



The Sixth Commandment, Part 1

by Pastor Glenn Huebel

You shall not commit adultery.

The “sexual revolution” of the 1960s was proclaimed as liberation from outdated social restrictions on sex. Beware the devil bearing gifts, especially “liberty.” The devil’s liberty is always abject slavery (2 Peter 2:19). The human race should have learned that in the Garden, but liars will always have an inexhaustible market of fools in this world. The revolution was not progress, but regress to the dark days of paganism. Jesus warns about demons returning in mass to a house once swept and garnished (Matt 12:43-45). Peter is less polite and compares it to

a dog returning to its vomit and a pig to the mire (2 Peter 2:20-22). Both say that those who return to darkness after living in light will find that the final end is worse than the oppression from which they were originally delivered. Sexual absorption and perversion is a symptom that the society is entering its terminal stage (Lev. 18, Rom. 1:18ff). There comes a point when even God’s patience reaches its limit and the conclusion is reached that national repentance is impossible.

The sexual revolution is not liberating us. It is destroying us. That may seem like too strong of a word, but it is absolutely accurate. We need look only at the physical effects of sexual immorality to see this. Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are destructive and even deadly. I was pleasantly surprised to see so many young people in Uganda, but then I was reminded that AIDS has decimated the older generation in most

of Africa. I was told that sexual immorality is still rampant there, even in the Church. If these millions had died of pesticide poisoning or improper disposal of chemicals there would have been an outrage against the companies responsible. But few voices are willing to expose the root cause of this massive destruction of life – sexual immorality. (That might lead us all to repent.) Rather we make and offer prophylactics. Can you imagine offering gas masks and water filters to avoid blaming companies who poison the population? As sexual immorality is glorified through mass media today and made to look perfectly normal and acceptable, we hear precious little about STDs, even though the problem is growing at a phenomenal rate and bringing misery into many young lives. Many STDs can be more harmful than smoking, but while we piously ban any positive advertisement on cigarettes, we boldly glorify sexual immorality in almost every TV show. And now people are making laws against soft drinks? Are we just stupid, or has God “given us over to

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Rembrandt, *Moses With the Ten Commandments*. 1659. Oil on canvas, 168.5 cm x 136.5 cm. Gemäldegalerie, Berlin

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That you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name. —John 20:31

a debased mind”? Have we “suppressed the truth in unrighteousness” (Rom. 1:18)? Christ, have mercy upon us!

The physical destruction produced by sexual immorality is serious enough, but the spiritual consequences are even more serious. First, we must understand that there are profound spiritual dimensions to a sexual relationship. That will come as news to most people in our culture. Many think that sex and spirituality are at opposite ends of the spectrum and maybe shouldn't even be mentioned in the same sentence. Unfortunately, the Roman Catholic Church has long given credence to the idea that sexual activity is intrinsically contrary to or at least beneath true spirituality, but they are wrong about the supposedly higher spiritual order of celibacy. God not only created male and female, but He obviously INTENDED Adam and Eve to procreate (they didn't have a different way to procreate than we do) – and all this took place in the perfect and holy paradise. The sexual relationship between Adam and Eve was included in what God called “very good” (Gen. 1:31), and we should esteem it as highly. After the Fall, the mystery and wonder of sexuality became corrupted as everything else did, but even in darkness people understood its profound spiritual dimensions. Idolatrous ancient religions often focused on sexuality, especially in the prominent fertility cults where prostitution was practiced in the temples as a part of sacred rites. All of that is deeply offensive to the true God, but not because sexuality and spirituality are to be separated. St. Paul exposed the seriousness of the sin of fornication by emphasizing the spiritual dimension of the sex act: *Shall I then take the members of*

Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, “The two will become one flesh.” But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him.” (1 Cor. 6:16-17).

The sexual revolution created the idea of “casual sex,” an attempt to divorce the physical act from personal or spiritual intimacy with another person. This is a proud, self-centered denial and rebellion against God's created purpose for sex - that two become one. Those who engage in casual sex are plainly saying, “I don't care a wit about YOU (I don't even want to know your name). I am concerned only for my own pleasure.” This self-centeredness is not softened by mutual consent to use and be used by one another. All other forms of extra-marital sex are just different degrees of this godless separation of physical from spiritual, not a difference in kind. Unity of spirit (as reflected in the marriage commitment) is a divine prerequisite to the unity of flesh.

Ancient Greek philosophy separated body and soul, matter and spirit. Christians do not. Christians have always understood the intimate union between the body and the soul (Rom. 6:12-14; Rom. 12:1; 1 Cor. 6:19-20, etc.) The sex act, by God's design, involves the whole person, not just body parts. One may, indeed, learn to depersonalize it through persistent violation of conscience, but such behavior does great damage to the spirit as reflected in strained and ruined relationships. Even the attempt to “try out” marriage by living together first has proven to be detrimental to lasting relationships. It doesn't create unity of spirit, but distrust.

Likewise, young men and women who believe that “sowing wild oats” in their youth will get it out of their system find that the proverb is true, “you reap what you sow,” and lust is never satisfied. The Bible says that when we sow to the flesh we reap only corruption (Gal. 6:7-8). Pornography is like a drug. It patterns the brain, not in a good way. Likewise, sexual promiscuity in youth leads to potential problems in the marriage bed, and even in the marriage itself. Saying sex is “casual” does not make it so. Don't fall for Satan's lies even if the whole world is mesmerized by them. Jesus said, “My sheep hear MY VOICE, and I know them and they follow Me. I give them eternal life” (John 10:27).

We Christians cannot fall into the trap of yielding to fleshly passions in the false belief that this is the way to happiness. Nor can we fall into the trap of thinking that our children are doomed to give in to youthful lusts because it is impossible not to (as the opponents of abstinence education affirm). This commandment shows us that the way of life is the way of self control, not self indulgence. The Bible says that a person without self-control is like a city without walls. In those days a city without walls was prey to any and every predator. Do we really want our children to be victims of predators? The wall they need is self-control, and it doesn't come naturally. It is not developed in homes where parents lack the strength or the will to set boundaries and enforce them. It is not developed in homes where expectations are low. Nor will it happen if God's expectations and wisdom are not clearly presented in opposition to the foolishness, lies, and corruption bombarding our eyes

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Sixth Commandment, cont.

and ears every day. St. Peter calls us all to “abstain from the passions of the flesh which war against your soul” (1 Peter 2:11). St. Paul counsels Timothy to cleanse himself from what is dishonorable that he might be a vessel for honorable use, and then calls him to “flee youthful passions” (2 Tim 2:22). These commands were definitely counter-cultural even then. New Testament Christianity was nurtured and grew up in one of the most sexually permissive ages of all time (Ancient Greece and Rome), and though voices called for sexual

permissiveness in the name of the gospel, the Apostles steadfastly called Christians to radically separate from this aspect of the culture (1 Cor. 6:9-11). It was a non-negotiable part of Christian life and discipline in the Church. Those who were converted and joined the church were required and expected to put away sexual immorality and to live as Christians (Eph 4:17-24).

Neither we, nor our children, can do any of this apart from Christ (John 15:5). We have been united with His death and resurrection in

baptism, through which we have the power to walk in newness of life (Rom 6:4) and to live in true freedom (John 8:31), freedom to say no to the flesh and walk in the Spirit (Rom 8:4). “If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 John 1:7).

Blessings,
Pastor Huebel

(In Part 2 of this commandment I will deal with marriage and homosexuality)



News From the Mountain: VBS 2013

Vacation Bible School isn't until June, but it takes a lot of time, effort, and coordination to bring it all together. That's why we're starting in March this year. Here's how you can help:

Volunteers

We need volunteers to help fill the following roles:

- Pre-school Leaders (2)
- Storytelling Leader
- Bible Challenge Leader
- Base Camp (opening and closing) Leader
- Games Leader
- Music Leader
- Helpers for each of the above leaders

A Mountain of Donations

Look for the Mountain of Donations collection station in the narthex soon. We are asking the congregation to help out with providing the following items:

- Decorations
- Activity supplies
- Paper goods
- Monetary donations

For detailed information about any of the needs, please contact Elizabeth Johnson (ethanellie@gmail.com) or Tamarra Liddle (fremantleaussie@gmail.com).

Thank you for your willingness to help us give the children a fantastic VBS experience.
—Elizabeth and Tamarra



Messiah Lutheran Church & School

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

1308 Whitley Rd. Keller, TX 76248

Church Office: (817) 431-2345

Early Childhood Center: (817) 431-6139

Classical Academy (K-8): (817) 431-5486

Sunday Worship: 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.

Sunday School & Adult Bible Class: 9:30 a.m.

Rev. Glenn Huebel, Senior Pastor

Rev. Dennis Kitzmann, Assistant Pastor

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National Lutheran Schools Week by Mrs. Ellen Malzahn

During the first full week in March, National Lutheran Schools Week is celebrated by children in Lutheran Schools throughout the country. It is a time to remember what a unique opportunity both students and teachers have to attend a Christian school where Jesus' love is shared every day while receiving an excellent academic education.

Lutheran Schools have a long history in the United States. Immigrants to the New World wanted to be sure their children received a strong religious education along with their academics. The first schools opened in 1638 in the Swedish colonies. In the early 1700's, settlers from Austria opened Lutheran schools in Georgia. German Lutherans settled in Pennsylvania and New York in the early 1800's and opened schools shortly thereafter. As our country grew so did the Lutheran school system.

Today there are Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod schools across the United States and throughout the world.

- Messiah Lutheran Classical Academy is one of over 879 Lutheran elementary schools nationally.
- There are 2,343 Lutheran schools in the United States including 1376 Early Childhood centers, 879 elementary and 88 high schools.
- 229,571 students attend those schools.
- 18,000 teachers lovingly guide those students each day as the children grow spiritually, academically, emotionally, socially and physically.

- There are ten Lutheran universities and two seminaries.
- Lutheran schools are also located in several countries throughout the world.

BAPTIZED FOR THIS MOMENT

*Repent and be baptized,
everyone of you
in the name of Jesus Christ
for the forgiveness of your sins.
And you will receive
the gift of the Holy Spirit.
The promise is for you
and your children
and for all who are far off
— for all whom the Lord our God
will call.
Acts 2: 38 - 39*

