

Keeping this in mind we are alarmed at how often the sexual sins were the cause of backsliding in Israel's history. We might think of the events in the Balaam episode when he "taught the children of Israel to sin" by bringing immorality to the camp. We might note the Ashtoreth worship of Canaan and the ways in which it led Israel into Divine disfavor. The very height of promiscuity occurred at the temple in the days of Ezekiel when the nation and its leaders allowed the profane worship of Tammuz on the premises. We do not like to dwell on such sordid schemes but they are typical of the ill that is brought among the people of God by the sexual sins. Consequently the judgment of God on these is most severe.

Of them all, adultery is especially disruptive of the family. God created man in his own image and likeness and woman was created for man as a special act of Providence. Together they were the "heirs of life" under the Adamic covenant and continue to be so in this age of grace. Their union in marriage and in the relationships sustained therein identify them as one flesh. Adultery breaks their unity through the intrusion of a foreign party to the harm of those in the original bond. It is the sort of damage that creates a nearly insuperable problem to health. Even where forgiveness and acceptance become the rule, adultery leaves such wounds as can hardly be comprehended. Not only are the principle members harmed, but all concerned parties as well. In short, adultery is disastrous in the home!

Needless to say, it is equally harmful to the whole testimony. What is harmful to the family on a local, personal setting is also harmful on the wider family setting. Seeing the great danger of this sin, God says: "Don't do it!"