

Adultery In The Heart – Matthew 5:28

Matthew 5:28 [New King James] *“But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”*

This is an instance of Jesus Christ making the law given through Moses by God more stringent by considering the thoughts that preceded the act as sinful as the act itself.

When we consider the subject of adultery in the Ten Commandments, what Jesus Christ was saying was already included.

Exodus 20:17 [New King James] *“You shall not covet your neighbour’s house; you shall not covet your neighbour’s wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbour’s.”*

As the wife is mentioned among several items of property, to “covet” someone else’s wife may not be by way of sexual urge, but because of the social or financial advantages of being linked to her family.

But the Hebrew word translated “covet” is “châmad” meaning to desire or lust after, so when referring to the wife must be of a sexual nature.

There may be significance that Jesus Christ extends beyond another person’s wife to “a woman” in general.

To treat any woman as a sex object and not as a person in her own right, as a human being created in the “image” of the Creator God, is a sin, all the more so, when that woman is your neighbour’s wife.

When we understand the real reason for marriage any misuse of that intimate relationship is a sin directly focussed on the breaking up of the intimate relationship of Jesus Christ and the Christian Church.

Revelation 19:7-9 [New King James] *“‘Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.’ And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, ‘Write: “Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’” And he said to me, ‘These are the true sayings of God.’”*

This future event is what every human being is in the process of preparing for, physical marriage is a major relationship in which we can make this preparation by remaining faithful in thought as well as deed towards our partner.

Recorded over and over again, when God’s people were unfaithful to Him by worshipping idols or other pagan gods, the prophets that God sent to correct and warn them of the result of such sins likened their thoughts and actions to adulteries, [Jeremiah 3:6-10; Jeremiah 5:7-8; Jeremiah 7:9; Jeremiah 13:27; Jeremiah 23:14; Ezekiel 16:31-32; Ezekiel 23:37; Hosea 4:13].

When we lust after anything to the extent of placing it ahead of our serving and worshipping the True Creator God we are committing adultery in our hearts and minds as Israel did.

1 Corinthians 10:6-11 [New King James] *“Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, ‘The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.’ Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; nor complain, as some of them*

also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.”

Allow the actions that caused Israel to sin to be a powerful warning for us of what we have to avoid so we will **not** be committing spiritual and physical adultery.