

## **4-25-21 Spiritual Adultery, The Worst Sin**

Text:

James 4:4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

James 4:5 Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?

James 4:6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

James 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

James 4:8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

Intro: When we think of the greatest sins that a man can commit we usually think of murder or adultery. But these are actually the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> commandment. The breaking of the first and second are the greatest sins. What is the first commandment?

Exodus 20:3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

Exodus 20:4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:

**THE GREATEST SIN IS THAT OF SPIRITUAL ADULTERY:  
PAUL SAID IT;**

II Corinthians 11:2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

II Corinthians 11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

Spiritual Adultery is the Greatest Sin.

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We think of an adulterous woman as one who gives herself to another man.

A man or a woman who is having a sexual relationship with a person married to another is called an adulterer.

Romans 7:2 For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.

Romans 7:3 So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.

Imagine the heartache and pain adultery has caused when:

A Husband takes off with another woman  
or a wife takes off with another man.

Imagine the scars, the hurt, the terrible sorrow this brings:

A man told me the story of how he caught his wife having an affair with another man. He said, as he drove by he saw another man's car in his driveway. In a fit of rage he stormed into the house and confronted her and her lover. He was jealous over her. He was upset and rightly so.

The Bible says, this is how God feels when we play footsy with the world.

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James 4:5 Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?

This is a quote from Deut 5:9 where the Lord is speaking about idolatry. He says:

Deuteronomy 5:9 I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me,

I have known people who have had nervous breakdowns over marital breakups.

Homes are destroyed, children are scarred for life, and bitterness lingers for years all because of physical adultery. This is certainly a serious sin.

Yet the Bible says, that committing spiritual adultery is worse than physical adultery.

Imagine all the heartache that has occurred because of physical adultery. People have committed suicide, hearts have been broken families ruined, children scarred.

## WHAT COULD BE WORSE THAN THE SIN OF ADULTERY?

I have news for you, SPIRITUAL ADULTERY IS WORSE:

THIS MORNING I WANT TO GIVE YOU REASONS THAT SPIRITUAL ADULTERY IS A WORSE SIN THAN PHYSICAL ADULTERY.

**I. SPIRITUAL ADULTERY IS WORSE THAN PHYSICAL ADULTERY BECAUSE GOD JUDGES PEOPLE MORE HARSHLY FOR THE ONE OVER THE OTHER.**

Hosea is a perfect illustration of this:

Hosea 1:2 The beginning of the word of the LORD by Hosea. And the LORD said to Hosea, Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms: for the land hath committed great whoredom, departing from the LORD.

Hosea 1:3 So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim; which conceived, and bare him a son.

Imagine the Lord telling his prophet to take to wife a woman that he called a whore to illustrate just how bad the nation was.

Why would the Lord ask such a thing of his prophet?

I remember one time I preached how that each of us needs to put God first. Even above our own wife, or children. A fellow come up to me after the service and said, he could not put the Lord first above his wife and son. That was many years ago. Since then his wife died, and then a few years later his son died. Now it is just him and God! When he stands before God he will have to answer for why he put his wife and son before Him. The truth is the eternal is more important than the temporal. Everything in this life is temporary, even our marriages, and our families.

You will often see how moms and dads have wrapped up their lives in their children and then when the children grow up and leave the house they find that their is a big vacancy in their lives. Then the man and his wife are alone. Sometimes in some marriages there is a void which effects the marriage. Husbands and wives have to re-discover each other. Life is full of transitions like this. Everything in this life is temporary. It is all preparatory for eternity.

Marriage is but a picture of Christ and His church. It is an image of the real thing.

Children are an illustration of Christ leaving Heaven coming down to earth and humbling Himself, becoming a servant. The best child training we can give our children is to train them to be humble, and learn servitude, like Christ.

Lamentations 3:27 It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.

Lamentations 3:28 He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him.

Lamentations 3:29 He putteth his mouth in the dust; if so be there may be hope.

Lamentations 3:30 He giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him: he is filled full with reproach.

Lamentations 3:31 For the Lord will not cast off for ever:

The reason our society is so dysfunctional is because we do not fulfill the spiritual imagery that God ordained for our families in society.

Everything in this physical world is but an illusion and reflection of the spiritual. The real world is the spiritual world, the not so real world is this physical world that is passing away and in a state of flux. The spiritual world does not change. The physical world is constantly changing.

I believe that God at times has allowed people to experience marital heartache and breakups because of spiritual infidelity. Just like a man or a woman wants their spouse to be faithful to them so God wants us to be spiritually faithful to Him in our hearts and lives.

So the Lord allowed Hosea's bad marriage to an immoral woman to be an object lesson about how serious an offence it is to live in idolatry. To live in idolatry is to be a spiritual adulterer!

Let me give you a few illustrations.

Wasn't God easier on David than Saul? David committed murder and adultery; the other committed spiritual whoredom, and went after the witch of Endor. Which is worse? In God's eyes what Saul did was worse, in man's eyes what David did was worse. In a human court of law who would have received a greater penalty? But the Lord says to Saul:

I Samuel 15:23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

Yet when David, killed Uriah the Hittite, and committed adultery with Bathsheba and we read:

II Samuel 12:13 And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.

Not only did David not die, but also God did not remove David from being King. He was punished but not as badly as Saul was punished. Saul was removed from his throne for his sin!

Why???? The reason was that David was faithful to the Lord in his heart. Physically, he was tempted and fell, but spiritually, he was true, and was a man after God's own heart!

Another example was Samson. God put up with everything until he broke his spiritual vow. He was immoral and messed around with Harlots. Yet God did not abandon him. However, when he was brazen enough to make light of his Nazarite vows, then the Spirit of God left him. In God's eyes putting his love for a woman (Delilah) above his love for Him and his Nazarite vows, was a worse sin in the eyes of the Lord than his immoral relationship with Delilah!

Spiritual infidelity is a greater sin than physical infidelity! One is bad, the other is worse.

Polygamy was more acceptable than worship on high places.

Adultery, in the case with David, was less of a crime than Saul's rebellion.

Samson's breaking of his Nazarite vow was worse than messing around with harlots.

Do you realize that you will suffer worse from breaking the first commandment than violating the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>?

Your marriage vow is till death do you part.

Your spiritual vow and union is forever.

So Spiritual Adultery is worse than physical adultery, because, the physical marriage is but a picture of the spiritual. The one is but an illustration of the other. The Spiritual is the reality; the physical is but an illusion. People will say, preacher I can't see the spiritual how can the spiritual be the real thing, and my marriage, which I can see, be but a reflection of the real thing? The reason this is the case is because that which is real does not change, but every physical relationship and thing in this world is in a state of flux and change. It is like a vapor that is here today and gone tomorrow.

## **II. SPIRITUAL ADULTERY IS WORSE BECAUSE IT CAN LEAD TO PHYSICAL ADULTERY:**

Romans 1:21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

Romans 1:22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

Romans 1:23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

Romans 1:24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

There is a process of giving up.. adultery comes first, then homosexuality, and then from there.

In Hosea we see this giving up process.

Hosea 4:

Hosea 4:7 As they were increased, so they sinned against me: therefore will I change their glory into shame.

Hosea 4:8 They eat up the sin of my people, and they set their heart on their iniquity.

Hosea 4:9 And there shall be, like people, like priest: and I will punish them for their ways, and reward them their doings.

Hosea 4:10 For they shall eat, and not have enough: they shall commit whoredom, and shall not increase: because they have left off to take heed to the LORD.

Hosea 4:11 Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart.

Hosea 4:12 My people ask counsel at their stocks, and their staff declareth unto them: for the spirit of whoredoms hath caused them to err, and they have gone a whoring from under their God.

Hosea 4:13 They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains, and burn incense upon the hills, under oaks and poplars and elms, because the shadow thereof is good: therefore your daughters shall commit whoredom, and your spouses shall commit adultery.

Those who stray from their God will stray from their spouses: The book of Romans says, they will dishonor their bodies between themselves!

I can't understand a person that wouldn't want to have a godly wife or husband:

The greatest safeguard from immorality is spiritual fidelity!

When a person strays from God, they would if they could stray from their spouses:

The Lord is what holds our marriages together.

### **III. SPIRITUAL ADULTERY IS WORSE THAN PHYSICAL ADULTERY AND AS EVIDENCE OF IT GOD WILL NOT PUNISH PEOPLE INVOLVED IN PHYSICAL ADULTERY AND THIS IS CONSIDERED THEIR PUNISHMENT FOR THEIR SPIRITUAL ADULTERY!**

God says as a punishment for your spiritual adultery I will give you over to physical immorality and adultery.

What will be the results of this? Notice again in Hosea what the Lord says to that adulterous generation

Hosea 4:13 They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains, and burn incense upon the hills, under oaks and poplars and elms, because the shadow thereof is good: therefore your daughters shall commit whoredom, and your spouses shall commit adultery.

Hosea 4:14 I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredom, nor your spouses when they commit adultery: for themselves are separated with whores, and they sacrifice with harlots: therefore the people that doth not understand shall fall.

God's punishment is that they are given over to the sin of immorality and whoredom:

The punishment is that men get an appetite for the very thing that is destroying them. They actually enjoy that which is destroying them.

Furthermore, God says, that as a judgment against an idolatrous people he will not punish people for their immoral lives. This is part of the giving up, or giving a people over to their own lusts. This produces a decadent nation. One wickedness leads to another. God removes the restraints and soon everything falls apart. Do you realize how much money has been lost because of divorce vendettas? I could tell story after story of money lost because of spouses that were trying to get even with each other.

The Lord says, I will punish your daughters and your spouses because of your spiritual adultery. That punishment will be that they will commit whoredoms in the land, and God will not punish them for that or restrain them in corrupting themselves and the land! It seems strange but the Lord says this is their punishment!

Romans 1:22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

Romans 1:23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

Romans 1:24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

Romans 1:25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

Romans 1:26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

Romans 1:27 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

Romans 1:28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

Romans 1:29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, malice; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

Romans 1:30 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

Romans 1:31 Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

Romans 1:32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

Their punishment is that they find pleasure in doing those things that are corrupting them and destroying them!

#### **IV. CONSIDER THE CURE FOR SPIRITUAL ADULTERY:**

Because of her whoredoms the Lord says this:

Hosea 2:1 Say ye unto your brethren, Ammi; and to your sisters, Ruhamah.

Hosea 2:2 Plead with your mother, plead: for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband: let her therefore put away her whoredoms out of her sight, and her adulteries from between her breasts;

Hosea 2:3 Lest I strip her naked, and set her as in the day that she was born, and make her as a wilderness, and set her like a dry land, and slay her with thirst.

Hosea 2:4 And I will not have mercy upon her children; for they be the children of whoredoms.

Hosea 2:5 For their mother hath played the harlot: she that conceived them hath done shamefully: for she said, I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink.

#### **The Cure:**

Hosea 2:6 *Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths.*

Hosea 2:7 *And she shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them; and she shall seek them, but shall not find them: then shall she say, I will go and return to my first husband; for then was it better with me than now.*

Hosea 2:8 For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal.

Hosea 2:9 Therefore will I return, and take away my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof, and will recover my wool and my flax given to cover her nakedness.

Hosea 2:10 And now will I discover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers, and none shall deliver her out of mine hand.

Hosea 2:11 I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts.

Hosea 2:12 And I will destroy her vines and her fig trees, whereof she hath said, These are my rewards that my lovers have given me: and I will make them a forest, and the beasts of the field shall eat them.

Hosea 2:13 And I will visit upon her the days of Baalim, wherein she burned incense to them, and she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and she went after her lovers, and forgot me, saith the LORD.

Hosea 2:16 And it shall be at that day, saith the LORD, that thou shalt call me Ishi; (HUSBAND) and shalt call me no more Baali (My Master slave owner).

Hosea 2:17 For I will take away the names of Baalim out of her mouth, and they shall no more be remembered by their name.

Hosea 3:1 Then said the LORD unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the LORD toward the children of Israel, who look to other gods, and love flagons of wine.

Hosea 3:2 So I bought her to me for fifteen pieces of silver, and for an homer of barley, and an half homer of barley:

Hosea 3:3 And I said unto her, Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for another man: so will I also be for thee.

The only cure for Spiritual Adultery and Physical Adultery is the chastening hand of God.

The Prodigal Son did not come home until he was out of money and out of friends, and realized it was better for him in the house of his father than with his friends and all the whores he was hanging with.

Revival cannot come without the chastening hand of God coming down on our nation:

The cure for the debauchery and immorality of our nation is a call to repentance against the spiritual whoredoms of the land:

As a punishment for the spiritual whoredoms God is allowing the physical whoredoms to go unpunished.

God only punishes a righteous people for their immorality.

God allows the immorality to increase when a nation has gone into idolatry.

When a people go into spiritual adultery, chastening must come:

Revival cannot come without the chastening hand of God upon the land.

### **Application:**

The greatest guard you need in your life is a spiritual guard. Our physical marriages are kept by keeping our spiritual marriage and union pure and holy before God:

Let us not have any other gods before HIM:

What would you say if your wife or husband went out and befriended someone of the opposite sex. If you see them going out for dinner holding hands with someone else, overly friendly with the opposite sex. I am sure you wouldn't like it. This is exactly how the Lord feels when we get too friendly with the world.

James 4:4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

James 4:5 Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?

Years ago, we had a church wedding and at the reception the whole evening my wife and I noticed a fellow sitting with another man's wife the whole evening. When we got home that evening my wife and I said something didn't seem right. Sure enough, a few years later the man and his wife separated because she found out her husband was messing around with other women. So it is when you are too friendly with the world.

I John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

I John 2:16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

Someone could say, I was just being friendly. No, you would say, it is your duty to reserve your close friendship with the opposite sex to your wife or husband only.

Can we befriend other spiritual ideas and isms; warmly associate with everything, error, and truth alike? Can we go to the psychic on Saturday and Church on Sunday and be ok? Can we befriend the liberals one day and the next day expect to be in fellowship with Christ? Can we tolerate the wild ideas of Hollywood, and read the filth of the world and expect that we will get anything out of the Bible and be accepted of Christ?

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We need to pray for the state of spiritual adultery in the Church, and then we will see our nation cleaned up. Spiritual adultery is a greater sin than physical adultery. If we tolerate the one, than we will fall victim to the lessor. God may in fact punish us by giving us over to the lessor.

FOR THIS CAUSE GOD WILL GIVE PEOPLE UP TO INFIDELITY TO DISHONOR THEIR PHYSICAL BODIES TO ADULTERY.

Romans 1:24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: