

The Sixth Commandment

Two preliminaries: counter-cultural and uncomfortable

- Two preliminary comments to make before start sermon. 1) Going to say things so counter-cultural that most people in mainstream America would disagree. If interviewed on Today Show, Matt Lauer, re this sermon, so much backlash, so many angry respondents, that I would be considered hateful, intolerant, old-fashioned crusader for a lost cause. Counter-cultural.
- 2) Going to say things might make you feel uncomfortable, because in sermon on sexual sin (or in Cat class on 6th Com) pastor usually speaks with very mild, indirect expressions; tries not to be too brash with words because it makes people uncomfortable to hear about sex from pulpit. I understand. But when I in 8th grade, my Cat pastor was older gentlemen (retired next year); I remember when he taught 6th Com, he worded things so delicately that I didn't even know what talking about. Wasn't until high school that realized: "Whoa! Didn't know people did that; that was out there. Maybe that's what Pastor was talking about." I grew up; confronted with sexual sin of world. So while I don't fault him for speaking gently about sensitive subjects, and while I have no intention of being tactless, I do believe this com, of 10, is most misunderstood by people and most targeted by Satan; I believe that most people will be tempted most severely to break this com more than the other 9. And I am determined to teach this com clearly; just hope that clarity doesn't cause too much discomfort.

Keeping the family unit safe

- 6th: vs. 14. What normally think of? Married person cheating on spouse. High-powered executive going on business trip with young secretary, developing fling with her, while wife is back home. Desperate housewife whose heart longs for something more than domestic, so latches onto exciting new man and leaves family behind. We call that cheating; what think of when hear adultery. Obviously, very common form of adultery.
- But in 6th, as in all others, God wants to keep something safe. 2nd: name; 5th: human life. Here in 6th, family unit: sacred rel between husb/wife and children/parents. God wants to keep family unit safe! Precious to him. Wrote blueprints for family unit, marriage, parenthood. Long before fall into sin! Understand what means? God invented sex; formed male & female bodies for that purpose; hardwired humans to be sexual creatures. His intention: man & woman fall in love; get married; have sex; have children (in that order!); raise family; not divorce; be committed. That was plan for Eden, God's design for family unit: one man, one woman, married, with children, in family. That stability, structure, safety – that was his design. And in this 6th, God wants to keep this beautiful picture of family unit safe.
- Today, family unit not safe, not just because of LGBT agenda, Supr Ct ruling legalizing gay marriage, sexual rev of 60s, or modern libertine culture. Reason not safe because through A&E's sin, passed to us, Satan has corrupted, perverted our very nature. So not just outside world at fault; Satan has set up fortress in our hearts. From that fortress, unleashes armies of sexual temptation, every day, in variety of ways, to try to get us to dishonor family unit, break 6th.

Dishonoring the marriage bed

- What are some those ways? Let's use Heb 13:4 (service folder) as starting ground – **“Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.”** “Marriage bed,” tactful phrase, God-pleasing sexuality between husb/wife. First & foremost, marriage bed dishonored when we jump into it with someone not married to. Let be known: sex with anyone other than spouse is always sinful, w/o exception. No such thing as sexual rel outside marriage that's okay. In add, I want to talk 4 other areas, 4 main assaults against family unit, that Satan unleashes with his armies of sexual temptation, that have become so common today, that we have to speak against them.
- Marriage bed dishonored, 6th broken, 1) When we make use of sexually graphic media: look at Playboy magazines, go to strip club, watch pornographic videos, look at pornographic pictures on internet – that dishonors marriage bed. Recent stats, over 50% men, over 30% women regularly visit pornographic websites. That means in this sermon I'm probably talking to people who struggle with this right now! Psychologists will tell you that those images sear themselves onto brain like cattle brand, so that can almost never fully wash them out of mind. Porn stats are staggering; becoming more and more common among men, women, elderly adults, even children as young as grade schoolers. Society calls it “adult entertainment industry” – just another form of entertainment. Christians, be on guard! Not easy topic to talk about, but more common than you'd like to admit. Porn destroys marriages, shames God's design for sexuality, and dishonors marriage bed.

- 2) When we as couples move in together, have sex together, before married. Cohabitation – shackin’ up. So common, so many bfs/gfs move in together and play married, that many Christians today don’t even know it’s sinful. Almost unheard of to save virginity for marriage; our society mocks notion, because if love one another, why wouldn’t you make love with one another. What’s so dangerous about shackin’ up is that not only having sex before married (always wrong), but consciously making decision to do it. Not like just moment of passion; it’s like looking God in face and saying, “God, we’re going to do this, like it or not.” That attitude is first step toward losing faith! Better believe I hit this hard in Cat class with 8th graders because having sex before married, moving in with bf/gf always dishonors marriage bed, breaks 6th.
- 3) When we as married couples divorce. God calls divorce sin: violent ripping apart of what God has joined together. Should say: sometimes guilt of divorce falls on one, spouse who broke marriage bond by having affair or making marriage miserable. In those circumst, innocent spouse probably should seek divorce; not sin. But sometimes guilt of divorce falls on both spouses, when both give up all efforts to salvage marriage. Divorce so dangerous because shatters structure, stability of family unit. If you’ve lived through pain of divorce, you more than anyone can understand why God wants to protect that sacred rel of love between husband/wife.
- 4) (Hot button issue in last few weeks), when homosexuality is embraced or endorsed. “Hate gays?” phone call. We don’t hate homosexual people. But no matter what Supr Ct, modern media, popular opinion says – God says homosexuality sin, no matter what. May be Christian people who struggle with it, just like alcoholism – they battle those temptations. But homosexuality is aberration from God’s design for family unit; when embraced or endorsed, marriage bed dishonored, 6th broken.
- Porn, skackin’ up, divorce, homosexuality. Haven’t had time to talk about wearing immodest clothing that arouses lust; telling filthy jokes about sex. Don’t even want to talk about rape, molestation. But all these are ways Satan has sabotaged sexuality, attacked family unit and marriage bed, which God wants to protect in 6th, **vs. 14 and Heb 13:4a**. And even if you’ve never had sex outside marriage, looked at porn, caused divorce, Jesus still pierces all our hearts when says, **“I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Mt 5:28)**. Not just for guys; girls, too. Last week, hatred, moral equiv to murder. Today, Jesus: lust, moral equiv to adultery. We all guilty of lust! You know that, because you know how mortified you’d be if wildest fantasies, carnal cravings of darkest heart would be revealed to public. Crush you if people knew your lustful thoughts. But know what: God does know them. He knows what you really think about, whom you think about, what you do in secret. He knows it all.

Our answer: Christ loved and cleansed the Church

- When faced with that kind of crushing indictment, that God knows every sexual sin we commit even in secret, where turn? Only one place: Savior Jesus Christ. Eph 5 says it best (bottom p. 6): **“Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word” (vs. 25-26)**. Has this sermon made you feel unholy? Has me! Talked about sins you don’t like talking about? Wasn’t easy to write. But here’s our answer: **“Christ loved the church”** (you); loved so much that he **“gave himself up for [you].”** He laid down life on cross, shed blood, for you, to make you holy (opposite of sexually dirty). And cleansed you **“by the washing with water through the word.”** Ref to baptism. Maybe never thought of bap this way, but in bap, God took all filthy lust, adultery, every sexual sin you’d ever commit, scrubbed you down and washed you in water. Made you clean; did this for church, **“to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless” (vs. 27)**. Through Jesus’ death on cross and drowning of sinful nature in baptism, God sees you as holy, blameless. Means: God forgives you, of everything, even premarital sex & porn, fantasies & lust, and everything else unholy you’ve ever done or thought. Washed away in baptism and blood of Christ, shed on cross. Now Jesus dresses us in beautiful white robe – no stain, wrinkle, blemish – wedding clothes. Put these wed clothes on us because he wants to marry us. Jesus loves us so much even calls us bride, wants to spend eternity with us in heaven. **Vs. 25a...“holy.”**

Let’s honor the marriage bed!

- Today, family unit, marriage bed under attack; always have been, ever since A&E ate fruit in garden, messed up their marriage. But if our Savior has washed us clean, dressed us in white robes of purity, made us his bride, himself our husband, let’s be faithful to him. Let’s be faithful bride by obeying 6th, leading (Luther) pure, decent life, words, actions. Never be perfect at it; lust will always be lurking nearby. But if Christ has washed us clean (has, died to!), then let’s try to stay clean. Let’s not roll around in filthy mud-hole of adultery. Let’s **“honor God with [our] bodies” (1 Cor 6:20)**; let’s honor marriage bed and family unit, loves so dearly, wants to protect in 6th.

Exodus 20:14 (NIV)

“You shall not commit adultery.”