

THE PRACTICE OF TRUTH IN THE SEXUAL LIFE

WHEN IS ADULTERY OR FORNICATION COMMITTED?

I never intended to write this tract. It came upon me as a result of my daily meditation, heart-search and communion with God. That day, the 16th of November, 1989 I was meditating from Luke 18:20 where the Lord said to the Jewish ruler, "You know the commandments: Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour your father and mother." I decided to spend one meditation period of two hours in examining my heart and life before the Lord on each of the commandments that was given by the Lord in the above passage. I will just write out what I wrote in my meditation book that day as adultery. I believe most of it will apply to fornication.

I commit adultery if I do any of the following:

1. I go to bed with any woman apart from my wife
2. I caress any woman to cause her to attain sexual fulfilment.
3. I allow any woman to caress me to make me attain sexual fulfilment.
4. I masturbate myself.
5. I kiss a woman secretly, be it on the hand, jaw or lips.
6. I embrace a woman secretly.
7. I squeeze a woman's hand secretly.
8. I caress any part of a woman's body: hand, face, back, and so on, with desire, even if this is done in the public.
9. I caress any part of a woman's body without desire, but in a way that I would not want anyone apart from her to know about it.
10. I write a love letter to a woman that I would want kept secret, i.e. between her and me.
11. I call a woman a "Pet-name" that I would not want anyone to know exists, showing the fact that the intimacy is cloudy.
12. I cherish a letter written by some woman that I would not want anyone to read or know about.
13. I pay a visit to a woman which I would rather no one knows about.
14. I receive a visit from a woman which I would rather not have people know about.
15. I read an immoral story.
16. I look at an immoral film.
17. I gaze at the picture of a naked woman or one who has some parts of her body exposed.
18. I deliberately look at a woman's "private part" in a moment of her being off-guard or when she dresses with the goal of exposing herself.
19. I think an immoral thought about any woman.
20. I imagine myself having any form of sexual relationship with any woman.
21. I speak an immoral or suggestive word to others.
22. I sing an immoral song.
23. I listen to an immoral song with some delight.
24. I go out of my way to seek the company of women rather than that of men, in carrying out spiritual projects, where the motive is not the greater availability of the women, but just because of the love of their company.
26. I prefer to witness, lead to the Lord, build up and establish in Christ, women rather than men.

THE PRACTICE OF TRUTH IN THE SEXUAL LIFE

It is probable that there is more falsehood among believers in the sexual life than in any other domain. This is so particularly because every sexual sin is a manifestation of falsehood.

Take fornication, for example. Fornication is the act of two unmarried people pretending that they are married, whereas they are not married to each other. Then adultery is the falsehood of two married people pretending that they are not married to their actual partners but that they are married to each other. Masturbation is the falsehood of a person who is not having a sexual relationship, pretending that he is having one and, thereby, trying to have the pleasure that he ought to have in sexual union without the sexual union. Petting is the sin of trying to enjoy the fruit of sexual union without actual union. It is the self-deception of saying, "I will have all the pleasure that I can have but I will not go the whole way. I will not have committed adultery or fornication. I will not be running the risk of any pregnancy or any venereal disease." Of course, this is self-deception because there can be no petting without lust or immorality in thought. The Lord Jesus says, "But I say to you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matthew 5:28).

What of lustful thoughts? This is the self-deception of experiencing in the mind that which should be entered into in the body. It is adultery or fornication in the soul, for the mind is a part of the soul. Such thoughts tarnish the entire being and make the person guilty before God. They break his fellowship with God, and destroy his capacity for spiritual receptibility as well as for spiritual labour. The Bible warns, "Do not desire her beauty in your heart" (Proverbs 6:25). To desire the beauty of anyone who is not your wife is sin.

What of sexual emotional attachment to someone who is not your husband or wife? Are you attached to the person because the person's physical appearance pleases you? You may be doing the Lord's work together, but are you doing it solely because of the Lord or is

it partly because of the pleasure you find in each other? There may be no sexual acts. There may be no kissing or caressing, but are you not emotionally wrapped up with each other? Are you prepared to break the relationship at any moment that you find that it is getting out of hand?

It will be good to face the following questions squarely and examine your heart, so that you may not continue to deceive yourself.

01. Are you committing adultery or fornication in act with anyone? If you are, you can be sure that unless you repent you will go to hell. The Bible says, "But as for the cowardly.... fornicators... their lot shall be in the lake that burns with fire and sulphur which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8). You must stop the sin at once. You must stop the relationship completely. Do not deceive yourself that you can continue to be friends and not fall back into the same sin. If you are involved in the Lord's work together, it is best to stop working together. If you continue to work together, you are most likely going to commit the same sin again. There are very few people who have fallen into a sexual sin and yet met together where there was an opportunity for sex and did not go back like dogs to their vomit. It is better to allow the work of the Lord to suffer and you save your souls than to keep trying to serve Him and to perish on the last day. It is also true that your joint service for the Lord, while you are occasionally committing fornication, is an abomination to Him. Your service can neither bless Him nor advance His Kingdom. As for you, you will receive absolutely no reward for it. If you continue to sin, you will be in the lake of fire on that day. Will the Lord reward those who carried out Christian service and yet perished because of sin? Certainly not. There will be no rewards or crowns for those who will be in hell, regardless of how hard they laboured for the Lord before they fell into sin or how hard they worked for Him and suffered while living in sin, even if it was on very few occasions.

Someone may wonder if I am not being too harsh. To such a one, I say the Lord's own recommendation is, "If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and throw it away; it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell" (Matthew 5:29-30). The Lord recommended radical surgery for every sin of immorality. Only fools can act differently. Do not be such a fool. If you have once committed immorality with anyone, do not visit him alone. Do not write any love letters to him. Have no contacts with him. He is the instrument of your eternal destruction. He will cause you to perish. At any cost, save your soul.

02. Are you carrying out any kissing, caressing, petting with anyone? Stop it at once. All that is written above applies to you. Save your soul. You may start with kissing and end up in the act! Besides, lustful kissing is already adultery in the heart. You are a spiritual adulterer or fornicator and unless you stop it at once, you will perish. God is not mocked. "Whatever a man sows that will he also reap." You will reap the fruits of your impure passions and, how bitter and how eternal they will be on that day!

03. Are you masturbating? This is the sin of self-abuse. You may hide it from everyone else, but was God not seeing you while you were committing the sin? You will also perish if you do not stop it. Many masturbators tell me that they have tried in vain to stop their sin. The truth is that that is a false excuse to continue in sin. You can stop it, and you must stop it if you are to see the Kingdom of God on that day.

04. Are you carrying out a relationship with a person of the opposite sex of which you would be ashamed if the films taken of it were put on the screens? If you are, you must stop it. The cameras of God are busy all the time, and all your life will appear on the screen for all to see on that day, except that which was confessed and forsaken. Be prepared for that day. All the truth will come to light.

05. Are you carrying out a relationship with your partner in which when you are relating to her sexually you have to imagine that it is with another person that you are having the relationship in order to find fulfilment? If that is so, you are an abomination. This is the epitome

of falsehood. It is lying at its highest. To spend an entire life in adultery is to seal your damnation. Stop it at once. If you cannot find fulfilment while having a sexual relationship with your partner, it is better not to have any relationship at all and maintain your salvation than to have it, commit adultery in the course of it and become a sure candidate for the lake of fire.

06. Do you commit fornication or adultery with anyone in your thoughts? The person or the persons may be far away, but your mind has become a brothel of unceasing sexual sin. You may commit it with one person or with many people. The number does not matter. The only thing that matters is that you are a hypocrite. You are practising sin in your soul, even though you may not be carrying it out in your body. The Bible says that the soul that sins will perish. You will perish unless you repent at once and stop every such sin once and for all. It must be a radical and harsh stop, for there is no tender way to stop sin. Can a man part with a viper amicably? Certainly not. Each seeks the life of the other. Either one or the other must die.

07. Have you written a letter or letters to someone whose contents you will not want people to read? If that is so, your letters are immoral. They are deceitful. There is no truth in them. Stop writing such letters. Do you have a name by which you call someone that you feel no one should ever know because of the intimacy involved? That, too, is falsehood. Stop it.

08. Do you embrace anyone much longer in private than you would do in public? That, too, is a lie. Stop it.

09. Do you sit closer to someone of the opposite sex, who is not your wife, in private than you would in the presence of others? That, too, is a lie. Stop it.

10. Do you give gifts to someone of the opposite sex that you would not want your husband, wife, friend or spiritual leader to know about? If that is the case, all such gifts are sinful. God is not part of them, for He can never be part of anything that is hidden.

11. Do you pay visits to someone whose frequency you would like to hide? That is indicative of sin, for all that is of truth comes to the light.

12. Do you have to create an additional reason for visiting someone of the opposite sex than the true reason? If that is the case, there is something wrong with the relationship. It should be stopped.

13. Do you give the impression to someone of the opposite sex that he or she is close to you and loved by you, whereas you are only enduring the person's presence? This is a lie. The truth should be spoken.

14. Do you give the impression to someone of the opposite sex that he or she is your preference, whereas in your heart you prefer someone else? That is lying. Tell the truth to all. The Lord never hid the fact that He loved John in a way that He did not love the other disciples. He did not hide the fact that John was special to Him. The Lord did not hide from Martha the fact that Mary had chosen the better portion and that it could not be taken away from her. The politics of trying to let everyone think that he or she is the preferred one is the product of a distorted heart. It must be stopped and restitution carried out.

15. Do you give gifts to a member of the opposite sex with the intention to draw her to yourself for marriage while pretending that you are just being kind to her as a sister in the Lord? This is falsehood.

16. Are you trying to get closer to a member of the opposite sex in order to better investigate the possibility of her becoming your wife and making an impact on her, while pretending that you are discipling her or just teaching her to drive or do something new? This, too, is falsehood. It should be repented of, confessed and forsaken.

17. Is there anything about your past life that you have hidden from your partner so that she is living in ignorance of who you are and what you have done?

18. Did you pretend to be a virgin on your wedding day when in fact you were not? This, too, must be repented of, confessed and restitution carried out.

If a person is not practising falsehood in any area of his relationship with the opposite sex, then he has come a long way in the School of Truth. That is what God expects of all who name the name of His Holy and Exalted Son. That is what He expects of you. Unless you are true in these areas and unless you bring truth into all these areas of your sexual life, you have decided to continue in falsehood and what then can the Judge do except to pass the sentence?

Professor Zacharias Tane Fomum

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