



WRITTEN WRITTEN IN STONE IN STONE

THE CLOSED DOOR GUARDING YOUR HEART, YOUR MARRIAGE & YOUR FAITH

Exodus 20:14

INTRODUCTION

ILLUSTRATION: Welcome everyone and walk into the room and acknowledge the closed door.

A closed door is not just a physical barrier; it's symbolic of so much more. Like a portal, a door can be an entrance to new beginnings, opportunities, and exciting challenges. It represents the threshold to another world, a place where we embark on new journeys and embrace fresh experiences.

However, on the flip side, a closed door can take on a different meaning. It becomes a barrier, a dead end, & can make us feel trapped or imprisoned. It's a symbol of missed chances, lost opportunities, paths left unexplored. A place where others are kept at a distance. Where shame & guilt weigh high.

In the setting of today's message, a closed door can be the boundary we place to protect the beauty of our relationships. It signifies the importance of what's inside, the precious moments, the trust & the bond we've built, guarding it from anything that might mean to destroy it.

Welcome to the seventh message in our series, "Written In Stone." As we continue our journey through the Ten Commandments, we reach a pivotal moment in our exploration of God's word. Today, we come face to face with the seventh commandment.

Exodus 20:14 *You must not commit adultery.*

Before we open this up today, let's start by asking a fundamental question:

What is adultery, and what does it truly mean?

Adultery is not merely a violation of a marital vow; it goes much deeper. It's about betrayal, shattered trust & the darkest vulnerabilities in human relationships. What makes this commandment unique is its intimate connection to our personal lives, our sexuality - a part of our existence that often remains concealed, something we might be hesitant to share or even confront.

It's like the closed door in our souls, hiding the secrets & desires we don't want to reveal.

However, when we view adultery through the lens of God, we see that it disrupts & destroys, not just relationships but also the very fabric of our being.

ILLUSTRATION: In ancient Hebrew writings, there was a vivid pictograph used to describe the essence of adultery - a mouth (Pey) for scatter, an ox (Aleph) for strength, and seed or fish (Nun) representing life. It's a profound visual that encapsulates the damage adultery inflicts. To scatter the strength of the next generation... But what makes it even more fascinating is the progression of the Ten Commandments. We look at it as a moral compass but the people back then saw it as the building blocks that would help them build a new way of life.

God loves Covenants & holds them in high value because of their commitment.

God & Man | Man & Woman | Believer & His Church

The Closed Door: Guarding Your Heart, Your Marriage & Your Faith

Now, consider this closed door as not only guarding your personal sanctity but also protecting a sacred image. Marriage, as God designed it, reflects His love for us, the Church. When we commit to a spouse, we symbolize the covenantal relationship between Christ and His Church.

In Ephesians 5:25, the New Living Translation beautifully states, "For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her." Your marriage is a living portrait of God's love and faithfulness.

ILLUSTRATION: Pete & Sarah wedding photos... along with Vows

"I take you to be my lawfully wedded husband/wife, to have & to hold, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness & in health, to love & to hold (cherish), forsaking all others, till death do us part according to God's holy law."

As this door guards your relationship with your spouse or future spouse, it also protects the image of what God designed. It shows others a physical picture of what it means to guard and protect what God holds dear. When we uphold the sanctity of marriage, we're not only preserving our own relationships but also bearing witness to God's love in the world.

How can we Guard this Space? How can we Guard our Hearts, Marriage (Relationships) & our faith?

PHYSICAL

Matthew 5:27-28 *You have heard the commandment that says, 'You must not commit adultery.' 28 But I say, anyone who even looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*

The focus here is on the heart, not just the external actions.

The heart reflects God's love for His people.

Leviticus 20:10 says that both the man & the women caught would be put to death.

Proverbs 6:32 *the man who commits adultery is an utter fool, for he destroys himself.*

**People who fall, didn't make a bad choice... they made a series of bad choices.
Cheating isn't a mistake, it's a choice.**

Practice Affection: Show affection towards your spouse daily. Hold hands, hug, kiss, physical connection & have sex. Sex is good! Say it again... It's good when it's in the context of what it was designed for.

To many times, I think we've allowed our insecurities or uncertainty lead us down the route where we know that it's good but we've planted seeds that it's not. Pushing people then to find out from the world how good sex is. There is a connection that happens that is more than just a physical thing & that's the way that God designed it.

THE MIND

Proverbs 4:23 *Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.*

The mind is where the battle against adultery begins, as it's the breeding ground for impure thoughts. We must strive to keep our minds pure to honor the sacred image of marriage.

Lust, not sex, is the starting place for adultery.

Communicate: Have open & honest communication. Talk about your needs, desires, listen. Build trust that is not just shared physically but mentally, emotionally & spiritually.

OBJECTS

Colossians 3:5 *So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires. Don't be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world.*

When we place worldly desires above our spouses, we're committing a form of adultery against them. This hinders the reflection of God's love in our relationships.

When adultery walks in, everything worth having walks out...

Priorities: Reconnect, rekindle the romance. Make an effort to focus on each other.

Faithfulness means more than not committing adultery!
It means to support, to love & to build up.

EMOTIONAL

The Bible often stresses the importance of emotional connection within marriage.

Ephesians 5:25-28 *For husbands, this means to love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her **26** to make her holy & clean, washed by the cleansing of God's word. **27** He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy & without fault. **28** In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as they love their own bodies. For a man who loves his wife actually shows love for himself.*

Encourages husbands to love their wives as Christ loved the church, emphasizing emotional and spiritual connection. Our emotional fidelity mirrors God's unwavering love for us. How can we love our enemies, yet struggle to truly love our spouse?

A healthy marriage is a long conversation that always feels too short.

SPIRITUAL

James 4:4-5 in the NLT warns against friendship with the world, saying, *"You adulterers! Don't you realize that friendship with the world makes you an enemy of God?" I say it again: If you want to be a friend of the world, you make yourself an enemy of God. 5 Do you think the scriptures have no meaning? They say that God is passionate that the spirit He has placed within us should be **FAITHFUL** to Him.*

When we love worldly things more than God, it's a form of spiritual adultery. This compromises the sacred image we should bear as Christians.

Get a Vision for your Marriage: What is it that you see? Don't just live your life, going through the motions. Ask God to get a vision for your life, for your marriage. Find our purpose individually & together.

Dream into it, Dig into it, Speak it, Refine it, Model it & then Repeat it.

CLOSING

As we come to a close, remember that if you're feeling that your relationship is at a breaking point or that you've strayed too far, there's hope.

In 2 Corinthians 7:10-11, the NLT reminds us, "For the kind of sorrow God wants us to experience leads us away from sin and results in salvation. There's no regret for that kind of sorrow. But worldly sorrow, which lacks repentance, results in spiritual death." Let God's conviction lead you to true repentance and healing.

Let's take a moment to reflect on these truths and make a commitment. Whether you're married or single, let's consider how we can apply these principles to our lives, strengthen our relationships, and walk in obedience to this commandment.

ILLUSTRATION:

The Princess Bride & Miracle Max - Mostly Dead, not all dead...

The closed door can be opened & the hidden can be healed.

Encourage everyone to reflect on their relationships & seek forgiveness & healing where needed.

Open the door of their hearts to God, and at the same time, guard it diligently from harmful influences. Provide resources or support for those who may need it.

By embracing God's Word and guarding the sacred space meant for Him, you can find the strength to overcome temptations & preserve the sanctity of your relationships.