

### Sexual immorality

Sex is God's special gift to humankind, not only for procreation but also for enhancing the spiritual and physical intimacy of a married couple. That is why Jesus said, "What God has joined together, let man not separate....Anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman, commits adultery." (Matt. 19:6&9). In other words, adultery breaks the spiritual bond of a couple. Thus Jesus regarded it as the only reason for divorce. A man may be registered as a legal husband to a woman but they become one only after they have consummation. This shows that sexual intimacy is the key to joining a man and a woman. On the contrary, if one party commits adultery, the marriage and family system of the person breaks down spiritually and physically. The party who breaks it has to be accountable to God, "for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral." (Heb.13:4)

If a person divorces his/her spouse legally but neither one of them has sexual relation with another person, the marriage cannot be regarded as broken. The spiritual bond between the divorced couple still exists. They should seek help for reconciliation. If any one of them gets married to another person or has sexual relation with another person, then he/she has committed adultery. The spiritual bond of the marriage is then broken.

In view of this, adultery truly is sinning against the person's own body as it hurts his/her spouse who is one flesh with him/her. For the Scripture says, "All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body." (1Cor.6:18). Our body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, and it is bought at a price. Moreover, once a man and a woman are joined in their marriage, they become one body and both are members of the body of Christ. Breaking a marriage therefore is also hurting the body of Christ. Then what should those who have already sinned against their own bodies and hurt the body of Christ do? The best option is for them to repent and sin no more before the judgment day of the Lord.

The Scripture says, "Since there is so much sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman should have her own husband." (1Cor.7:2) According to the Professor of Sociology in University of Chicago, Dr Edward Lauman's research, 18% of married women and 24% of married men in the United States today have extramarital affairs. Dr. Helen Fisher, an American anthropologist and human behavior researcher discovered

that among those who have committed adultery, 34% women and 56% men claimed that they have normal marriages. That is to say, many marriages today have been broken spiritually without the person's knowledge. To remedy such marriages, the guilty parties have to renounce their relationship with the other persons, then confess to their spouses and seek forgiveness for an appropriate reconciliation. Otherwise, their brokenness may hinder their prayers and they will not be able to be the joint heir of the grace of life even though they have not been divorced.

However, prevention is better than cure. It is imperative for the married couples to enrich their marital bond through consistent communication with each other and to seek to resolve their conflicts constructively. The process that leads to infidelity always begins innocently enough with the sharing of one's stress or unresolved spousal conflicts with colleagues or friends who are of the opposite sex. The attentive ears of the party concerned may be a draw for them to become soul mates and this may ultimately land the parties concerned in adulterous acts.

Therefore, it is of great advantage for couples to join a covenant family group which meets regularly as a means of helping one another resolve their conflicts as well as to enhance spousal communications. Couples will certainly have better sexual intimacy once they are able to communicate well with each other and resolve their conflicts effectively.

Forming covenant family groups for our course participants is our main goal for all the courses conducted by Oasis Family Life Enrichment Center. In fact it is a buffer for the influence of sexual immorality.



**We wish all couples may fulfil their vows and flourish in love hand in hand and heart to heart throughout their marital journey.**