

Avoiding Divorce: Part Two

Scripture

“Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast [it] from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not [that] thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast [it] from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not [that] thy whole body should be cast into hell.” (Mt 5:27-30 AV)

Devotion

In part one a breakdown of love was cited as one of the reasons for divorce. If we could define love primarily as sacrifice, then the opposite would be selfishness. This selfishness often plays out in adultery.

Jesus tells us that adultery is not just the physical act of sex outside of one's marriage, but also includes the lusting for sex outside of one's marriage. You do not have to have sex to be guilty of adultery. This is not a lesser crime either. The context tells us that the penalty for living an adulterous life is hell. Jesus' warning about hell couldn't be any stronger. As you may have noted, it would be better for you to gouge out an eye than for your whole body to be cast into that place of eternal torment.

Let us be thankful that our Lord gives us this warning about mental adultery. This mental adultery is much easier to fall into than the actual act. Of course, mental adultery is the first step to physical adultery. James tells us that sin is progressive like that.

“. . . Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” (Jas 1:14-15 AV) The temptation comes first, then after that temptation is thought about, justified in the mind, conceived it gives birth to sin. Like a child during the gestation period it grows and is eventually born.

The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty in God, therefore we must fight this temptation with spiritual weapons. This begins by having a strong relationship with God as we may also be guilty of spiritual adultery. Spiritual adultery is likely the first step towards betrayal. “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.” (Jas 4:4 AV)

The world is attacking us with every manner of perversion. As believers, we need to be looking at ourselves for signs of weakening. Remember he who looks upon a woman to lust has committed adultery already in his heart. What do you allow your eyes to see? What do you allow your mind to think about? Like a writing-prompt an image or suggestion will often lead the mind to consider evil thoughts. Therefore the best advice may be to follow David and make his commitment. He said, “I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; [it] shall not cleave to me.” (Ps 101:3 AV)

“Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth.” (Pr 5:18 AV)

