:

[People] who **do not know** God...
The Lord will punish all those who commit such sins, as we told you and warned you before.
1 Thessalonians 4:5b, 6b (NIV)
 - ✓ **Apostates** – people who may pretend to be saved, but they have abandoned the faith.

With **eyes full of adultery**, they never stop sinning; they **seduce the unstable** ...
2 Peter 2:14a (NIV)
 - ✓ **Ungodly people** who use God's grace as an excuse for sin.

They are ungodly people, who **pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality** ...
Jude 1:4b (NIV)

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- Sexual sin is against your own body... *and* the body of Christ.
 - ✓ **Against the body of Christ** ... *Who* do you want to unite with?

Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never!
Or don't you know that **he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body**? For it is said, "The two will become one flesh."
But **he who unites himself with the Lord is one with Him in spirit**.
1 Corinthians 6:15-17 (BSB)
 - ✓ **Against your own body**... *which you don't own*.

... **he who sins sexually sins against his own body**.
Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have received from God?
You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore glorify God with your body.
1 Corinthians 6:18b-20 (BSB)

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THE SPIRITUAL APPLICATION OF THE 7TH COMMANDMENT:

LAST TIME ...

- We saw how this commandment applied to our relationship with God:
 - ✓ **The POSITIVE** aspect of this commandment: God describing himself as "married" to his people. Example: Christ and his "bride" (referring to *all* genuine Christians).
 - ✓ **The NEGATIVE** aspect of this commandment: described as spiritual adultery or prostitution – *any* situation in which we give something else the honor and loyalty that belongs *only* to God.

TODAY ...

- A few additional comments – something about the **POSITIVE** aspect of this commandment, and something about the **NEGATIVE** aspect of this commandment.

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More about the "positive" aspect: Christ and the church.

- Last time, we looked at Ephesians 5:22-33.
 - ✓ This passage *defines* the required relationship between husband and wife, and its intended parallel to Christ and the church.
- Here are some more observations:
 - ✓ The **two** are separate entities, yet they are brought together as **one**. The marriage relationship among *humans* is defined this way; and because humans are designed to reflect *spiritual realities*, the very passage that shows this relationship among *humans* is *rightly applied* to the relationship of *Christ and the church*.

[Quoting Genesis 2:24.] "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and **the two will become one flesh.**"

This mystery is profound, but **I am speaking about Christ and the church.**

Ephesians 5:31-32 (BSB)

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- ✓ Referring to "Christ" *and* the "church": Points to the fact that they are different.
- ✓ Referring to the church as the "wife" (or "bride"): Points to the fact that they are brought together in marriage.
- ✓ Referring to Christ as the "head" and the church as the "body" of Christ: Points to the unity.

Christ is the head of the church, His **body**,
For we are **members of His body.**

Ephesians 5:23b, 30 (BSB)

☞ This is what marriage is to be like!

- ✓ This parallel to Christ and the church shows us how the husband-wife relationship is to function, in order for things to work properly.

When the New Testament talks about a "mystery," it refers to something that was *not known* in the past, but has *now been revealed* to us.

This **mystery** is profound, ...
Ephesians 5:32a (BSB)

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About the "negative" aspect: What about the *unsaved*?

- There is no passage that links God to unsaved people, in terms of *Seventh Commandment concepts* – no "marriage language" (such as "bride" or "wife"). Nor is there any passage that links them to the *devil* in such a way.
- All "linking concepts" use *Fifth Commandment terminology* – "family language" (such as "son" or "children"). Here, there is a *complete contrast* between the saved and the unsaved:
 - ✓ **Saved people** are called "sons of God" or "children of God" – and that influences their conduct – Romans 8:14; 1 John 3:2-3; etc. As God's children, we are described as having God's "seed" in us (figuratively, we could compare it to "spiritual genetics") – and this is why our conduct will be different – 1 John 3:9; 1 Peter 1:23.
 - ✓ **Unsaved people** are called "sons of the evil one" or "children of the devil," etc. The devil is their "father" – and all this influences their conduct – John 8:44; 1 John 3:10; etc.

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- What about *church-goers*, who claim to be God's children, *even though they do not evidence the change that God's children have*?

- ✓ They do not actually belong to God. Scripture calls them "illegitimate children."

... **illegitimate** children and **not true** sons.

Hebrews 12:8b (BSB)

- There is *one verse* that uses the word "offspring." The concept is applied to *all humanity*, and refers to how humans came into existence.

- ✓ This is a *different* concept (and a different N.T. Greek word). It focuses on our *origin* and *accountability* to God, *not to a family relationship*.

The God who **made the world and everything in it** ...
He Himself **gives everyone life and breath and everything else.**
From one man He **made every nation of men**, ...
Therefore, **being offspring of God**, ...

Acts 17:24a, 25b-26a, 29a (BSB)

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All humans are described as God's "offspring" – a word that focuses on origin or source.

Few humans – only those who have entered a covenant relationship with God – are described in terms of marriage or sonship.

- One passage describes the idolatry of unsaved people with a *Seventh Commandment concept: prostitution*.
 - ✓ God describes their worship of false gods this way, and warns Israel to *not* make unions – covenants or marriages – with such people.
 - ✓ **WHY** no unions? Because their influence will cause the Israelites to follow their example in "*prostituting themselves to their gods.*"

Do not make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, for when **they prostitute themselves to their gods** and sacrifice to them, **they will invite you**, and you will eat their sacrifices. And when you take some of their daughters as brides for your sons, **their daughters will prostitute themselves to their gods and cause your sons to do the same.**

Exodus 34:15-16 (BSB)

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WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PASSAGE?

- This passage describes *idolatry itself* as "spiritual prostitution." Here, it is *not* referring to people who have *made a covenant* with the true God (like Israel), but to people who have *never* followed the true God.
- All of us** have had a conscious awareness that the true God exists – *an awareness that we have suppressed* (unless God, in mercy and grace, has changed our hearts) – Romans 1:18-20. **All of us have pursued our own gods** – whether in the form of an actual "idol" (a statue), or as a *set of values* that exalts something (*anything*) over the true God. **All of us have "prostituted ourselves" to our gods** – *even atheists*, who exalt *creation* over the Creator (who's existence they deny, having *suppressed* their innate knowledge about him).
- ★ **The big question is this:** Have you repented and returned to the Creator you have rejected? Have you begun to trust and obey him? Are you willing to *rely on him for the ability to change from* someone who "prostitutes" yourself to a false "god" ... ⇒ *into a child* of the true God, someone who will someday be part of the *bride* of Christ?

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CHARACTER TRAITS THAT ARE RELATED TO THE 7TH COMMANDMENT:

- There are many character traits that are related to the Seventh Commandment.
 - ✓ Some are *direct expressions* of Seventh Commandment principles – such as *faithfulness*.
 - ✓ Some are *learned through obeying* the Seventh Commandment – such as *patience*.
- At the same time, many character traits overlap with *other* commandments.
 - ✓ **Example:** Faithfulness is also related to *truthfulness*, an expression of the Ninth Commandment ("Do not bear false witness against your neighbor.")
 - ✓ It is **more important to learn and practice godly character traits**, than to know exactly which commandment they belong to!

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- **Character traits – examples to consider.** (These are moral obligations, whether or not we realize how they connect to a commandment.)
 - ✓ **Faithfulness** – Not only in *sexual* commitments, but in all of life.
 - ✓ **Covenant (or promise) keeping** – Related to faithfulness, commitment to one's marriage covenant parallels commitment to other covenants or promises made in life.
 - ✓ **Self-control and self-restraint** – when tempted in *any* area of life.
 - ✓ **Contentment** – in one's marriage situation... or in *any* situation.
 - ✓ **Respect for others** – recognizing the dignity, worth, value of others; and treating them appropriately.
 - ✓ **Self-giving / self-sacrificial love for others** – care, protecting them from harm (whether caused by you or by others).
 - ✓ **Purity of heart** – in all matters.

★ Your actions will affect others, in either good or bad ways. ★

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OUR MISSION:

FOCUS ON THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT!

Take care of any "do not's" that may be necessary.

But then:

Focus on replacing them with **POSITIVE** applications of this commandment.

When *wrong* conduct isn't *replaced* with something *right*, the devil finds it easier to bring back the *wrong* conduct. (See Luke 11:24-26.)

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Credits

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