

The Sixth Commandment

You shall not commit adultery.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we lead a pure and decent life in words and actions, and that husband and wife love and honor each other.

Dear Disciples of Jesus,

Many books and stories have been written about love and marriage. Who wrote the first one? The answer is God. We don't have all the details we would like, however, God provides us with the first words of marital love and the first marriage. God's gift of marriage is so precious that he wanted this story known.

We also see that marriage and family are very important to God as he has provided the Sixth Commandment to protect his sacred institution.

This is important because there are many questions today about God given marriage. People of the world despise God's gift and have created versions of marriage that mimic and mock God's gift. A ruling by the Supreme Court of the United States concerning licensing same-sex marriages has increased the confusion and misunderstanding.

Biblical Christians look to God for answers to our questions. He reminds us what marriage is. He also helps us to understand that marriage between one man and one woman is not only good, but it is a holy gift from God.

Under the Sixth Commandment "**You shall not commit adultery.**" we will have two sermons. Part 1 is **God Gives the Blessed Gift of Marriage.**

1. He defines marriage as between one man and one woman.

The Church that confesses God, the Father, God, the Son, and God, the Holy Spirit has preached marriage between one man and one woman for close to 4000 years. It is only in modern times that visible churches have even dared to preach something different. When you go to Scripture where God speaks, it is clear that marriage was instituted between one man and one woman.

A. We have that word of God in Genesis, chapter 2 and a Genesis definition which is affirmed by our Savior, Jesus.

1. You heard the words in the reading this morning from Genesis 2. God brought Eve and gave her to Adam. In verse 24 it says, **“A man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife.”** There is no mention here or anywhere else of other people participating in the marriage. In fact the commandment concerning adultery suggests the opposite. We have Jesus’ words in the Gospel of Matthew, **“Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’ and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”** (19:4-6) Years later St. Paul in Ephesians 5:31 quotes Genesis 2:24 showing that the church was still holding to what Jesus had affirmed that marriage is between one man and one woman. To subscribe to any other kind of marriage is to go against the Lord God and his word.

2. At this point I would like to answer question, *“How long does the marriage last?”* St. Paul tells us in his letter to the Romans 7 that marriage is for as long as both are alive. When one person dies, God has naturally ended the marriage, and the other is free to marry if they wish. Paul wrote Romans inspired by God, so this is God’s word. Divorce also ends marriages. I will speak of that next week.

B. This leaves us with the question, *“How does God react when humans either mimic marriage or cohabit that is live together without being married?”*

1. The answer is anything that goes against God’s word is wrong and cannot have his blessing. So called “marriage” between two men or two women or more than two people (bigamy) is anti-scriptural. Couples who live together without a marriage license are breaking the law and this goes against what God has commanded in his word. Should people want to marry their pets or plants, they are going against God and his word.

Someone who knows a little Scripture might argue, but the governments are instituted by God and therefore have authority from him. That is true. However, when they go against God and against conscience, they are wrong. We must obey God at all times as we learned under the Fourth Commandment which was about God’s gift of authority.

2. What happens to those who insist living contrary to Scriptures? The Apostles Paul states in 1 Corinthians 6, **“9 Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men 10 nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”** All those who repent of their sins have forgiveness and life in Jesus. Those who refuse to repent will face God’s wrath as did the immoral cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Application: One of the dangers for you and me as good Christians is letting people around us show support for immoral relationships while we remain silent. Perhaps it’s a daughter or maybe a grand-son who is visiting and they tell you they like a certain entertainer. You know just enough to comment, *“Isn’t that person a homosexual?”* or *“Aren’t they living with someone after several divorces?”* The relative who is the apple of your eye responds, *“What’s wrong with their choices if it makes them happy?”* And you respond with dead silence. You could say, *“God says in the Bible their choices are wrong and their choices are a path to unhappiness and eternal damnation.”* But you don’t because you don’t want the apple of your eye to hate you or think you’re an old fool.

That silence is a sin. Any defense of alternate life styles is a sin. Not only does God forgive us if we ever break the Sixth Commandment. But when we fail to speak the truth in love, the blood of Jesus shed on the cross **“purifies us from all sin.”** Dear Brother and Sister, God forgives you. Even though it may seem difficult, we can speak up for God’s definition of marriage. It isn’t coming from us, or the church or primitive white males in the 1st Century. This definition of one man and one woman comes from God who is our Creator and our Savior will be giving eternal life or eternal death to every human. Speak up because you care. Speak up for life and for God’s blessings.

2. He blesses marriage between one man and one woman.

The fact that the Lord God blesses marriage is clear from the Gospel reading of the Wedding of Cana. Jesus’ presence and actions say that. We also see that God blesses Christian marriage when we have our prayers for

Wedding Anniversaries 25, 30 and more years. What exactly are the blessings of marriage?

A. The church for hundreds of years has spoken of three main blessings. I will also try to point to a few others. I could never list all the blessings.

1. Martin Luther in his Small Catechism speaks of married couples enjoying: companionship, intimacy or sex and children. God does not bless all couples the same. Some couples aren't able to have children and may have to adopt children. Some couples end up with more children than they prayed for.

Health can affect intimacy and some careers may limit companionship. I would ask that you pray for marriages in general and for specific marriage in your family or network of friends and neighbors. If a couple is disappointed with marriage blessings or experiencing troubles, counseling with a pastor is a good first step. Professional counselors may be used for difficulties that cannot be resolved.

2. Other blessings that are not treated in the Catechism might be that when you get married your network of family and friends grows. Another blessing is that the husband or wife may have knowledge or experience in travel, cooking, raising kids that they can share. When a couple shares and experiences new things together their lives are rich for it. Martin Luther comments that children ought to be taught about the blessings of marriage and to look forward to marriage.

B. Another blessing that couples have is the blessing of roles in marriage. God is not a god of confusion, but of order. He doesn't want couples trying to guess the part they play so he assigns roles. The Apostle Paul gives clear examples of what these roles are to be like in Ephesians 5.

1. The wife is to be like the church that submits to Christ. The believer loves her Savior and eagerly follow his lead. So a wife is to recognize that God has given responsibility to the husband for their marriage. She loves him and helps him to carry out his role.

2. The husband is to be like Christ. He is responsible. It means he is like Christ who loved his bride and sacrificed for her, not just on Good Friday, but his whole life. He gave his all for the one he loved, so a husband is to love his wife and give his all for her.

When husband and wife serve in their roles and help each other there are blessings upon blessings.

C. What about those who are single? How does marriage affect them?

1. Being single or widowed is also a blessed estate. Not every adult has the gift to be single and chaste, so St. Paul says it is better to get married. Those who have the gift of being single can dedicate their lives to serving others without the responsibilities of marriage. In the Bible we have the examples of the prophetess Anna who lived and served in the Temple after being widowed. (Luke 2) St. Paul appears to have been single and “married” to his ministry.

2. Marriage affects single people, because most of us are born into marriages. We are affected by our parent’s marriages and those of our brothers and sisters and nephews and nieces. God wants everyone to pray for godly marriages and a stable society. We can encourage those who are married.

Conclusion: Several couples in our church recently celebrated 60 plus years of marriage. What is the secret to a long and blessed marriage? Everyone getting married would like to know. Believers in the Lord God will tell you that they look to the Author of marriage.

By faith we understand God gave us marriage between one man and one woman. They seek to live by his rules and guidance. As we live by faith, he blesses his institution. So you end up with marriages lasting not just 25 or 30 years, but 50 and 60 years.

Go to God’s word. Understand his gift. Understand God’s saving grace in Jesus. Live a life of marital love with your spouse. All of us should pray and support those marriage in our lives. Amen.