

AUGUST 4TH
YOUR WIFE MATTERS
"You shall not commit adultery **EXODUS 20:14**

Ever heard of something called the "Wicked Bible"? I never had...until I did some research for this men's devotional topic for today. Why was it called the "Wicked Bible"? According to Kent Hughes in his "Disciples of Grace," when the 1631 early edition of the King James Bible was first published, it contained a "scandalous" mistake. Ready for this? Exodus 20:14 was printed exactly like this: "Thou shalt commit adultery." Did you notice the error? That's right...the printer forgot the "not." The printers were fined "a lifetime's" income by Archbishop Laud when they discovered the mistake. A huge error indeed! However, has our current culture transformed with how they treat marriage? Today's sexual culture has allowed free thinking and free sex with any willing partner. What does this command call us to in our godless culture?

Why marriage in the first place? Marriage is a picture of how Christ relates to the church. I'm convinced that one of the biggest reasons for this marriage debacle is the loss of the picture that God gives us in Ephesians 5. Look at Ephesians 5 again. Notice the words that Paul uses to describe how Jesus treats His Church: love that causes giving life up for the church, sanctifying the church, cleansing the church, nourishing and cherishing the church. As God has provided a Substitute that sheds His blood for us, that same kind of love is a gut punch to our sense of entitlement and arrogance. Marriage brings death...death of your selfish desires so you can fully love your wife in the same way that Jesus loves us. Satan wants nothing more than to break down what God has created for a lifetime, and he has worked at destroying the covenant of marriage ever since sin entered the picture.

As always, Jesus refuses to let men off the hook. You can't excuse yourself from the table because you've avoided the big "A." Instead, Jesus calls you to look deeper. That's what Matthew 5 is all about: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell." Jesus isn't messing around here. The Pharisees thought they were safe because they hadn't been caught in bed with another woman. But God. God continues to seek to kill the sin of the heart. Jesus is dead serious. So serious that he uses "gory" language to set the image in your mind. According to Hughes, "Halfway measures will not do it. There must be a severing...it must be decisive and complete—as serious and final as a hand or foot or eye cast on the floor. The language suggests that you alone must do it...your hand, your foot, your eye."

Men, I wonder about empty time for you. Does your "death scrolling" on the screen cause your eye to linger? Perhaps this is Satan's new scheme to lure you in. You must fight against it. You must fight spiritually with weapons from the spiritual world. I'll leave you with Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 10:3-4: "For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God and take every thought captive to obey Christ...". Men take any rogue thoughts captive. Fight the War. After all, your wife matters because she is God's great creation.

Spend some time thinking about ways that you put yourself in danger against lustful temptations. Ask the Lord for wisdom and endurance to fight the battle as you take every thought captive.

For Further Reading: Ephesians 5:22-33

