

The Old Paths

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“Wholesome Adultery?”

Sherman Wilson, Owensboro, KY

In the Saturday, June 24, 1995 issue of the Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer, our local daily newspaper, the entertainment section contained a capsule review of the movies currently showing in our city. I quote from the review of *The Bridges of Madison County*: “From Clint Eastwood comes a wholesome romance about adultery.”

Now I ask, “How CAN adultery EVER be ‘wholesome’?” For those who believe the Bible, please read Galatians 5:19-21. There are 17 specific sins listed, one of which is adultery. While the sins are not listed alphabetically, adultery is the very first one mentioned. It is listed right along with murder among the 17 and Paul ends by saying, “*They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*” Can “murder” ever be described as “wholesome”? God appears to feel that adultery is just as bad as murder! This appears to be unreasonable in the eyes of most humans, including this writer. Frankly, it seems to me that taking someone’s life would have to be the most vile sin of all. After all, the murdered person may not have obeyed the gospel and, if he had lived, there was always the chance that he would have eventually obeyed and had a promise of eternal life. While the sin of murder can be forgiven if the murderer truly repents, it is the

only one of the 17 sins that is permanent as restitution for the life of the murder victim is, of course, is impossible. However, even though it is hard to accept that adultery is just as bad as murder, we must never lose sight of the fact that God does not view things as we humans view them. Isaiah 55:8-9 says, “*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*” This is a truth that most people have never learned (or accepted).

To those who have committed adultery, or are “thinking about it,” what about the “Golden Rule” as set forth by Jesus (Matt. 7:12)? It says we should do unto others as we would have them do unto us (paraphrase -SW). Well, would you want YOUR spouse to commit adultery against you?

I have heard people justify adultery by saying, “But am I not entitled to happiness?” Will your adultery make him/ her happy? Remember your wedding vows — “As long as we both shall LIVE” not “As long as we both shall LOVE” — as the T.V. character “Rhoda” was asked by the preacher to vow in her famous wedding scene several years ago.

The recent T.V. movie of Elizabeth Taylor’s life pointed out that she had been married eight times, including twice to Richard Burton.

In one scene, she is depicted as saying, “Don’t I have the right to be happy?” To that I ask, what about the husbands she left for other men over the years? Weren’t THEY entitled to happiness? What about Eddie Fisher and Richard Burton’s wives? Didn’t Debbie Reynolds Fisher and Sybil Burton have a right to happiness? Didn’t their children have a right to be raised by BOTH of their natural parents?

As someone once said, “My RIGHT to swing my arm ends at the point of YOUR nose!”

Editor’s Note:

The above article was written by brother Wilson in 1995. I hope we all can see that this 12 year-old article still makes some great points worthy of our study. I remember 1995 and remember the furor among some folks over that Clint Eastwood movie mentioned above. Sadly, instead of movie directors and producers listening to the people, in the last 12 years, it is obvious we are becoming more and more explicit in the depictions of adultery, homosexuality, and other sexual deviancies. We need to turn to God now, repenting of our sins before it is too late (Ps. 33:12, 144:15).

Adultery is never wholesome. It has been consistently condemned by God throughout Scripture (Gen. 39:9; Ex. 20:14; Rom. 7:2-3, 13:9; Heb. 13:4; etc.). It contributes to a breakdown of the family unit, and ultimately to a breakdown of the nation. Our selfish attitudes provoked by lusts of the eyes and flesh (I Jn. 2:16) prevent us from seeing this truth, unfortunately.

Satan is very effective, and has ways of making people think that it is right

and proper to commit adultery when truly "in love." Think about how many movies have been produced over the last 100 years that have the audience "rooting" for the "hero" who just happens to be in love with another man's wife! How sad.

Let us remember just how heinous the sin of adultery is. Hollywood portrays adultery as "loving" but God says it is sin — a sin one commits not only against God, but also against his own body (I Cor. 6:18)! Let us show our children the right and proper examples in the home, and let us teach them to find a mate that they will love all their lives (Matt. 19:4-6; Rom. 7:2-3), one that will help them go to Heaven, being "*heirs together of the grace of life*" (I Pet. 3:7).

Thought: "When the watchman on the wall can no longer recognize the enemy, the city is as good as lost!"

God has always wanted His people to be watchmen (Isa. 62:6-7). Spiritually, His people today are to be watchmen in the church (Acts 20:31). The watchman is responsible for watching out for the enemy (Satan, I Pet. 5:8) and warning God's people against his advances (Col. 1:28). Therefore, just as a city is lost when the watchmen fails in his job, so also the church is lost when the watchman is either too ignorant, or too rebellious to recognize Satan, and warn Christians of his devices (II Cor. 2:11).

- Jarrod Jacobs

"I Don't Speak Against The Church!" Oh, Really?

Gordon Skinner, Paoli, IN

Some years ago I spoke with a woman who left her husband to enter into an adulterous relationship. They had a young daughter of which the wife had primary custody. In discussing spiritual things and the effects upon the young girl, the woman commented that she never spoke negatively about the Lord's church to her daughter. I responded she didn't need to. Her actions spoke as loud as any words could. After a long pause, she changed the subject. What could she say? The point hit home. The young girl is grown and hasn't shown any interest or intention of obeying the gospel. The father attempted to encourage the daughter as he could. He took her to services when she came on the weekends, gave her material to study, and talked about spiritual matters when she visited on other occasions. But there has to be desire from within to do right and certain environments can help diminish or destroy those desires.

There are lessons for us here. Individuals may forsake the assemblies (Heb. 10:25), fail to let their voices be heard against sinful things (Eph. 5:11), fail to be active spiritually (Jas. 4:17), and fail to be steadfast (I Cor. 15:58). They may seek to excuse themselves by saying they don't go around badmouthing the church. Yet, their actions exposes their lack of love and loyalty to Christ and His church (Lk. 6:46, Acts 20:28, Heb. 10:23-31). John says we are to express our love in deed and in truth (1 Jn. 3:18).

How about you? What are your children seeing and hearing by your actions? (Matt. 18:1-6).

"Will You Help Yourself?"

Someone remarked, "I just can't get interested in Bible study." Another answered, "No, some can't. It is like getting interest at the bank. You have to put money in first. Therefore, the more (time, prayer, work) you put in, the more the interest can be expected to grow."

If your interest is down in Bible study, etc., begin now to put more into it and watch the interest grow!

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