

Embracing Hell's Fire

Proverbs 6:27-35 HCSB Can a man embrace fire and his clothes not be burned? (28) Can a man walk on coals without scorching his feet? (29) So it is with the one who sleeps with another man's wife; no one who touches her will go unpunished. (30) People don't despise the thief if he steals to satisfy himself when he is hungry. (31) Still, if caught, he must pay seven times as much; he must give up all the wealth in his house. (32) The one who commits adultery lacks sense; whoever does so destroys himself. (33) He will get a beating and dishonor, and his disgrace will never be removed. (34) For jealousy enrages a husband, and he will show no mercy when he takes revenge. (35) He will not be appeased by anything or be persuaded by lavish gifts.

Introduction

Adultery is a terrible crime. It is one of the sins that Adonai refers to as "an abomination".

- **Ezekiel 22:11a HCSB** One man within you commits an abomination with his neighbor's wife...

When people do this, when they have an affair and break their vow to their spouse Paul says:

- **Titus 1:16 HCSB** They profess to know God, but they deny Him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, and disqualified for any good work.

Even worse!

- **1 Corinthians 6:9-10 HCSB** Do you not know that the unjust will not inherit God's kingdom? Do not be deceived: no sexually immoral people, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, homosexuals, (10) thieves, greedy people, drunkards, revilers, or swindlers will inherit God's kingdom.

If you are in or considering an affair, you may be trying to justify yourself by saying, "I have the right to be happy! It's my body – I can do with it as I please. Besides, as long as no one knows, no one's hurt!" Listen to the word of God on the matter:

- **1 Corinthians 6:18-20 HCSB** Flee from sexual immorality! "Every sin a person can commit is outside the body," but the person who is sexually immoral sins against his own body. (19) Do you not know that your body is a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, (20) for you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body.

A person who acts against his vow and injures his spouse by stepping out of the bounds of their marriage is even considered by the Lowlanders to be a lying scumbag of a weasel. Personally, I would despise such a person if only I could muster up enough will to even think about them.

You may think that's harsh, but I've learned it's best to not only love what God loves but to also hate what He hates. Like David,

- **Psalms 101:3-6 HCSB** I will not set anything godless before my eyes. I hate the doing of transgression; it will not cling to me. (4) A devious heart will be far from me; I will not be involved with evil. (5) I will destroy anyone who secretly slanders his neighbor; I cannot tolerate anyone with haughty eyes or an arrogant heart. (6) My eyes favor the faithful of the land so that they may sit down with me. The one who follows the way of integrity may serve me.

Why do people commit adultery?

- They are lured in by lust.
- They focus on what they think are their "needs".
- They believe the affair will make them happy.

- They blame their spouse for their marital problems.
- They assume their spouse cannot or will not change.
- They fail to consider the consequences of their sin.
- They think they will not get caught.
- They have hardened their heart.
- They rationalize that God will understand.

They rationalize that their wrong actions are somehow right. Then they indulge in their selfish pleasures and harden their hearts against their spouse and their God.

- **Isaiah 5:20-21 HCSB** Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness, who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. (21) Woe to those who are wise in their own opinion and clever in their own sight.

Listen to what the Lord has to say to you:

- **Proverbs 21:2-3 HCSB** All the ways of a man seem right to him, but the LORD evaluates the motives. (3) Doing what is righteous and just is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.

Do you want to know why you should not be involved in adultery?

1. Your God forbids it.
2. The Bible condemns it.
3. It will wound your mate.
4. Your children will learn from you.
5. You are jeopardizing your health.
6. Your future will be cursed.
7. You will forfeit peace.
8. You will lose your integrity.
9. You compromise your morals – in all areas.
10. Your conscience will be scarred.

The Scriptures tell us:

- **Proverbs 11:3 HCSB** The integrity of the upright guides them, but the perversity of the treacherous destroys them.

Go ahead, sip the wine of treachery. Go ahead, dine at the devil's table; but as both Chaucer and Shakespeare said, He that sups with the devil should use a long spoon.

- **James 1:14-15 HCSB** But each person is tempted when he is drawn away and enticed by his own evil desires. (15) Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death.

Am I saying that there is no hope for the adulterer? No – absolutely not. After King David's adulterous affair, the prophet Nathan confronted him and David confessed. Impelled by the Holy Spirit as God's prophet Nathan replied,

- **2 Samuel 12:13-14 HCSB** David responded to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." Then Nathan replied to David, "The LORD has taken away your sin; you will not die. (14) However, because you treated the LORD with such contempt in this matter, the son born to you will die."

David received God's forgiveness, but

- **Galatians 6:7 HCSB** Don't be deceived: God is not mocked. For whatever a man sows he will also reap,

David's baby boy died. David's family was forever at war with itself. David's relationship with Bathsheba was never based on mutual trust and love. If you want to see the heart of a

broken man, shattered by the consequences of his sin, truly repentant and seeking the face of God, read Psalm 51 this afternoon.

So, what should the adulterer do to get right with God (but not necessarily the humans he's hurt)?

1. Count the cost of your sin.
 - **Proverbs 6:32-33 HCSB** The one who commits adultery lacks sense; whoever does so destroys himself. (33) He will get a beating and dishonor, and his disgrace will never be removed.
2. Confess the sin and seek forgiveness from God and others.
 - **James 5:16 HCSB** Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The intense prayer of the righteous is very powerful.
3. Recommit yourself to your spouse.
 - **Malachi 2:14-15 HCSB** Yet you ask, "For what reason?" Because the LORD has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth. You have acted treacherously against her, though she was your marriage partner and your wife by covenant. (15) Didn't the one *God* make *us* with a remnant of His life-breath? And what does the One seek? A godly offspring. So watch yourselves carefully, and do not act treacherously against the wife of your youth.
4. Completely sever all ties to the third party.
 - **Proverbs 2:18-19 HCSB** for her house sinks down to death and her ways to the land of the departed spirits. (19) None return who go to her; none reach the paths of life.
 - **Proverbs 4:14-15 HCSB** Don't set foot on the path of the wicked; don't proceed in the way of evil ones. (15) Avoid it; don't travel on it. Turn away from it, and pass it by.
5. Deliberately choose to focus on your spouse's virtues.
 - **Philippians 4:8 HCSB** Finally brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable--if there is any moral excellence and if there is any praise--dwell on these things.
6. Understand the difference between love and lust.
 - **Ephesians 5:25-30 HCSB** Husbands, love your wives, just as also Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her, (26) to make her holy, cleansing her in the washing of water by the word. (27) He did this to present the church to Himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and blameless. (28) In the same way, husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. (29) For no one ever hates his own flesh, but provides and cares for it, just as Christ does for the church, (30) since we are members of His body.
7. Communicate godly sorrow.
 - **2 Corinthians 7:10 HCSB** For godly grief produces a repentance not to be regretted and leading to salvation, but worldly grief produces death.

Admitting the affair and saying you're sorry will not automatically make everything ok. Confession is not a re-do button. There is a vast difference between worldly sorrow and godly sorrow. Worldly sorrow is being sorry for getting caught and only leads to wanting quick, short-term but ultimately useless solutions. Godly sorrow is a change of mind that comes with a true change of direction and behavior. Godly sorrow causes you to hate your sin so much that you turn from it and never turn back again.

8. Commit yourself to faithfully and humbly serving your spouse – in whatever way they need.
 - [Philippians 2:3-4 HCSB](#) Do nothing out of rivalry or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than yourselves. (4) Everyone should look out not *only* for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.