

THE CHRISTIAN AND HIS RELATIONSHIP TO MORALS

A LOOK AT SEXUAL IMMORALITY

Gal 5:19

INTRODUCTION:

- A. You and I live in a very promiscuous society! Only a few years ago, our society revered God and patterned their thinking according to the principles of the Bible. But now, most of our society do not display any respect for the teaching of the Scriptures concerning the quality of being pure in sexual conduct.
- B. Many factors contribute to the rampant sexual immorality in our age. The communication networks such as movies, television, radio, pornographic magazines, and false philosophies such as agnosticism, atheism, humanism, and the "New Morality" are responsible for disseminating the "if it feels good, do it" syndrome!
- C. The Greek word underlying the English word "fornication" is *porneia*, which is found 26 times in the Greek New Testament. Paul, in listing some of the evil works of the first century world includes "fornication," *porneia*, in five of the references and puts it first on the list each time (1Cor. 5:11; 6:9; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 5:3; Col. 3:5). This surely emphasizes the sexually corrupt environment in which the Christians lived.
- D. *Porneia* is defined by Arndt-Gingrich's lexicon of the Greek New Testament (P. 699) as "prostitution, unchastity, fornication, of every kind of unlawful sexual intercourse."
- E. Thayer's lexicon (p. 532) has the following regarding *porneia*, "properly of illicit sexual intercourse in general."
- F. In the *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* a very significant analysis is made on page 497, by H. Reisser. He states: "The word group (*porneuo. pome, pornos. and porneia*, JH) can describe various extra-marital sexual modes of behavior insofar as they deviate from accepted social and religious norms (e.g. homosexuality, promiscuity, paedophilia, and especially prostitution)."
- G. Historical data leads one to conclude that *porneia* in its ancient setting also included the gruesome act of homosexuality. A discussion of *porneia* as it relates to homosexuality can be read in a book entitled *Flesh and Spirit* by William Barclay (pp. 24-28). Barclay cites historical sources which substantiates the homosexual tendencies of such men as Socrates and Julius Caesar who were lovers "of boys" and Caesar being a lover of King Nicodemus of Bithynia.
- H. It becomes obvious from these definitions that the word "fornication" even though used at times to refer to specific acts, in general refers to any and all sexual immorality, that is sexual acts that deviate from that which God intended for man and woman in the beginning.

DISCUSSION:

I. SEXUAL ACTIVITY BETWEEN THOSE UNMARRIED IS FORNICATION (sexual immorality)

- A. In the beginning, God made them male and female Gen 1:27

1. Not good for man to be alone so God made a help "meet" (suitable) for him Gen 2:18
 2. Leave father and mother - cleave to wife - become one flesh Gen 2:24; Matt 19:4-6
- B. Present day ideas:
1. ABC news report: "21% of all births are to women unmarried."
 2. On a game show where husbands and wives are to match answers: all three wives said their husbands would advise their daughter to live with someone before marriage and when the husbands came on the show two of them said they would.
 3. In 1960, 1 in 10 American babies was born to an unmarried mother, usually a teenager. In 1992, the ratio was 1 in 3. But according to a June 10, 1995 news release from the Nation's Center for Health Statistics, the boom is not among teenagers, who used to make up nearly two-thirds of unwed mothers, but now make up less than one-third. The biggest jump is among women 25 and older, who once made up less than 15% of unwed mothers, but now account for 35%. Most older single moms, the NCHS believes are living with someone, are lesbian, or are career women who have decided to have a child even though they never intend to marry (Taken from the *Alberta Report* [July 17, 1995], p. 32).
- C. God designed marriage as the medium in which man's and woman's sexual needs are to be satisfied. 1Cor 7:1-5
1. Marriage is to "avoid" fornication
 2. Both husband and wife (man & woman) have needs
 3. One must not (defraud) withhold from the other that which they need as designed by God
 4. Sexual gratification is good and right in marriage Heb 13:4a
- D. Those who satisfy sexual desires outside of marriage, God will judge Heb 13:4b
- E. The sin of fornication can be practiced by people who are not married, those who are unscripturally married, homosexuals, bisexuals, lesbians, and others who are sexually perverted.

II. PORNOGRAPHY IS FORNICATION (sexual immorality)

- A. Definition of Pornography:
1. Webster: "A depiction (as in writing or painting) of licentiousness or lewdness: a portrayal of erotic behavior designed to cause sexual excitement."
 2. The American Heritage Dictionary: "Writing, graphic, or other forms of communication intended to excite lascivious feelings."
 3. The word is formed from two Greek words "porne" which is one of the "family" of words earlier defined involving sexual immorality and another family of Greek words "graphe" translated "scripture" (writings); "grapho" translated describe, write or writings (Vines) and "graphein" which means to write and was originally defined as any work of art or literature depicting the life of prostitutes"
- D. PTA Magazine, Oct., 1973 "Pornography has become as American as apple pie, Mom, and the Fourth of July. It is now everywhere."

1. This quote was 40 years ago and it is much, much worse now than then
2. Pornography is not just restricted to skid row or "adult" X-rated sleaze shows! It is in your local grocery store, in the words of pop music, and is even piped into homes through cable and satellite TV and computers hooked to the internet and this is just a few sources

C. Pornography in 2006 was a worldwide \$97 billion industry – more than the top technology companies combined: Microsoft, Google, Amazon, eBay, Yahoo!, Apple, Netflix and EarthLink (some estimate 13 billion)

1. "Playboy magazine hit the news stands in 1954. By 1970 the President's commission on Obscenity and Pornography described the average consumers of pornography as predominately white, middle-class, middle-aged, married males dressed in business suits or neat casual attire."
2. "As of April 1, 1990, the population of the United States was 248,709,873. That same year, over 300,000,000 X-rated videos were distributed in our neighborhoods. Since then. Sales and rentals of adult videos have risen 75 percent." (*Taken from the book An Affair of the Mind by Laurie Hall*)

D. Pornography appeals to the prurient (lascivious) interest of individuals. Matt 6:22,23

1. Thayer defines lasciviousness (aselgeia) as "unbridled lust, excess, licentiousness, lasciviousness, wantonness, outrageousness, shamelessness, insolence wanton (acts or) manners, as filthy words, indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females."
2. As is obvious from this definition, lasciviousness embraces every aspect of pornography

E. Pornography promotes the actual acts of fornication (sexual immorality) of all kinds and promotes the visualization of these acts in the mind See Prov 6:26-32

1. Flee fornication 1Cor 6:19,20
2. Abstain from fleshly lusts 1Pet 2:11; Note Jas 1:15
3. Adultery can be committed in the heart Matt 5:27,28

III. HOMOSEXUALITY IS FORNICATION (sexual immorality)

A. Homosexuality - sexual relations between those of the same sex, as male with male or female with female. Unnatural - Romans 1

B. Now have homosexual clubs in schools. Example: From Jack Wise: In the Ames (Iowa JH) High School there is a club that is openly accepting and promoting homosexual and lesbian life styles. They are listed in the handbook as; "an organization dedicated to creating a more inclusive school community while providing a safe and open forum for dealing with issues concerning gay, lesbian, bisexual, and straight students. All students are welcome regardless of sexual orientation." I was told that last year they went to the school board and requested they be recognized as a club. And here they are. My son, 17 yrs old, expressed his thoughts about it to one of his fellow students and she simply said what was wrong with being 'gay'. She is 'straight' but is running for vice president of the club. Supporters say that it is not a sin as long as the two same sex partners are in love and not simply abusing the other partner.

C. This sin caused God to destroy Sodom Gen 19:5

D. Paul condemns such activity Rom 1:26,27 and says they are worthy of death Rom 1:32

E. Sign on Billboard: "God made Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve"

IV. ADULTERY IS FORNICATION (sexual immorality)

A. Adultery (moichao) - means "to have unlawful intercourse with another's wife, to commit adultery with." Thayer & Vines Matt 5:32; 19:9 (verb): Luke 18:11; 1Cor. 6:9; Heb. 13:4 (noun)

B. New ideas on the meaning of adultery are being presented in an effort to avoid having to leave an adulterous relationship.

1. Statement from John L. Edwards' book *Marriage and Divorce* first published in 1985 and a revised edition in 1990 "Therefore, the act of divorce is adultery. You do not commit adultery by having sex in the second marriage. The only sin is the divorce, which you can repent of and receive forgiveness for. The second marriage is not a sin." His conclusion: "We conclude that adultery is the breaking of a covenant"

2. Olan Hicks is traveling the country promoting this same idea regarding adultery and is attracting followers everywhere he goes

C. Adultery is the result of the unlawful putting away of ones spouse for both the one put away, the one who remarries and the one who marries the one "put away" Matt. 5:32; Matt 19:9; Mk 10:11,12; Lk 16:18

1. The adultery in Matt 19:9 required two acts: divorce for a cause other than fornication and remarriage.
2. The product of that is adultery. Those two acts are not adultery, they result in adultery for at least two people and possibly four. A & B are married - A puts B away for a cause other than sexual immorality (fornication) and marries C so A & C are guilty of adultery - then B marries D so two more are guilty of adultery for a total of four and it "snowballs" if C & D happened to have been married.

D. If adultery is only the breaking of a covenant. Then how does one commit adultery in their heart by lusting after someone (Matt 5:28) or how is it adultery when someone marries the "put away one" (Matt 19:9)

E. God's solution: Matt 19:5,6 One man married to one woman for life.

CONCLUSION:

- A. Certainly this has not been an exhaustive study of these matters, but hopefully has opened our eyes to the seriousness of the problem of sexual immorality
- B. Sexual passions are strong. God placed these desires in man's nature, and when they are exercised within the marriage relationship, they are a beautiful expression of love, human compassion, and physical and psychological delight. Heb 13:4; 1Thess 4:3-7; 1Cor 7:1-5
- C. We must make sure we avoid sexual immorality in any form and teach our children to do so as well, if we ever hope to be pleasing to the God of heaven