

Prostitution and immorality

Prostitution is the practice of engaging in sexual activity, usually with individuals other than a spouse or friend, in exchange for immediate payment in money or other valuables. Prostitutes may be of either sex and may engage in either heterosexual or homosexual activity, but most cases of prostitution has been by females with males as clients.

Prostitution is a very old and considered a universal phenomenon; also universal is the condemnation of the prostitute but relative indifference toward the client. Prostitutes are often set apart in some way. In ancient Rome they were required to wear distinctive dress; under Hebrew law only foreign women could be prostitutes; in prewar Japan they were required to live in special sections of the city. Prostitution is nevertheless tolerated in most U.S. and European cities, where police activity focuses instead on associated crimes.

Prostitutes are very often poor and lack skills to support themselves. In many societies, prostitution has been largely responsible for the spread of sexually transmitted diseases and the orphaning of hundreds of thousands of children. Economic condition is not the root cause of prostitution but the human old sinful nature carnal desires for fleshly pleasure. Prostitution has twin sisters: adultery and fornication.

Adultery is conjugal infidelity. An adulterer was a man who had illicit intercourse with a married or a betrothed woman, and such a woman was an adulterous. Intercourse between a married man and an unmarried woman was fornication. Adultery was regarded as a great social wrong, as well as a sin.

Adultery in every form of it was sternly condemned by the Mosaic Law (Lev. 21:9; 19:29; Deut. 22:20, 21, 23-29; 23:18; Ex. 22:16). But this word is more frequently used symbolically than in its ordinary sense. It frequently means a forsaking of God or a following after idols (Isa. 1:2; Jer. 2:20; Ezek. 16; Hos. 1:2; 2:1-5; Jer. 3:8, 9). In Scripture "adultery" denotes any voluntary cohabitation of a married person with anyone other than his or her lawful spouse.

But at times the Bible designates this sin also by *porneia*, "fornication" (I Cor. 5:1), though this properly designates the offense of voluntary cohabitation between an unmarried person and one of the opposite sex. Where the two kinds of wrong-doing are to be distinguished, Scripture designates them by different terms: *pranoi*, "fornicators," and *moichoi*, "adulterers" (I Cor. 6:9).

Adultery is forbidden in the Scriptures especially in the interest of the sanctity of the home and family (Exod. 20:14; Deut. 5:18). More specifically the sin is described in Lev. 18:20: "Thou shalt not lie carnally with thy neighbor's wife to defile thyself with her." The wrong is regarded as so great that its penalty was death (Lev. 20:10; John 8:5) by stoning (Ezek. 16:40; 23:43-47). In Deut. 22:23-24 an adulterous young woman betrothed to a man should be stoned together with her guilty partner.

Since the death penalty could be inflicted only upon a person "taken in adultery, in the very act" (John 8:4), the woman suspected by her husband of having committed adultery had to undergo an ordeal to establish her innocence or be made manifest as a sinner by a divine judgment (Num. 5:11-31). The Mosaic Law in this aspect is no longer applicable to us.

David became guilty of adultery and, as a result of this sin, of murder (2 Samuel 11:2-5), of which, however, he earnestly repented (Psalm 51). Adultery filled the land especially through the influence of profane prophets and priests (Jer. 23:10-14; 29:23). Cultic religions are the advocate and protector of prostitution.

While the penal laws in the Scriptures consider only the actual transgression of the commandment of chastity, the moral law condemns also adulterous practices committed with the eye and the heart (Job 31:1, 7). Emphasis on this kind of transgression was urged especially by Christ in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:28), where he pronounced the person guilty of adultery who maliciously looked upon a woman have already committed adultery with her.

Equally severe was our Lord's rebuke of the offensive hypocrites who condemned adultery while they themselves were guilty of moral corruption (John 8:7).

However, while he reproved the wicked accusers he did not condone the sin of the adulteress when he dismissed her with the command to go and sin no more (John 8:11). His words must be regarded rather as his solemn forgiveness of a sinner who was willing to accept His free gift of salvation.

When our Lord testified against the lax divorce practices of the Jews who followed the loose interpretation of Deut. 24:1-3 advocated by the traditional Jews he excepted adultery as the only cause justifying divorce (Matt. 5:32; 19:9). As a prevailing carnal passion of perverted mankind, adultery will always be a continuing chronicle.

Paul does not contradict Christ, who in Matt. 5:32; 19:9 permits the putting away of the wife because of fornication, when in his directions on marriage in 1 Cor. 7:10-15 he commands the faithful Christian spouse to be at peace in case the unbelieving husband or wife should break the marriage union by malicious desertion.

He forbids Christians to break the marriage union, and that as a word of the Lord, the reference being very clearly to Matt. 5:32; 19:9, with Christ's express statement "except it be for fornication" clearly understood.

Paul addresses to Christians joined in mixed marriages to unbelievers a new provision, which Christ had not considered when addressing Jews; namely, that if the unbelieving spouse desires to break the marriage bond by deserting the Christian, the latter is not bound, but is not free to marry. The phrase the brother or the sister is not under the bondage does not mean they can marry bypassing the law of the land.

Fornication denotes voluntary sexual communion between an unmarried person and one of the opposite sex. In this sense the fornicators (*pornoi*) are distinguished from the adulterers (*moichoi*), as in 1 Cor. 6:9. In a wider sense *porneia* signifies unlawful cohabitation of either sex with a married person. In this meaning it is used interchangeably with *moicheia*, as in Matthew 5:32, where Christ says that anyone who divorces his wife except for *porneia* causes her to become the object of adultery (*moicheuthenai*) since he who marries her commits adultery (*moichatai*).

The same use of porneia in the sense of adultery (moichatai) is found in Matthew 19:9. While all other sins must be overcome by spiritual crucifixion of the flesh (Gal. 5:24), the sin of immorality (porneia) is one from which the Christian must flee in order to keep pure (1 Cor. 6:18).

Believers must avoid any situations that are favorable to sexual immorality. Since God's close relation to his people is regarded as a marriage bond (Eph. 5:23-27), all forms of apostasy are designated in Scripture as adultery, and all the cults were usually connected with immorality.

The Lord Jesus Christ died and paid for the all sins of the entire human race, so that all might have the access to heaven through Him. No unrighteous person will inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9-11) because at the very moment an individual believed and received the free gift of salvation, he is no longer a sinner in the sight of God through the merits of Christ.

As a child of God, he nourishes his soul with Bible doctrine which also renewed his thinking pattern. Prostitution is a lucrative business for many especially those in power and authority. No government in the world succeeded in eradicating prostitution. Both the rich and poor nations are not free from growing prostitution because it is not a moral, social or political problem. It is a spiritual problem that only God has the solutions.

Economic consideration is not acceptable reason for the believers to engage in any form of prostitution or to be sexually involved with a married person. Marrying an unbeliever for financial security is a sin; any sexual relationship outside marriage is a sin. Prostitution is a snare where many are hooked by empty promises in exchange for sexual activity. Sexual sins are addictions which are very difficult to treat apart from Bible doctrine and will continue to linger, harass and persist if the believer fails to crucify his old sinful nature daily.

The union of Adam and Eve in the Garden teaches the principle of marriage, not the principle of Right Man/Right Woman. Marriage is designed by God to legitimize sexual relationship between marriage partners during the Angelic Conflict. Family is designed by God as the unit within which a child learns obedience to authority in preparation for obedience to God during the Angelic Conflict.

Proverbs 23:27-28 says, "For a prostitute is a deep pit and a wayward wife is a narrow well. Like a bandit she lies in wait, and multiplies the unfaithful among men." God forbids involvement with prostitutes because He knows such involvement is detrimental to both men and women (Prov. 5:3-5).

Prostitution not only destroys marriages, families, and lives, but it destroys the spirit and soul in a way that leads to physical and spiritual death. God's desire is that we stay pure and use our bodies as tools for His use and glory (Romans 6:13). First Corinthians 6:13 says, "The body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.

Prostitutes are not beyond God's scope of forgiveness. The Bible records His use of a prostitute named Rahab to further the fulfillment of His plan. As a result of her obedience, she and her family were rewarded and blessed (Joshua 2:1; 6:17-25). In the New Testament, a woman who had been known for being a sexual sinner but because of her faith, Christ had forgiven all her sins, and she was received into His kingdom (Luke 7:36-50).

When speaking to those who refused to believe the truth about Himself, Jesus Christ said, "I tell you the truth, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did (Mat. 21:31-32).

Just like anyone else, prostitutes have the opportunity to receive salvation and eternal life from God, to be cleansed of all their unrighteousness and be given a brand new life! All they must do is to receive the free gift of salvation in Christ alone by grace alone. Turning away from their sinful lifestyle and turn to the living God, whose grace and mercy are boundless to change anyone (2 Cor. 5:17).



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