



“THOU
SHALT
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COMMIT
ADULTERY”

MARVIN W. INGLE

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Although I was born the 11th of 13 children, Mom and Dad had enough love to go around and enough wisdom to make the Christ an important part of our home. The blessings which I account from God to me are legion, but would include: (1) an opportunity for business training in an atmosphere of fellowship and goodwill; (2) serving as a secretary to a railroad dispatcher, a purchasing agent for a newspaper, and a two-star General; (3) knowing and studying under great Bible teachers; (4) soldiering, traveling, and living in the Philippines, England, France and Belgium; (5) successfully completing a Bachelor's and Master's degrees in education at Drake University with honors; (6) teaching the richest kids in town alongside the poorest; (7) being awarded a Gregory Fellowship, living with a tightened belt, and having conferred on me a Doctor's Degree from the University of Missouri; (8) decision-making with educational leaders in Iowa, the Midwest, and Washington, D.C.; (9) learning a little about the technological monster called a computer and how it operates – coming to manage an installation combining the intelligence and sensitivity of the educator with the skill and know-how of the technician; (10) falling in love with a Christian girl – who is mine and mine alone – who helps to keep me in proper perspective – and who has blessed me with two families: a six-foot-two son with great potential and a daughter who is the joy of her father and will one day become “a mother in Israel”; a strawberry blonde sweetheart three years old waiting at the door each evening, and a tow-headed boy, Charles Glenn (named for his two wonderful grandfathers), the spittin' image of his dad – or so everyone says; and (11) enough material things to make me the envy of a Solomon.

But more important than all of these, an upbringing, a training, a studying, a learning, and a conviction – making it possible for me to know Christ and to be found in Him. For this *unspeakable* gift, I am indebted eternally to the God of Heaven; should I live 10,000 years, do a million worthy deeds, or write books without number in His honor, I will have still been unprofitable.

As if this all were not enough, He has surrounded me with brothers and sisters – more than any one man deserves – to bless my days, to comfort me when I sorrow, to laugh with me in my joy, to encourage me in my grey skies, to chastise me when I stray from Him, and to honor me with their allegiance as a shepherd who must lean hard on his Lord.

A person in his short lifetime receives many messages from his eyes, his ears, his hands, and his heart. The process of arriving at a set of values by which one can live abundantly becomes a matter of sorting, casting aside, modifying, and retaining. The thoughts in this booklet have been gleaned from others – to whom I am indebted, but space prevents my listing – or are thoughts sent to me in my periods of study and meditation on the things of God.

THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY

An Everlasting Commandment

The commandment, “Thou shalt not commit adultery,” was given by God to Moses to be passed on to the children of Israel. Why should I harp on the Law of Moses? We live in an age of freedom – or is it an Age of License, so far as this commandment is concerned? The principle to be found in this commandment is ageless, and is as applicable today as the day it was given – and if properly kept will bring the smiling approval of an all-wise God and the pleasure and harmony among men until time shall end.

“Thou shalt not commit adultery” is God talking about our sexual behaviour – a part of the very foundation of our society. Whenever you see the home break down, you will see our way of life go down in dirt – right where it should be if the home fails. Then home-liness is next to God-liness – and not cleanliness as some would have us believe. (Although cleanliness is a noteworthy habit for anyone who wishes to remain an accepted member of any group.) Next to keeping God’s house is keeping your house.

Many will read the commandment, “Thou shalt not *admit* adultery”; but the Lord says, “Thou shalt not *commit* adultery.” In spite of the Lord’s crystal-clear instruction, now – in our enlightened (?) age – the restraint of fear once with us is now removed by prophylactics, pills, and professors. You think about it! The things that previously inhibited man from seeking pleasures outside his duly-authorized realm was the fear (1) of producing an unwanted child, or (2) of getting caught and being ostracized by his peers. But *now* those two fears have been removed – and we have circumvented God with prophylactics, pills, and professors.

Now I am going to be talking plainly, because the Bible is plain on the matter of sexual behavior. Why should we be otherwise? And if you don’t understand what is said, ask for more detail. You will not embarrass me; we will attempt to inform you and to please God at the same time.

An English judge once said: “We have, I fear unfortunately, reached a position that adultery (or “infidelity” or “misconduct” as it is called by softhearted people) is considered to be a matter of little moment. It is no bar to advancement. . . any other form of stealing would immediately mean the end of a career.” And if *you* don’t believe this, you’re naive. In the modern American business community, for example, it is referred to as “belonging.”

“entertaining,” “fringe benefits,” or an “antidote for loneliness” – and at the harshest it might be termed “misconduct.” All nice words for the ADULTERY committed daily in American hotels, motels, etc. If you were to steal \$10,000, you would undoubtedly go to jail as soon as you were apprehended. But if you steal the affections of your neighbor’s wife, it is taken as a matter of course, nothing to alarm us, nothing new, it happens every day, and if it reaches the courts the suit will be brought in the name of “mental cruelty” or “incompatibility” – and not the true cause, ADULTERY.

The definition of adultery which I think is good is: “Adultery, fornication, promiscuity – all irregular sexuality – constitutes a *perverse* use of a *right* impulse for *wrong* ends.” A perverse use? Using sex for purposes other than that for which it was intended: The confirmation of the love between two married people or for the propagation of the race. A right impulse? A God-given impulse. For wrong ends? The gratification of a desire divorced from an originally legitimate purpose.

The intense pleasure associated with sex acts is lawful and right within its proper context. How many children are made to believe that, because they are a boy and made differently than a girl, it is naughty for them to act like they are a boy? How many of you mothers say, “No! No! Don’t put your hands down there! It isn’t nice!” Now, of course, it *isn’t* nice in public – in the wrong context – but he has to put his hands “down there” to wash himself – he *will* put his hands “down there” out of natural curiosity – to know himself, which he should do. But you forbid it. He gets a dirty outlook on sex – which is a right impulse from God if used correctly, within the proper context. Don’t misunderstand, I am not proposing that boys play with themselves – but I am talking about LITTLE children’s attitudes being set *before* they know right from wrong. We say, “Naughty! Naughty!” or “Dirty, Dirty!” – and it is *not* naughty and it is not dirty – in the right context – at any age. But for those who do know right from wrong to isolate sexual activities from the creation and sacramental character of the act and the significance of the marriage relationship – that is a perversion and an abuse, with assurances of proper rewards as a result.

You will notice “adultery” from Moses has been enlarged to include all forms of sexual behavior – I believe this is what the Lord intended. If you would read the 20th chapter of Leviticus, starting with the 10th verse, you will find God’s elaboration on this particular commandment. If those verses exceed or fall behind in clarity with what I am sharing with you, I apologize. It is not my intention to supersede the Scriptures; nor is it my intention to soft-pedal them. God talks frankly, so we should attempt to do so without being offensive and crude.

Adultery is sexual intercourse with anyone other than your own husband (wife). That cuts out sexual intercourse for those who don’t have a husband or wife – in spite of all our “love-ins, lie-ins, and bunk-ins.” Leviticus 20 says that a

married man has committed adultery if he has intercourse with (1) an unmarried woman, (2) with his own wife during her menstrual period (or, as it words it here, “having her sickness”). It is not generally wrong for a man to have sexual intercourse with his own wife – because it is within a legal and God-given right and context – but if she is in her menstrual period, they both commit adultery because it is without the bounds of God’s limitations. (3) He commits adultery if he has intercourse with another married woman, (4) another male, or (5) with a beast. The instructions in Nehemiah 13:23-31 prohibited sexual intercourse with the heathen. With all of these, *God* forbade the children of Israel to have sexual intercourse.

Sexual intercourse between two *unmarried* people is not adultery – but it is fornication. And God says the two are equally bad, and those who indulge in such things ought to be stoned until they are dead. So, sexual “investigation” before marriage is OUT; a trial marriage is OUT; cohabiting together in any manner before marriage is condemned by the living God – as an offense against the person and against the society in which he lives, and an insult to God

I trust this discussion will not embarrass *any* of you, because God has not meant for us to be offended or embarrassed – but has intended that each of us should understand and know. If you *are* embarrassed, you are ignorant – and you need the lesson worse than anyone else.

Colossians 3:5 reads: “Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth: Fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection (affection which is out of order – out of proper context. If you see two boys running around holding hands and kissing in the dark, that is exactly the kind of activity these two words describe), evil concupiscence, and covetousness, *which is idolatry*, for which things sake the wrath of God comes on the children of disobedience.” Mortify – KILL THEM! PUT THEM TO DEATH! CRUCIFY THEM! Abolish them from your life, your thinking, your experience – when God clearly forbids sexual intercourse – until you have the right to exercise your liberty within the proper context – which God has so wisely designed and made known to us. But when you do get in that context, do *not* feel you have done something dirty, or you have done something wrong, or that God would turn His head and look the other way if He were watching – BECAUSE HE IS WATCHING!

If we would please God, we have no choice in whether or not we have sexual intercourse BEFORE marriage. We KILL the urge to satisfy the desire – until the time arrives when we have authority from God and authority from our fellowmen (through law) to enjoy the fruits of that patience. Have you noticed the thread of authority running through each of the Ten Commandments? Authority: Because we “must give an account,” we are not *entirely* free moral agents; and neither are we *free* sexual agents. In Acts 15:20 the *apostles* of the Lord Jesus Christ commanded that all disciples should abstain from pollution

with idols (Thou shalt have no other gods before me) and, secondly, from fornication – which went right along with idol worship. Sex has become an idol in America; do you worship at her shrine? If you do, you are an idolator – and God CANNOT and WILL NOT tolerate you.

“Every sin that man does is without the body, but he that commits fornication sinneth against his own body.” (I Cor 6:18.) What does that mean? You only hurt yourself when you do such things. You cannot *really* hurt another if you have a different woman every night – but when you get old, as David did (and as you will, God permitting), such behavior will return to haunt you, such desires will lose their lustre, and there will be none to comfort or keep you warm. If you have never read the story of the close of David’s life, read it. He was an adulterer. . . and, although he repented of his grievous sin, he paid for that wickedness down to his last dying breath. And if YOU engage in such activities before you are married – if you are a fornicator – may God have mercy on your soul. Because you have destroyed YOURSELF, have “given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme,” and you have insulted the God of Heaven.

Adultery is wrong. WHY? (1) Because it robs a man of the affections of his wife – his *exclusive* property. Some of us are not careful enough, I’m sure, about the way we conduct ourselves, if we have wives that really love us. God said, “Ye shall have *no other* gods before me” – or in My sight – for “I am a jealous god.” But He is jealous over us for *our* good. And if we have a wife that is worth her salt, she is jealous over us – and she should be. And, of course, the same is true of husbands toward their wives.

A wife is a man’s exclusive property – as his home is his castle – but on top of this, you *cannot* restore it once you have taken it away from him. Take the case of David and Uriah, the Hittite: If Uriah had *not* been murdered, David could *never* have repaid Uriah for what he had done to him. Because, once another person enters into the union two people have made, that union is never the same again. It is the pride of a man that he has found a woman who is “meet for *him*” – or good for *him* – and he confines his affections to her and her alone, expecting the same in return. If you rob him of that – you *cannot* give it back to him, can you? Any more than the man who stole the little ewe lamb could return it to its rightful owner. He couldn’t restore it -- HE ATE IT! David could not give back to Uriah that which he stole from him. If I commit adultery, I cannot (in spite of all my repentance, my desire to do so, or my bitter pleading tears) give back to the husband the love and trust I stole from him. I cannot restore an HUNDREDFOLD, twenty-fold, yea, not even SINGLEFOLD! IT IS IMPOSSIBLE!

The man convicted of adultery was commanded to be taken out and stoned till he died – but the worst stoning that came to him were the stones of regret and futility he threw at himself, and not the stones hurled at him by the

executioners. If you will go out and commit fornication, or if you will insist on committing adultery – it won't be the stones of others that will hurt so much as the stones *inside* you. Because you have said to *God*, "I have a heart of stone!"; and God has echoed back, "That's right!"

The second reason it is wrong to commit adultery is that you beget, and you oblige another to maintain as his offspring, a child that is not his own – but a bastard. Have you thought of it in that way? There is a certain bird that flies around and lays her eggs in other people's nests and expects them to raise her young – and it works. What kind of bird is it, do you know? A *cowbird*? – that figures: The cowbird could only be named after – a bull and/or a heifer. Samson said, "If you had not plowed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle." Maybe this is a good analogy. For so is a man who goes around planting his seed in other men's nests – he expects the other man to take on his responsibility and to claim it for his own. And that is wickedness gone to seed.

Thirdly, adultery – or extra-marital sex – is wrong because it undermines the home. If you are unaware of this canker eating at the very heart of what makes our country great, look at the homes in America today broken by a conscience destitute of godliness, the unwillingness of married persons to restrict themselves to the bounds of their sacred vows, or by sexual free-lancers who never bother with formalities or legalities. Adultery – adultery – adultery – on every hand you see it, you hear about it, you read about it; and nearly every day brings us all new opportunities to become a party to it. One time my wife and I counted up – of all the young people in a graduating class of twenty-four, only FOUR of them escaped the blight of "having to" get married. You say, "That's unusual!"; No, not at all. Young people don't have any stronger sex drives in Des Moines, Iowa, than they have in Martinsville, Indiana. And we don't find the rewards of the wicked any surer there than you do here. One crop from which you can always expect a bountiful harvest is wild oats. If you sow them, God has *guaranteed* enough harvest to last to the third and fourth generation.

Parents, if you haven't talked to your children about sex and the confrontations with Satan it is sure to give them, you certainly should do so. Sex promiscuity is a daily temptation for them – especially when their bodies are undergoing biological change preparing them physically and emotionally for normal reproductive capability and arousing in them drives hitherto lying dormant – but very real and God-given. Young and old alike are surrounded by *sinful* sexual temptations – and if any of us were to get away from it, we would have "to get out of the world."

Jesus gave a little exhortation on the temptation of sex and how to deal with it – and I don't think you or I can improve on His lessons. They are usually short – which automatically makes them better than mine. If you will turn to the 5th chapter of Matthew, we shall see what He had to say about it:

:28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee than one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.”

You are shocked and cry, “You mean Jesus was a man? And he knew the sexual temptations that we know!” I have a little book at home called JESUS’ LAST TEMPTATION, and the author’s idea was that perhaps Jesus was tempted to come down from the cross in order that He, too, might have a home, a wife, a son or a daughter – as other men have. As you know, He had “not where to lay His head” – He had no earthly companion to share his joys and his sorrows – He had no son or daughter in which he could take pride and joy. It was not God’s will, so He *learned* obedience by the things which He suffered – by denying himself, and by taking up His cross daily. Yes, Jesus *was* a man – just like we are men. “He was in ALL points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” And, young ladies and gentlemen, when you are tempted with evils sexually, just remember that WITH HIM you haven’t more than you can bear . . . because He will with each temptation “make a way of escape.” But *you* must be looking for it. So many of us are blind (by choice) to the Lord’s danger signs; so many of us try to figure out better ways than the Lord’s way; too often we ignore His “way of escape.”

This exhortation of Jesus in Matthew 5:27-32, I believe, can be summed up in about six words: CONTROL YOURSELF AND PREVENT FOREST FIRES. I use the latter because one might control himself and still find he is in the midst of a forest fire which he didn’t prevent. All of you know this character that symbolizes the prevention of forest fires. I wish we had more Smokeys – those who *prevent* uncontrollable fires – in exchange for those unfortunates who go about *starting* fires! Sexual pyromaniacs. Real forest fires destroy other people and their property – and oftentimes destroy the property and the person of the one who sets them. If you set sexual forest fires, it will, without a doubt, destroy that which rightfully belongs to another and not to you – and in the process will ultimately destroy you, too.

Have you ever seen someone throw a lighted cigarette into the dry grass along the roadside? Have you been guilty of doing the same thing sexually? You knew the weakness of the person, and yet you threw a bomb right in the middle of the situation – and set a fire that neither of you could put out? So you came running home to mother and dad crying, “I’m in trouble! I started a fire! I can’t put it out! And I don’t know what to do!” All anyone can really do is “forgive them for they know not what they do.”

Control *Yourself!* Another time we discussed the story of Tamar and Amnon – two very normal young people. Amnon’s desires were normal; God made man to desire a woman – which Amnon did – which was normal. Tamar reciprocated with her natural desire for male companionship. The only trouble with Amnon was that he just couldn’t WAIT – he ignored the danger signs – and suffered the consequences. I asked a girl one time why she got married in such a hurry. She replied, “I just couldn’t wait!” She would have been better off had she waited – but she had a fire going she couldn’t extinguish. So she made nearly impossible her chances for ever having a happy marriage, a beautiful relationship, or a lovely home.

Prevention: Let me bring to your mind the story of David and Bathsheba – because it illustrates our point and is a classic example of all the facets of adultery. If David had been in the field where he belonged, he would never have seen Bathsheba bathing. If he had been half the man he claimed to be, he would have paid only passing attention to her. If he had remembered the Lord, he would have found a way of escape – and stayed away from her. IF IF IF IF . . . those who practice illicit relationships will have lives filled with “what-might-have-beens” IF.

You see, what we *think* in our head about sex gets us in trouble, too. We must think about it in the way God talked about it. I trust that you will do so more frequently after we hear each other out.

Let us look at Matthew 5:27: “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old times, Thou shalt not commit adultery”: That is what we are studying in Exodus 20:14. Moses was an old man – and he said it. You ought not to pay attention to *old* men who don’t know what they’re talking about. Don’t kid yourself – because a man has white hair does not mean he is dead – even sexually. Or, as another man put it, “Because there’s snow on the roof is no sign the fires have gone out in the house.” Old men have impulses and drives and ideas just the same as young men have impulses, drives, and ideas. Why? Because God made them that way. A lot of people think we lose all sexual desires once we get past 16 – once we become “old men.”

:28 “But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” But I say unto you, **WHOSOEVER** – and I don’t care (but, more important, God doesn’t care) who you are: the Governor in the palace, or the slave that mops up the kitchen – “*whosoever* looks on a woman *to lust after her* has committed adultery in his heart.” We see some woman walking down the street; she is well-proportioned; we wish we had the price; in our evil imagination we indulge vicariously; and God says, “**YOU ADULTERER!**”

Our intentions condemn us – our thinking condemns us – as well as the acts we commit. You put that down in your little black book and remember it!

What you intended to do – although you never really accomplished it – God will ask you to give an account – “Whether it be good or whether it be evil.”

Analyze this a bit: Adultery in our day and age does not require that I even touch a woman to commit the act – in my heart. I don’t have to commit the physical act (although this, too, is included in the forbidden territory), but can do so vicariously and receive the same condemnation from the God of Heaven. Under the Law of Moses a man had to be caught in the act itself, or the results of the act had to be made known, for him to be liable for stoning. But in the Christian dispensation, God condemns us and we contaminate ourselves by even having such *thoughts*.

II Peter 2:12-16: “But these (that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness), as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; and shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam, the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness: But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man’s voice forbad the madness of the prophet.”

The apostle Peter is describing someone – “natural brute beasts” – who speak evil of “the things that they understand not” – and that is what I am saying: A person with a filthy mind just does not understand the subject of sex; he does not understand God; – he doesn’t even understand his OWN BODY. “And shall utterly perish in their own corruption” – if you think it is a beautiful and exciting life to operate a house of ill-fame, to be part of the merchandise, or to be an addict to such a place – watch your television portrayals, or for that matter your worldly associates who actually engage in such rot. A more despicable character and a more miserable life cannot be imagined by those “called to be saints” – those who respect themselves, their fellowmen, and most of all respect God. I thank my God that He has enabled me to keep myself from such degradation and sin – and has forgiven the things “wherein in times past I walked according to the course of this world.”

“And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness . . . cursed children. . . which have forsaken the *right way* . . . the dumb ass . . . forbad the madness of the prophet.” In other words, Peter is saying to you and me, “If you commit

adultery – if you play around territory which is not legally or rightfully yours – a dumb ass is smarter than you are.” You never saw a dumb ass doing a thing he should not do – that God did not intend for him to do – but you have certainly seen people doing many things God never intended for them to do. Men and women – the highest of His creation, His crown and glory, the God-appointed ruler of all he surveys – are, in spite of all these advantages, the only part of His creation that brings reproach, shame, regret, and dishonor to their Creator and Sustainer.

Here is Paul’s remedy for a mind cluttered with garbage or empty – either condition being a reproach to man and his Maker:

Philippians 4:8-9: “Whatsoever things are true . . . honest . . . just . . . pure . . . lovely . . . of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think *on these things*. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with *you*.”

Paul was sure it did make a difference – the difference as to whether or not God would be with you – what YOU think (regardless of whether or not you actually do the act). Although many of my acquaintances will say, “It doesn’t make any difference what you *think*, so long as you don’t *do* it.” How many people do you know have a mind filled with corruption, and in spite of it are able to bring forth fruit fit for the Master’s use? No, men do not gather figs from brambles – nor do they get sweet and bitter water from the same fountain. **IT DOES MAKE A GREAT DIFFERENCE WHAT YOU THINK!**

The second point, in the 9th verse Paul says, “If you learned it from me or if you saw me do it, then you go ahead and do it, too.” If you are really proud about your plans or your actions in your sex life, invite somebody to accompany you. Better still, ask Paul to go along. Or ask yourself, “Would Paul behave this way”? Many so-called “Christians” would undoubtedly shake the cigarette habit if they would, each time they reach for the pack, first in their sub-conscious mind offer one to their Lord – and perhaps one to the Apostle Paul. Can you feature that?

“Out of the heart (mind) proceeds evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornication, theft, false witness, blasphemy: these are the things that *defile* a man.” They could not proceed out from the heart – if we did not harbor them, keep them warm, nourish them there. Jesus said, “If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out!” Where does a man ever get the idea he wants to go to bed with some girl to whom he has no right? If he were blind, he wouldn’t even know what she looks like. And that is exactly what the Master says, “It would be better to be blind if what you see leads you to be tempted to evil.” We can blind ourselves – without hurting our physical eyes – by taking care in our mind

immediately not to look with evil eyes; and if evil thoughts do come (and they will), to cast the thought from us before it has a chance to develop.

Brother Loney is stone deaf – that’s a BLESSING! It is not a curse. He can’t hear the filth I hear; he is unable to hear people damning one another and cursing God. That’s a blessing! And the Master is warning *us* that if we go to the places where we see things that stir us to the point we get the desire and commit adultery in our hearts, we are an insult to Him – it would be more tolerable for us to put out our own eyes, than to offend Him or one of His little ones.

Maybe we should maim ourselves and cut our hands off. A man was caught stealing in Jesus’ time; they just took him up, put his hands over a block, and cut them off. It made it awfully hard to steal with just two stumps. Brother Barker, how many people could steal your diamonds with stumped arms? They would really have to be clever to do it, wouldn’t they? But we all have ten little fingers that can steal so efficiently. That’s what the Master meant – the hands are a start of an outward action – and if the action is out-of-bounds, the start of an outward action that should be nipped in the bud. You fellows who believe in petting, if you just can’t keep your hands where they belong, you had better have somebody cut them off. Because Roman hands will eventually lead to the production of a little Roman which you cannot “longer hide.” If you don’t know what is meant by petting, come around after class and I will explain further. You know; you are smarter than I am.

Which is worse – to have the sex temptation or to furnish the temptation? Which is worse – for me to think evil or for you to present a problem making it nearly impossible for me to think otherwise? I want you girls to listen (and I hope you don’t think I’m picking on you – that is not my purpose; and I have nothing personal against you. As a matter of fact, I know very little about most of you. I am glad for that, because you cannot truthfully say, “He’s just digging me!” I am *not* digging you – but I am trying to “dig” God – to understand Him – with you).

Paul said if meat made his brother to offend, he would quit eating meat. Do you think meat is pretty important to your diet? It isn’t a very good meal if you don’t have meat, is it? It lacks something. But Paul swore he would do without meat if his eating it would be a stumbling block to his brother. Jeroboam caused Israel to sin by placing something before them God had forbidden. If you don’t know the reputation Jeroboam gained for himself, you read the Book. His name is probably mentioned more times than any other man’s in the Bible – for sinfulness, that is. And your name will be mentioned in much the same manner by your contemporaries and by the God of Heaven if you practice the same thing he practiced – laying before others temptations which they cannot – or even, will not – resist.

Someone has said, "Not all the temptors are to be found in the red light district." Let me reason with you: Where do we get our daring apparel? Where do we get our dresses cut down to here? Where do we get the mini-skirt, the mini-midriff, the mini-top – the mini-this or the mini-that? Where did they come from? Who conceived the idea? A good Christian man or woman? Who first had the boldness to wear this kind of clothing? The answer: People who sold their bodies for the pleasure of men and for the profit it brought them.

What woman first smoked a cigarette in private? or in public? It certainly wasn't anyone patterning her life after Sarah. She was probably in a house of ill-fame, in some nightclub, or on the stage parading her "virtues." Where did we get our net stockings? You think about this – is this to be your ideal in life? Is this to be the model from which you will copy your manners, dress, or thinking?

When did men first decide to go naked to the waist? Is that any better in God's sight than a woman with a topless bathing suit? When did men first decide to wear pants so tight they left little to the imagination? Paul says in Ephesians 5: "But fornication and *all* uncleanness and covetousness, let it not be once named (you shouldn't even talk about it – much less practice it) among you as becometh saints." If this hits you, I am sorry – but the apostle said it intentionally and I repeat it intentionally. "Let it not be once named among you as becometh saints. . .filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting – which are not convenient." He didn't say it just wasn't nice.

Do you know that if a child goes naked when he is little, he will not see any harm in it – and will not care about – going naked when he's big. A lady recently discussed this problem of dressing children with my wife, and asked, "Do you let your little girls wear shorts?" And the answer was, "No!" The reason being: That which is commonplace is nothing to be desired – whether you talk about a woman who sells herself to men – common property for \$5 – and no one who has any sense would desire her. Or whether you talk about diamonds; if the supply were plentiful – if everybody had his pockets full of them – no one would desire them.

Although God has said, "What God has joined together let no man put asunder," Christ allowed the marriage vows to be annulled only under two conditions: (1) the death of one party – "The woman which has a husband is bound by the law unto her husband so long as he lives. But if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband." (Rom 7:2,3.)

I have often wondered why Abraham (as soon as Sarah died, and he had buried her with proper mourning) immediately took another wife. It always seemed strange to me that he didn't wait until, as the old gossip says, she got cold. But then I remembered that we are told "Everybody has his proper gift" – what is respectable for Abraham would not be for me and might not be for you. *Abraham* was smart enough to know that when Sarah died she was no longer his

wife. I know a woman that, when her husband died, she died too. She is still living physically, but she had just as well be dead – she is a *vegetable*! She is not a carrot, or a tomato, but she is a cabbagehead. WHY? Marriage is an earthly arrangement. When one of us leaves this earth, we can no longer have the arrangement – the blessings God provided while we were together, can we? It is an insult to God for a widow “that has knowledge” to sit around and eat out her heart all the days of the life God gives her after the passing of her husband.

In the first place it is an insult to God for us to ever become so dependent upon one another that we *cannot* live without one another. We would do well to follow the example of Job: “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.”

“Will I know my wife when I get to heaven?” I really don’t care whether I do or I don’t. She is worth my knowing or I would never have married her. But, on the other hand, Christianity is an individual matter; my salvation or rejection is not dependent on my wife. Her salvation or rejection is not dependent on me – much as I may be able to help her or to hinder her. If my wife were not in heaven, I am sure it would make me very unhappy – but only if I kept the mind I now have. But God is a *just* God – it is His heaven and not mine. He has already told everyone – including my wife – what kind of a person will be in heaven. If she meets His standards, she *will* be there in eternal bliss and happiness. If she fails, it cannot be a charge against God’s partiality; it will not be because she had no chance to be there? it will not be because I bribed Him to let her through “because she’s my wife.”

Paul, in I Cor. 7:39, declares a widow “at liberty to be married to whom she will – ONLY IN THE LORD.” So if a widow cannot “contain” or cannot be happy and contented doing service in the House of God, then she shows intelligence and a desire to follow God’s plan by remarrying – but only if she is sufficiently wise to know that she *must* marry a Christian.

Jesus’ second legitimate reason (outside the death of your mate) for being freed from the marriage vows was for the cause of fornication. Matthew 19:9. But it is left up to the *innocent* party to determine whether or not his or her former mate – guilty of adultery – will be received back in reunion. The decision rests entirely with the offended party – and is not at the discretion of the offender. But let me clue you on one thing: If you are married and either party ever commits adultery, you will never have the same relationship and home after the adultery as you had before that mutual trust was broken.

In the interest of time, we must bring this discussion to a conclusion in a few minutes. Below are a series of short exhortations relating to this subject. Would you be kind enough to listen attentively and to think about them; They are especially designed for the young people in the audience, but they will not be harmful to us “old folks” either.

(1) A little sign reads, “Drive Carefully – Death is so *Permanent*.” And I say to you who are seeking a mate – a lifetime companion – DO IT CAREFULLY, because MARRIAGE IS SO PERMANENT!

(2) Remember the *joy* of innocence and the *haunt* of wickedness. Be sure your sins will find you out – you won’t get by; you can’t get by; and, down deep, you don’t want to try to get by.

(3) Marriage and sex cannot be separated. Like love and marriage – sex and marriage go together “like a horse and carriage, and you can’t have one without the other.” That sounds trite, but once upon a time a man and woman lived together in the same house, but they were not married. They were called Mr. and Mrs., but they were not husband and wife – they were not *one*. They slept in separate beds, had separate bank accounts, went their separate ways – and had nothing discernible in common. They were not married – they were just kidding themselves. God said, “The two *shall be* one flesh,” – that was not a mere suggestion. It was an obligation placed on both parties – it was the declaration of a fact that if two were to be married in God’s sight, they must come together . . . and if Paul is any authority, we’re not to withhold from one another, except with mutual consent – and that for only a spiritual enrichment period. (I Cor 7:5)

The marriage relationship is the highest of all human relationships, with perhaps the exception of the mother-child sojourn during pregnancy. In the act of sexual intercourse, you are as close to the person as you can be without being the person himself. Your mother carried you in her own body; you were as close to her as you could be without being her. And yet in all its beauty, the mother-child relationship does not take the sacrifice, nor bring the rewards, that a healthy marriage relationship does. WHY? Because the child has *no* choice in the relationship – it is cast upon him and comes about solely at the pleasure and consent of the mother. While in the marriage relationship, each party has mutually consented that the other is his choice from among all others.

“She that is married cares for . . . how she may please her husband.” And that’s a full-time job if done properly, girls. The wisest man said, “Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord.” (Prov. 18:22.) Some other man said, “It’s more satisfying to raise children than it is to spend money.” But I will assure you that if you do the former, you will automatically take care of the latter.

(4) Sex is *natural* – God-given. “He made them male and female” – and *they* had no choice in the matter. Why didn’t He make them “Its”?

(5) Parents have a great deal to do with the extent to which you are a male or female. How many males do you know who are really female? How many female acquaintances do you have who are male in their thinking, in their looks,

and in their actions? The masculinity of boys depends to a large extent on the degree to which their father is masculine; the culture, daintiness, self-control, and modesty – in short, the femininity – of the daughter is by a large proportion a reflection of these attributes in the mother. Even educators have reached the conclusion: One reason so many boys turn out to be homosexuals is lack of exposure to male influence until after basic sex attitudes are well established. How many male elementary teachers do you have in your school? Fathers, are you *letting* your sons get to know you? Are you *planning* ways in which you can demonstrate manly thinking and characteristics that they might copy? Do they really know what a Christian man is like? How he meets his temptations? ridicule? and irritation? Or do you “put it on” mother to tell them about it?

(6) We are in danger of becoming a sexless generation – a current headline from LIFE bewails. We cannot tell the boys from the girls – men from women – male from female. And it isn't funny – IT IS AN ABOMINATION to the living God, and should be an offense to every Christian. If you are unbelieving, READ – READ – READ what God *says* about it! For example, the men of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed with fire and brimstone from out of heaven – Why? Because they didn't know the difference between men and women – and burned in their lusts toward one another – if there was a difference in their minds, it made no difference in their actions. As the noted Dr. Johnson said, “A difference, to be a difference, must *make* a difference.”

(7) “Flee fornication.” – a simple command and a simple solution to a complex problem. It is better to run and be thought less than a man than to stay and prove it – and I call Joseph and the wife of Potiphar as my witnesses.

(8) “Thou shalt not commit adultery” – the plea of the whole commandment is: Don't destroy yourself, your self-respect; your neighbor's beautiful relationship; and the very foundation of society – the home.

(9) All of us know we have lots of help in picking a mate. And sometimes we have even more help in picking them apart. How many of you have picked a chicken? If not, you're in for quite an experience the first time. It is smelly – your hands stink – and the chicken will be nude when you've finished with the last pinfeather. And that is the way some people will help you pick your mate: About anything you come up with, they start picking it apart – the things they don't like about him (or her, whichever the case may be). Mothers and dads are especially adept at this pastime because of their anxiety over whom their son will choose as his bride, or whom their daughter will consent to marry. Or are they fearful of reaping the results of their unskillful handling of the rearing of their own child, or their lack of attention to the instruction that should have taken place long before when values were really being formulated? I might give this word of advice to parents: Just remember *you* don't have to live with the newlyweds – and they probably are hoping that you won't.

Only YOU can find a help “meet” for you – *fit for you!* Good for YOU! Only *you* can do that. Friends might point to things in your associates – your prospects – you should know. Points, if heeded, will save you from being “pierced . . . through with many sorrows” later. But *they* CANNOT pick a mate for *you*; and if you allow them to do so, you will *r ue* the day and will despise them for their “favor.” There have been too many mistakes made in our world by an outsider passing final judgment on who should be “the one.”

The parties to a shotgun wedding may live together, but they’ll never be happy in the true sense of the word. One reason we have so many miserable homes in America today is because Mom and Dad (or some other well-meaning soul) did the choosing. Think back in your mind; if you can’t identify 12 couples living together because somebody thought “they were the perfect pair – meant for each other” (but not because the two thought so), then you are not very observing.

And I don’t care who you are – you have NO business playing Cupid. You are NOT the god or goddess of LOVE – so quit trying to assume the role. If a young man is attracted to a young lady, it is because (1) he is infatuated with her physical attributes, (2) he admires her ways, her goals in life, her concern for him, or (3) a combination of both these forces. And you should keep your nose out of it – in blunt terms.

(10) In choosing a mate, one is often overly attracted by the outward appearance. I would like to share this exhortation with you: Birds of a feather flock together. People will judge *you* by the kind of person you choose as your closest associate. They will, likewise, judge your companion’s reputation and taste by the kind of person you are. Like the man, invited to join a lodge, retorted: “If you’ll have characters like me in your lodge, I don’t want to be a member!” Just be aware that, when you pick someone for your lifetime companion, he becomes a part of YOU. He is the other half of you. If he cavorts in the street, you had just as well join him because you will receive the reward of guilt by association.

(11) Speaking of birds, many young men are looking only for a peacock as a mate. Peacocks *are* beautiful when they “doll up” and really “strut their stuff.” But have you ever observed a peacock from the other side – did you ever observe him from the rear? It makes a world of difference when you see the “other side,” too. Actually, peacocks aren’t really worth much – except as a shelf ornament.

Before we were married, my wife was always very careful that I should not see her when she was other than at her best. Now I don’t think she was unique in this respect. So one day I dropped in unexpectedly and found her with her hair all screwed up, dressed in sloppy clothes, and with dirty bare feet. Just about as low as she could get on the beauty barometer. Remember that peacocks have

another side — and so do eligible bachelors and available maidens. Choose someone you can look at across the breakfast table — all done up in curlers, dressed in a sloppy housecoat and baggy bedroom slippers, and half asleep — and yet you can love her, even at her worst. By the way, ladies, one thing I should like to point out about my wife: I can never recall sitting across the breakfast table when she didn't have her hair combed. It costs something to keep ourselves attractive to one another; if you neglect your appearance or manners, you stand the loss alone.

(12) “Know them that have the rule over you.” KNOW your prospective husband, girls. Know him under stress, and relaxed; pleased, and displeased; on his guard, and off guard. If you meet him today and marry him tomorrow, how much do you really *know* about him? NOTHING! Or — at the benefit of the doubt — very, very little. They passed out little pamphlets one time at the Iowa State Fair in Des Moines. On the front cover was a very curvaceous blonde. The title read, WHAT MEN KNOW ABOUT WOMEN; and I thought, “Ho, boy, I'd better buy me a copy of this one. Maybe I'll learn something.” I opened it up and it was full of blank pages. And that's about how much you really know about your fiance — unless you are wise and take your time.

It slips my memory how long a courtship I had, but I had known her family for a lifetime — my mother and her grandmother were raised together. (Now don't get the wrong impression; that doesn't mean you have to find somebody whose grandmother was raised with your mother to really know them. But it would be well for you to know the background and the reputation of her family.) I knew Melda pretty well — her stock, the family's strengths and weaknesses, rights and wrongs, etc. All of these things you should carefully consider — BEFORE you propose. You know that if you get into a den of thieves, it is pretty difficult not to become a thief. It's almost impossible to be a good apple in a barrel of rotten ones — or for that matter in a barrel of apples with spots on them.

A young man contemplating marriage discussed the matter with his pastor. The counselor pointed out: (1) the boy's values and the girl's were at opposite poles on things really important to the success of a marriage; (2) one family entertained themselves with drinking and carousing — the other believed in wholesome entertainment; (3) her family cared little or nothing about Christianity or God — while their counterparts made worship and living for Christ the uppermost consideration in their daily lives; (4) one family had raised their children under strict but reasonable controls — the other had let them grow “like Topsy.” The young man was supposedly a Christian — and I have no reason to doubt his assertion at the time — but neither of them is faithful today. And it is still a mystery to me how he became attracted to a girl of the world — and, in spite of his being a Christian.

“Know them that have the rule over you.” A positive command – and not just a suggestion. Why? Because there will be times after marriage when a decision will have to be made – when the man and wife are diametrically opposed – and consequently, only *one* person can make the decision. We, unfortunately, live in a time when men and women share equally in decision-making – and that largely by *compromising*.

Another reason we should *know* (be thoroughly acquainted with – to the point we would react in the same manner he would react to a situation) our husband well before we become one in matrimony: There will come a time when a decision has to be based solely on *opinion*. And that opinion had better be a good one since it affects so many lives other than the one making the decision. We would assume that, in a Christian home, there is no decision to be made on a commandment. With Joshua, the Christian husband and wife should agree, “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

But suppose it is a matter of judgment – should you go to the party or shouldn’t you? The parents have an obligation to point out the alternatives, and the likely consequences from each – but it remains a matter of judgment. And somebody has to be the *final* word on the matter. There must be just one head – or the family becomes a two-headed or many-headed freak – and the children, in the process, become psychos.

Let me illustrate: Johnnie comes to Dad and queries, “May I go to the class party next Thursday night at Judy Langworth’s?” Reply – and too often the pat reply: “I don’t know; go ask your mother.” After asking and some coaxing, Mother consents, with, “Go ahead and go!” But as soon as Johnnie departs, Dad rakes mother over the coals because she made the decision. Father didn’t want Johnnie to go, but he didn’t have the backbone to assert the role God intended him to have in the family nor the courage to disappoint the son he loved – and so he shifted his responsibility to his running mate. What is the poor kid to do in circumstances like this: Mama says “Yes” and Dad says “No” – and I am to obey my parents (in the Lord, no less). Frustration sets in, and the child does as he pleases because of the confusion. That’s why there has to be just *one* head of a family – God knew it, you know it, I know it, and even children know it – and want it that way perhaps even more than their parents.

(13) In sexual matters, a green-as-grass amateur is always superior to the experienced and seasoned “professional.” It is better to be totally ignorant about performance than to be an expert and to have “been there before.” Many marriages go on the rocks because one or both of the parties involved have already had all the experiences – the thrills, the joys, the discoveries – before they ever got to the marriage bed. They were looking for something *new* but, as Solomon said, “There’s nothing really new under the sun” – just some things

that are new to us. And because there was no new excitement, the disappointment was great – and was subconsciously laid at the feet of the “other fellow.”

(14) The last point I shall be able to bring before your mind is II Cor. 6:14-18: “Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.” A union between an unbeliever and a believer can, if it takes place, only be unequal – in favor of one or the other. Paul is posing a ridiculous proposition – a Christian and a non-Christian *cannot* be equally yoked together – it is IMPOSSIBLE. They cannot pull together as a team – when one of them is pulling toward God, and the best you can say for the other one is that he is neutral and therefore standing still (which leaves him behind his mate pulling toward God). But more than likely, he is consciously or unconsciously pulling in the opposite direction. If two oxen are hitched together with a yoke and one pulls while the other stands still (or draws back from the load against his neck), the load will stop and no progress will be made. That is, no *forward* progress will be made until the hesitant one decides (or is convinced) to pull in the direction we wish the load to move. On the other hand, through persistence and determination, by standing his ground or backing up, the unwilling one will change the direction of the one pulling – the destination is changed – and little or no progress can be made toward the goal. This is the picture of a non-Christian and a Christian yoked together in marriage. You as a Christian young person cannot voluntarily and equally be yoked together with an unbeliever – it is IMPOSSIBLE. IT CAN'T BE DONE!

In a union consummated on this basis, either the Christian will dominate – regardless of sex – or the unbeliever will rule; it is impossible for both of them to do so when they are headed in opposite directions spiritually. A compromise cannot be achieved without one or the other assuming the same goal and means of reaching it as his mate. Whichever is the stronger personality, the stronger willed – he will be the real navigator that determines direction and the power that keeps the family moving in that direction. Paul poses the question – but the answer is obvious to all but the blind: What fellowship hath righteousness (the Christian in our study) with unrighteousness (the unbelieving partner)? and what communion hath light (the one who studies and knows God – the Christian) with darkness (the other who has not yet learned to submit to God)? To ask such a preposterous question is but to answer it – NONE, from a religious or spiritual standpoint.

The adversary retorts, “This verse can’t be talking about marriage – he’s discussing idol worship!” And that is exactly what we are talking about, too – idol worship – placing *somebody* or *something* between us and God. If a man is an unbeliever, what is he but an idolator? True, he may not have a golden calf, but he has an idol somewhere – perhaps it is himself.

Look at what the Scriptures say: “What fellowship (what in common?) hath righteousness with unrighteousness?” What kick can a Christian get out of an ungodly person? What *do* they have in common – in fellowship? They are going in opposite directions spiritually – and you will still affirm they can get together in harmony and unity, create a congenial Christian home in which friends from both sides of the tracks will be equally welcome, raise their offspring to be God-fearing boys and girls, men and women? And I say (which is not really very important) – but God also says, (and that makes it vitally important), “You’re kidding yourself!” It is as impossible as entering a dark cellar with a 100 watt bulb lighted, and not expecting the darkness to disappear.

“What concord hath Christ with Belial?” These are *hard* questions. Can you feature Christ sitting down having coffee with the devil – enjoying his company? If I read my Bible correctly, their face-to-face encounter in Matthew 4 was no imaginary battle: it was for real; and it was quite a struggle. They were on opposite sides of the fence, and *they* didn’t get along. The meeting was not a compatible or congenial period of exchanging viewpoints, chitter-chatting, compromising, and finally terminating in their marching down the aisle arm in arm. But would you assert that Christ’s child can unite himself to a child of the Devil – when even the Master couldn’t (or wouldn’t) do it?

“What part hath he that believeth with an infidel?” What is an infidel? To quote our friend Webster:

Infidel – adj. 1. Not holding the faith: exp. non-Christian; also, opposing or unfaithful to Christianity. 2. Of or pertaining to infidels or infidelity. – *n.* An unbeliever; a disbeliever: specif.: *a* A non-Christian one who does not accept Christianity. *b* A non-Mohammedan . . . *Infidel* in modern popular usage is a term of reproach for one who avowedly denies the tenets of Christianity and the truth of the Scriptures.”

An atheist does not believe in the existence of God; an infidel might believe in His existence (but then, so do the devils) but acts and thinks in opposition to him. They will share a common destiny, according to the Scriptures.

“And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye (singularly or as a group? Singularly, of course.) are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” But will anyone affirm that a Christian can join himself knowingly, intentionally, loving-God-first, and willingly, – join himself physically because he has previously joined himself spiritually – to a temple of idols? And still hope to retain God *alone* in his temple, although he can, will, and must be frequenting the temple of his companion’s idol?

If so, why does the apostle of Jesus Christ **COMMAND** (not suggest, not hint, not imply, but **COMMAND!**) “Wherefore – because these are impossible agreements, hopeless unities – come out among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not (let alone handle, caress, fondle, have intercourse with, learn to adjust to, adopt their ways, and compromise to avoid conflict) the unclean (that which God has not cleansed); and (then) I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” The results – the “well done, thou *good* and *faithful* servant” – the rewards you desire – are based on *your* keeping the commands. If you avoid them and disregard them, then you will find yourself to be fighting against God – and joining the ranks of the infidels and atheists, who have **NOTHING** to offer a believer in the Christ. Would you seriously consider II Corinthians 6:14-18, and may God help us to make our thoughts His thoughts, and our ways His ways – so that we each may know that *God’s* ways *are* equal; His ways *are* just; and the keeping of His commandments for *our* benefit.

–Marvin W. Ingle