Command 7: "You shall not commit adultery" (Exod. 20:14)

- I. Marriage, sexuality, adultery, pornography
 - E. Adultery
 - 1. Why is adultery wrong?
 - a. God says so: Exodus 20:14 "You shall not commit adultery."
 - b. It wrongly pictures unfaithfulness in the relationship between God and his people
 - (1) Marriage is a picture of the relationship between Christ and the church: Eph. 5:31-32
 - (2) Therefore, adultery pictures <u>Christ</u> being unfaithful to his people, abandoning them, not keeping his covenant with them (see also Malachi 2:14: adultery is being unfaithful to a covenant promise)
 - (3) Or it pictures the church worshiping other gods, being unfaithful to Christ
 - c. It wrongly intrudes another person into the "one flesh" (Gen. 2:24; Eph. 5:31) relationship of marriage
 - d. It destroys trust within a marriage (because of most serious violation of marriage promise)
 - e. It often leads to <u>children</u> being born without two parents to raise them (or else to abortion to end an unwanted pregnancy)
 - f. It frequently <u>destroys</u> a person's life. see warnings:
 - Prov. 5:3-7: For the lips of a forbidden woman drip honey, and her speech is smoother than oil, ⁴ but in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. ⁵ Her feet go down to death; her steps follow the path to Sheol; ⁶ she does not ponder the path of life; her ways wander, and she does not know it. ⁷ And now, O sons, listen to me, and do not depart from the words of my mouth. ⁸ Keep your way far from her, and do not go near the door of her house, ⁹ lest you give your honor to others and your years to the merciless, ¹⁰ lest strangers take their fill of your strength, and your labors go to the house of a foreigner, ¹¹ and at the end of your life you groan, when your flesh and body are consumed, ¹² and you say, "How I hated discipline, and my heart despised reproof! ¹³ I did not listen to the voice of my teachers or incline my ear to my instructors. ¹⁴ I am at the brink of utter ruin in the assembled congregation."
 - Prov. 6:27-29, 32-33: Can a man <u>carry fire</u> next to his chest and his clothes not be burned? ²⁸ Or can one walk on hot coals and his feet not be scorched? ²⁹ <u>So is he who goes in to his neighbor's wife</u>; none who touches her will go unpunished ³² He who commits adultery lacks sense; he who does it <u>destroys himself</u>. ³³ He will get wounds and dishonor, and his disgrace will not be wiped away.
 - Proverbs 7:21-23 With much <u>seductive speech</u> she persuades him; with her smooth talk she compels him. ²² All at once he follows her, as an ox goes to the slaughter, or as a stag is caught fast ²³ till an arrow pierces its liver; as a bird rushes into a snare; he does not know that <u>it will cost him his life</u>.
 - → parents should give warnings like this to their children!
 - g. How does adultery happen? (often begins with an "innocent" friendship):
 - Note recent tragic stories about David Petraeus (CIA), Mark Sanford (R-SC gov), John Edwards (D-NC), Mark Souder (R-IN), Eliot Spitzer (D-NY gov).

But sadly also many pastors!

- h. What are some helpful safeguards against adultery? ("boundaries"):
 - (1) Examples: not being alone w/person of opposite sex, keeping office door open, taking care in travel w/ co-workers. (company policies)
 - (2) <u>Avoid situations</u> that may lead to adultery, or that give <u>appearance</u> of inappropriate behavior Proverbs 5:8 Keep your way far from her, and <u>do not go near the door of her house</u>, Genesis 39:11 [Joseph and Potiphar's wife:] But one day, when he went into the house to do his work and none of the men of the house was there in the house, 12 she caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me." But he left his garment in her hand and <u>fled</u> and got out of the house. Ephesians 4:27 and give no opportunity to the devil.
 - (3) Be aware of danger signs
 - Proverbs 4:23 Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.
- 2. The Bible sets an even higher standard: A desire to commit adultery is also wrong in God's sight
 - a. Exodus 20:17: "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; <u>you shall not covet your neighbor's wife</u>, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's."
 - → this is the last of 10 Commandments; it shows that heart purity is required in all of them
 - → opposite of desiring adultery: deep love for wife/ husband, desire for positive sexual relationship within your marriage; also a sense of revulsion at thought of embracing someone else in same way
 - b. Prov. 6:25: "do not desire her beauty in your heart" (someone who is not your wife)

- c. Jesus understood the deeper intention of the seventh commandment
 - Matthew 5:27-28 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' ²⁸ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.
 - Matthew 5:27 Ἡκούσατε ὅτι ἐρρέθη· οὐ μοιχεύσεις. 28 ἐγὰ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι πᾶς ὁ βλέπων γυναῖκα πρὸς τὸ ἐπιθυμῆσαι αὐτὴν ἤδη ἐμοίχευσεν αὐτὴν ἐν τῆ καρδία αὐτοῦ.
 - "whoever looks at a woman with lustful intent" Greek πρὸς τὸ ἐπιθυμῆσαι αὐτὴν, "for the purpose of lusting for her" -- key question: why are you looking?
- d. Wrongful actions begin in the heart
 - Proverbs 4:23 Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.
 - Mark 7:21 For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery,
 - James 1:14-15 But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵ Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.
 - James 1:13-15 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. ¹⁴ But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵ Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

e. God looks on the heart:

- 1 Samuel 16:7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart."
- f. God's blessing on our lives and ministries depends on our maintaining purity of heart
 - 2 Timothy 2:21-22 Therefore, if anyone <u>cleanses himself from what is dishonorable</u>, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work. ²² So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.
 - 2 Chronicles 16:9 For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him. You have done foolishly in this, for from now on you will have wars."
 - Proverbs 5:20-21 Why should you be intoxicated, my son, with a forbidden woman and embrace the bosom of an adulteress? ²¹ For a man's ways are before the eyes of the LORD, and he ponders all his paths.

F. Pornography

- 1. In the Bible, at least one example of a relationship between pictures and sinful actions:
 - Ezekiel 23:14-17 (Oholibah) But she carried her whoring further. She saw men portrayed on the wall, the images of the Chaldeans portrayed in vermilion, ¹⁵ wearing belts on their waists, with flowing turbans on their heads, all of them having the appearance of officers, a likeness of Babylonians whose native land was Chaldea. ¹⁶ When she saw them, she lusted after them and sent messengers to them in Chaldea. ¹⁷ And the Babylonians came to her into the bed of love, and they defiled her with their whoring lust. And after she was defiled by them, she turned from them in disgust.
 - → the progression of sexual sin: Oholibah saw lusted sent for committed adultery
- 2. Purity of heart requires us to discipline our eyes, what we look at:
 - Job 31:1-2 "I have made a covenant with my eyes; how then could I gaze at a virgin? 2 What would be my portion from God above and my heritage from the Almighty on high?
- 3. Looking at pornography violates Jesus' command in Matt. 5:27-28
 - Matthew 5:27-28 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' ²⁸ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.
- Pornography attracts your affections and desires <u>outside your marriage</u> and away from your wife
 (or: your <u>husband</u> everything in the following section also applies to wives with respect to their husbands)
 (or: the person you will marry)
 - a. Robs her of affection that should be hers
 - b. Turns your heart from her, from desiring her
 - c. It <u>will hinder</u> your sexual relationship within marriage (memories that last for a long time; also, false expectations, often wrongful expectations, ideas)\
 - d. Your wife (or girlfriend) will <u>instinctively sense</u> some uncleanness, some impurity in your relationship even
 if she does not discover any facts. (Sometimes other women will sense this impurity too.)
 If she does discover factual proof, it will be devastating to her.

- 5. Pornography is a trap that draws people deeper and deeper and never satisfies (a deception of the enemy to destroy us): see Grudem, Politics, 240-241, ref. to expert testimony, Dr. Victor Cline
- 6. It leads to other sins
 - visiting prostitutes, ultimately rape and other violence against women (because it de-humanizes women, fails to respect them and treat them as persons made in God's image and valuable in his eyes)
- 7. Excuses, rationalizations are frequent
 - a. "It's only a picture"b. "I'm just curious"

 - c. "It's not really bad stuff" → ask Matt. 5:28 question: why are you looking?
- 8. The great damage of pornography today
 - a. A wife who finds out feels devastated by this: damage to the marriage that can take years to repair.
 - b. Perhaps as many as 2,000,000 in U.S. (nearly 1% of population of 300,000,000) addicted to internet pornography (Wash Times Weekly Edition, Nov. 10-16, 2003, p. 1) (vast majority are men, but some significant % are women) (another estimate: 6-8% of pop.: see Grudem, Politics, p. 241)
 - (1) great loss in their lives because of destructive effect on any sexual relationship in present or future within marriage
 - (2) this will lead many to other sins
 - (3) will lead to alienation from God, unwillingness to seek God because of secret guilt
 - (4) a time bomb ticking away in our nation, or a cancer eating away at its soul
 - 9. This is often an "addiction" that cannot be overcome without help from someone else.

Focus on the Family will refer a person to a local counselor: 719-531-3400

So will National Coalition for Protection of Children and Families 800-583-2964 (Mon-Fri 9-5) www.nationalcoalition.org (formerly N-CAP)

- → much excellent material on their web site
- 10. The legal situation in US: Much of the blame for allowing the flood of pornography in our nation belongs to the Supreme Court because of interpreting First Amendment freedom of speech/ press rights far too broadly. (1st Amendment was intended primarily to protect political speech, which pornography is not). But adequate legal means still exist if there is a willingness of prosecutors to prosecute (national/ state/local level)
 - Roth v. United States, 1957: "whether to the average person, applying contemporary community standards, the dominant theme of the material taken as a whole appeals to the prurient interest" "prurient" = "inordinately interested in matters of sex"

Miller v. California, 1973: work must lack "serious literary, artistic, political, and scientific value" Attorney General's Commission on Pornography (under Ed Meese): Alan Sears, director, gave useful definition: "sexually explicit material designed primarily for arousal"

Legal recommendation: → prosecutions should focus on visual images (photos, videos), not literature -- but prosecutions have not nearly been enough

1981-93 (Reagan w/ Ed Meese, Bush I): about 50 Federal prosecutions and convictions; major curtailing of US pornography industry

1993-2001 (Clinton): zero or almost zero Federal prosecutions of pornography: the pornography industry flourished

2001- 2009 (Bush): more Federal prosecutions, but the task is nearly overwhelming 2009-present (Obama): back to almost zero prosecutions

- 11. Things to do to protect your home and community
 - a. Internet filter on computer
 - b. Promote filters at local library (you can run for library board!)
 - c. Community pressure and aggressive prosecution can drive out stores that sell the worst pornography
 - d. Example of some successful boycotts (by AFA, others)
 - e. Other examples? (see NCPCF web site, above)

Audio recording of classes and these handouts are available on the class website: http:www.christianessentialssbc.com