



Exodus 20:14

HONORING MARRIAGE

*There is no relationship between human beings greater or more important than marriage. In the Bible's account, God Himself officiates at the first wedding. And when the man sees the woman, he breaks into poetry and exclaims, "At last!" Everything in the text proclaims that marriage, next to our relationship with God, is the most profound relationship there is. And that is why, like knowing God Himself, coming to know and love your spouse is difficult and painful yet rewarding and wondrous. The most painful, the most wonderful—this is the Biblical understanding of marriage, and there has never been a more important time to lift it up and give it prominence in our culture... Marriage used to be a public institution for the common good, and now it is a private arrangement for the satisfaction of the individual. Marriage used to be about **us**, but now it is about **me**.*

—Timothy Keller, *The Meaning of Marriage*

The Ten Commandments reveal God's righteous character. They also summarize the foundational principles for ethics and for life. These principles are not only for our own well-being but also for the survival of the community as a whole. The society that neglects and rejects these basic moral principles will eventually destroy itself.

THE COMMAND

You shall not commit adultery. (Hebrew, lo tin'aph)

- **Specifically, this command prohibits the _____ union of any person with someone who is not their married spouse.**

If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death. (Lev. 20:10)

- **Generally, this command prohibits _____ sexual immorality.**

Now Israel remained in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit sexual immorality with the women of Moab. They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. (Numbers 25:1-3; cf. 1 Cor. 10:8; Eph. 5:3)

- **Spiritually, this command prohibits the breaking of a covenant, such as in idolatry, which is described as "spiritual adultery."**

"Have you seen what faithless Israel has done? She has gone up on every high hill and... has committed adultery there... I gave faithless Israel her certificate of divorce and sent her away because of all her adulteries." (Jeremiah 3:6b, 8a; cf. Ezek. 16:15-34; 23:37; Hosea 4:1-19)

The happy state of matrimony is undoubtedly the surest and most lasting foundation of comfort and love, the cause of all good order in the world, and what preserves it from the utmost confusion.

—Benjamin Franklin

Commit adultery. Heb., *na'aph*, "the act of breaking the marriage covenant through sexual infidelity and, by extension, any breach of covenant faithfulness." (biblehub.com)

Sexual immorality. Grk., *porneia*, "all forms of sexual activity outside the covenant of marriage as ordained by God." (biblehub.com)

Marriage has been understood as the legal union of a man and woman as husband and wife in all cultures and societies throughout all of human history. No society in all of recorded history ever permitted same-sex marriage before the 21st century. —Wayne Grudem

The question of adultery is a question of what sort of people we want to be... Culture tells us to be self-gratifiers; the commandment tells us to be covenant-keepers.

—Lewis Smedes

THE REASON

Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and they shall become one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. —Genesis 2:24-25



- Marriage is the _____ human relationship.
- Marriage is a _____ relationship before God.
- The sign of the marriage covenant is _____ union.

THE PRINCIPLES

1. Marriage—the union of one man and one woman for life—is to be greatly honored and protected by all people (Hebrews 13:4).
2. Sex outside of the marriage covenant harms us, others, and society as a whole (Prov. 5:15-23; 6:27-35; Mal. 2:14; 1 Cor. 6:18).
3. Lusting after a person who is not one's spouse is a violation of the spirit of the seventh command (Matthew 5:27-28).
4. Sexual immorality is such a powerful, enslaving, and damaging sin that the biblical mandate is to _____ from it and take radical action against it (Matt. 5:29-30; 1 Cor. 6:18; cf. Gen. 39).
5. Pursuing sexual purity and self-control is vital to our physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual health (1 Thessalonians 4:1-8).
6. If married, make every effort to improve the health of your marriage (Prov. 5:15-19; Eccl. 9:9; Songs 8:6-7; Eph. 5:22-33).
7. Remember that you are married to Christ first and foremost and all you do reflects upon Him (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:32; Rev. 21:2).

J.D. Unwin [British anthropologist] chronicled the historical decline of 86 different cultures, and he found that strict marital monogamy was so central to social energy and growth that no society flourished for more than three generations without it. —Wayne Grudem

The effects of marriage on health, happiness, life satisfaction, meaning, purpose, character, virtue, close social relationships, and financial stability are profound.

—Tyler VanderWeele
Harvard Professor of Epidemiology

Sex is perhaps the most powerful God-created way to help you give your entire self to another... If you have sex outside of marriage, you will have to steel yourself against sex's power to soften your heart toward another person and make you more trusting. ...Ironically, sex outside of marriage eventually works backwards, making you less able to commit and trust another.

—Timothy Keller

Whatever increases the authority of the body over the mind, that thing is sin to you, however innocent it may seem in itself.

—Susanna Wesley (1669-1742)

For every individual attempting to exercise self-control over their computer use—whether it's an obsession with social media or compulsive pornography—there are a thousand experts on the other side of the screen whose job it is to break it down. —Tristan Harris

Staying married is not about staying in love as much as it is about keeping covenant. "Till death do us part" is a sacred covenant promise—the same kind Jesus made with His bride when He died for her.

—John Piper