

CAPITOL STUDIES

FEBRUARY 3, 2021 • WEEK 4



SEVEN DEADLY SINS AND CIVIL SERVANTS

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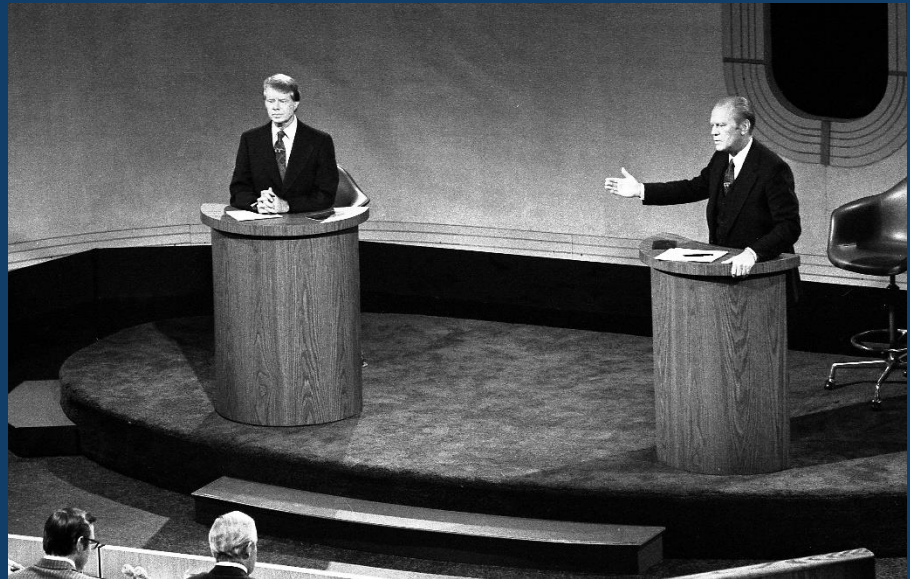


Verse of the Week

Hebrews 13:4

Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

The Sin of Lust (Part I)



I'VE LOOKED ON A LOT OF WOMEN WITH LUST. I've committed adultery in my heart many times. This is something God recognizes I will do, and I have done it, and God forgives me for it. – Governor James Earl Carter, presidential candidate, interview with *Playboy* magazine, November 1976.¹

Many would say that the 39th U.S. President had ventured into the land of TMI (too much information) in that pre-election interview. While even granting the interview with *Playboy* was a questionable decision that produced a very “awkward moment for America,” there is a refreshing sense of honesty and a rare display of humility in his public confession. Governor Carter said in the same interview, “...I'm human and I'm tempted. And Christ set some almost impossible standards for us. Christ said, ‘I tell you that anyone who looks on a woman with lust has in his heart already committed adultery.’”

Rev. Perry M. Gauthier, V. D. M.

(This study is adapted from an earlier series by Rev. Gauthier, 1960–2020.)



INTRODUCTION

People who dine on other sins (like gluttony, greediness, or gutless gossiping) often label those succumbing to sexual sin with big Scarlet L's (as lust mongers for life). However, sexual sin is *not* invincible; it is *not* worse than other sins,² and it is *not* “unforgivable.” If we had the Bible knowledge and honesty of the then Governor Jimmy Carter, we would admit that sins of bodily lust are common for two reasons. First, Creator God designed humans as sexual creatures (“I’m human”). Second, all sexual sin is in the mind, or at least it all begins there.

1. DEFINING THOUGHTS ABOUT LUST

A. How Is Lust Defined?

All sins are a “lust” for something (greed for gold, sloth for sleep; even drunkenness is a lust for liquor). We will limit our discussion of lust to what people most commonly mean when they talk about the sin of lust: a desire for sex—sinful sex. Sad stories of sexual sin saturate Scripture. It is so very common to us all. To borrow lyrics from the country crooner Johnny Lee, along with the people in the Bible, we are “*Lookin’ for love in all the wrong places, lookin’ for love in too many faces.*” In the first use of the word “lust” in the Bible, God uses a sexual analogy to describe the woes of His spiritual marriage to unfaithful peoples.

Ezekiel 23:2-12

There were two women, the daughters of one mother; ³and they played the harlot in Egypt... in their youth; there their breasts were pressed and there their virgin bosom was handled. ⁴Their names were Oholah the elder and Oholibah her sister. And they became Mine...

⁵Oholah played the harlot while she was Mine; and she lusted after her lovers, after her neighbors, ⁶who were clothed in purple, governors and officials... ⁷She bestowed her harlotries on them... all whom she lusted after... ⁸She did not forsake her harlotries from the time in Egypt; for in her youth men had lain with her, and they handled her virgin bosom and poured out their lust on her.

⁹Therefore, I gave her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the Assyrians, after whom she lusted. ¹⁰They uncovered her nakedness... ¹¹Now her sister Oholibah saw this, yet she was more corrupt in her lust than she, and her harlotries were more than the harlotries of her sister.³

God always desires a faithful, deeply pleasurable, intimate, and intensely personal relationship with His people. God created us *Imago Dei* (in His image). As such, our sexuality is an important avenue through which we glorify Him and reflect His image on earth.

B. Lust Is Not Simply a Desire for Sex

Sex is not bad. Sex is good. Sex is God’s idea. He invented sex. As such, within His will, sex is godly. While some pastors and priests may be shy



regarding sexuality, God is not, nor should we be. Sex is indeed God's idea. He is no heavenly prude, blushing behind the celestial clouds. In fact, the very first scripturally recorded command to the first humans as a couple (who were both "naked and unashamed" at the time) was basically to "have sex" (Genesis 1:28).

SEX IS GOD'S IDEA, SO A DESIRE TO HAVE SEX WITHIN HIS WILL *IS* GOOD AND IS *NOT* LUST.

Sex is one of the first things commanded in Scripture. We find another interesting incident of God commanding sex in the Song of Songs. The scene is the moonlit wedding night in the royal honeymoon suite of young King Solomon and his beautiful bride. Verse 1(a) shows Solomon expressing his manly joy in consummating their marriage. Verse 1(b) records God entering the bridal chamber to give two commands. Significantly, in the entire book of the Song of Songs, this is the *only place* where God is mentioned. Note what God commands:

Song of Songs 5:1

(a) I have come into my garden, my sister, my bride; I have gathered my myrrh along with my balsam. I have eaten my honeycomb and my honey; I have drunk my wine and my milk. (b) Eat, friends; Drink and imbibe deeply, O lovers.

C. "Too Much" Sex Is Not About Quantity

The sexual sin of lust is not the desire for sex, but the desire for *too much* sex. To be clear, to say that lust is a desire for *too much* sex is not referring to a quantity of sexual encounters. Lust wants sex "too much" as shown by its willingness to go outside of God's revealed will to get it. God's love for sex is not to be lost upon His creatures. He delights in it. So should we. In fact, to the chagrin of unbiblical Victorian prudes or those who prefer to have their sexual sin be *sins of omission*, a significant quantity of sex is vital within the marital relationship. It is so vital that (did you guess it?) God commands it.

God the Holy Spirit inspired the Apostle Paul to write and clarify that His solution for immorality is the institution of marriage. Paul writes to both the Corinthian "Chicks Gone Wild" and the lewd, lusty males in that church as well. The apostle further instructs them that frequent sex is a rule within marriage, and any abstention is a dangerous (and potentially devilish) exception to that rule.

1 Corinthians 7:2 & 5

Because of immoralities, each man is to have his own wife, and each woman is to have her own husband... ⁵Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

CONSTANT SEX IN MARRIAGE IS NOT *TOO MUCH* SEX.





God is for sex and pleased to enter the marital chamber to see constant, intimate, personally private, sexual marital relationships. To summarize lyrically, “*God delights in sex; this we know, for the Bible tells us so.*”

2. LEWD LUST VERSUS SCRIPTURAL SEX

Eleven days before Valentine’s Day, we see the Creator’s timeless perspective on sex: It is good. His Bible tells us so. Where is the Christian senator to turn to see which sexual sins are lustful and lewd? God tasks the legislator with the difficult duty of moralizing culture. He must codify morality the way God defines it. Woe⁴ to the legislator who “legislates lust.” Be like Omaha Judge Joseph W. Moylan⁵ who, in 1994, was reminded of President Lincoln’s words, “No law can give me the right to do what is wrong.”⁶

SHOULD LUSTS BECOME LAWS?

Secular orthodoxy has poured down upon our culture, soaking our spirits with the rain of relativism and an unhelpful humidity of human opinion. There are a thousand voices speaking and singing about sex. One incredibly gifted singer-songwriter said:

**“THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH GOING TO BED WITH
PEOPLE OF YOUR OWN SEX. PEOPLE SHOULD BE VERY FREE
WITH SEX; THEY SHOULD DRAW THE LINE AT GOATS.”**

– ELTON JOHN

There are many soaked to the bone in their belief that Elton John is morally wrong here. They believe you should *not* draw the line at goats. They are beginning to press legislators worldwide for a so-called civil right to have sex with animals. The tiny Mother Teresa, that celibate servant who labored long in Calcutta’s slums, would have raised a frail but forceful fist in protest, strongly disagreeing with both opinions. Humans have a right to their opinion and the free expression thereof. Nevertheless, the senator who reverently fears God and believes He will hold him accountable on Judgment Day would be wise to research God’s divine opinions as found in His Law book, the Bible. Let us look at five of the ways that God defines lust.

A. Lust Invading Marriage: Adultery

By definition, adultery is sexual sin in which at least one married person is involved. Sex (even constant sex) within marriage is good (even great), but God is clear. He means for that sexual satisfaction to be experienced *only within one’s own* marriage.

Exodus 20:17

You shall not covet your neighbor's wife...

Adultery is forgivable, as are all sins. The Christ who forgave the woman caught (and *framed by civic leaders*) in adultery in John 8 died on the cross to pay for her sins of physical adultery just as much as Jimmy Carter’s sins of mental lust. Lustful, covetous, adulterous sex is legislated against in The Big Ten (Commandments) because of its devastating



effects on marriage, families, children, and society. Adultery is “looking for love in all the wrong places,” and in others’ marital faces. God’s eternal voice rings clear.

B. Lust’s Largest Umbrella: Fornication

There is a theological umbrella word, a “catch all” for sexual sins of all types. That word is fornication (*Greek πορνεία, porneia*). It is the most inclusive word for sexual sin in God’s law. Note how God, the supreme Lawgiver and Judge (James 4:12), legislates against lust using both terms (fornicator and adulterer) here:

Hebrews 13:4

Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

However, God shows mercy to all who turn to Christ as Savior to wash them from their sins. Washed and sanctified, every kind of sexual sinner can know they will inherit the kingdom of heaven. Paul gives both hope and warning to any “*Corinthians gone wild*”:

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals,¹⁰ ...nor the covetous, nor drunkards... will inherit the kingdom of God.¹¹ Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ...

To be honest, every one of us fits somewhere under this big umbrella of the sexual sins. As I discussed with a lesbian friend of mine recently, “It’s not that heterosexuals are better than homosexuals or less sinful, but can we just let God be the One who defines sin for all of us?”

C. Lust Among Lesbians? Homosexuality

Though an ordained minister, I believe my sins are worse than *anyone* I have ever met. The Bible defines sin for me and about me. The same holds true for all those I love and know and those I have never met. God has spoken clearly in Scripture about homosexual sin. Same-sex attraction is *not* a sin. Choosing to act out on the urges condemned in Scripture is a sin. Forgivable yes, but sin nonetheless. At a hearing on the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) back in 2013, 1 Corinthians 6:9 (above) is the verse I referred to when then Senator Brad Ashford asked me where I find homosexuality listed as a sin in the Bible. Another condemnation of homosexual sodomy is found in this list:

1 Timothy 1:8-10

But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully,⁹ realizing the fact that law is... for those who are lawless... for murderers¹⁰ and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers...





D. The Quote About the Goat? Bestiality

God and Elton John agree⁷ about at least one thing sexually: goats are off limits. Does the following passage leave any question in your mind about God's view of the "morality" of bestiality?⁸

Leviticus 18:23

Also you shall not have intercourse with any animal to be defiled with it, nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it; it is a perversion.

E. Sex Sin and Our Mental Morals

The most powerful sexual organ lies right between the ears—the mind. Former U.S. President James Earl Carter was right; God sees and condemns sexual sin, even mental sexual sin. He also forgives it. Another president, Earl Radmacher, former president of Western Seminary, speaks of the mind, saying, "Right living begins with right thinking and right thinking begins with thinking rightly about God."

APPLICATION & BLESSING

In a fallen world where not all have faith, legislating morality is an unenviably difficult task. May you find success this Session because you rightly live your legislative life by thinking rightly about God.

Humbly submitted for your consideration,

Rev. Perry M. Gauthier

FOOTNOTES

1. Jimmy Carter, 39th President of the United States, <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/spc/character/glossaries/carter.html>.

2. Sadly, there is a predominant view to the contrary (Pharisaically so) that I call "Evangelical Midrash" (Oral Tradition). It is based upon a shallow exegesis and misinterpretation of 1 Corinthians 6:18.

3. All Scripture quotations are from the *New American Standard Bible 1995 Update* unless otherwise noted.

4. [Isaiah 5:20](#) – "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness...."

5. "When Judge Joseph W. Moylan of Omaha, Nebraska, was asked to approve a teenager's request to waive the requirement that she seek her parents' approval for abortion, he faced a crisis of conscience. Unable to adhere to the law of the state, the 61-year-old judge with more than two decades on the bench resigned, saying, 'I simply cannot enter an order authorizing one human life to put to death another totally innocent human being.... I am reminded of Lincoln's statement: "No law can give me the right to do what is wrong."' " <http://www.uffl.org/vol%205/moylan5.pdf>.

6. The quote cited by Judge Moylan comes from Lincoln's Sixth Debate with Stephen Douglas in which he said, "When Judge Douglas says that whoever, or whatever community, wants slaves, they have a right to have them, he is perfectly logical if there is nothing wrong in the institution; but if you admit that it is wrong, he cannot logically say that anybody has a right to do wrong." *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/l/lincoln/lincoln3/1:32?rgn=div1;view=fulltext>.

7. This reminds me of the quip, "God doesn't believe in atheists."

8. President Thomas Jefferson wrote, legislatively speaking, that the classic definition of "buggery," which is an archaic term for "sodomy," included both intercourse with a member of one's same sex as well as intercourse with animals: "Buggery is twofold. 1. with mankind, 2. with beasts. Buggery is the Genus, of which Sodomy and Bestiality are the species. ...[Sodomy] is a carnal copulation against nature, to wit, of man or woman in the same sex, or of either of them with beasts." *64. A Bill for Proportioning Crimes and Punishments in Cases Heretofore Capital, 18 June 1779*, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-02-02-0132-0004-0064>.

Personal Study Notes

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