



Lasting Love

Proverbs 5

The title of our series is "P.S. I Love You" and we are learning about what God teaches us in His word about love. God is the Ultimate Lover. He has the greatest love and he is the author of all love, including the love we offer to one another.

Today, I would like us to let God into our marriages. Today I want to focus on some issues that are critical to having a love-filled, lasting marriage. (In the next couple weeks I want to focus on how to find the one in life and how to know when you've found him/her.)

Once again, we are going to tackle an issue that, frankly I would rather avoid. I wish no one ever had to deal with the, but sadly that is not the case for many.

- How many of you are married today? (your the focus today)
- How many of you plan on committing adultery in your marriage or future marriage?

Shocking because in my research for these messages I found that a lot of people *are* unfaithful, yet none of you so you plan to be so.

Reporting from the most reputable study I found:

- Over 50% of men and 42% of women will commit adultery at some point in their lives.

Today's topic "love that lasts" but I am going to also talk about adultery.

God's law. **Exodus 20:14** *you shall not commit adultery.*

Hebrews 13:4 *Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage*

bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.

Definitions. *Adultery* means *sexual relations with someone other than your spouse.*

Sexually immoral translates the word, *Pornos*. *Pornos* is the word from which *pornography* comes from. It refers to *all sexual relations outside of marriage*, here covering those who are not married.

Last week I touched on cohabitation or living together and talked about the realities of that. In it, I told you that one of the main causes of more cheating and more divorce is the fact that we as a culture no longer take God's advice on developing relationships. We quickly, without marriage, enter into sexual relationships then break up. We do it again and again. We are learning to *divorce* before we ever get married. We never learn to be faithful, emotionally, sexually. It's part of the problem I am going to talk about. But today I'm going to focus more on married couples.

And upfront, my apology to those of you who have tasted the pain of adultery. This could draw back some of that pain and that is not my purpose. Maybe it was in your family with your mom and dad. Maybe it was someone you respected like a pastor or mentor. And for others, maybe it was your spouse. Maybe you were the one who was unfaithful...

Please know that discussing this subject is not intended to hurt you all over again. Like I said last week, this is not about the past, but about your future. We can't change the past but we can come up with God's help, affect our future and the future of our marriages and families.

But to those who personally know the pain of adultery, I'm sure you would be the first to want others if possible, not to have to suffer what you have endured. You'd be the first to say, "Please pastor Dave talk about this to help someone else."

So let's dive in...

How many you have seen the movie "What about Bob?" He can't get anywhere unless he takes what? He needed to

take “baby steps”. That’s a good principle. It’s also true when you get into a destructive situation too. One minor bad decision leads to one other minor bad decision and before you know it, you’re in trouble.

The “baby steps” that lead to adultery:

In a study where they worked with hundreds of couples who had been unfaithful to each other, *who never planned on that happening*. Good people, like you, (not sexually addicted, not predators) but ones who just “slipped” into it, found there were Eight “baby steps” common in almost all of those adulterous relationships...

1. Enjoys common interests. A man sees a woman at work and they enjoy working on a project together. A woman sees a man at Bible study and enjoys being in that study with him. Or they’re playing sports together and they have a common interest. Then he/she starts to compare this other person with their spouse, thinking “you know, I don’t enjoy that as much with my spouse as I do him/her.”

2. Start sharing personal information. Here’s what’s going on in my life. What’s going on in your life? And all of a sudden he an emotional bond is being formed

3. Anticipating time together. I can’t wait to be with them. I wonder what I should wear?

4. Hiding the friendship from my spouse. We haven’t done anything wrong, but it’s better that my spouse does a know about this.

5. Flirting, maybe minor arousing touch. May be a squeeze on the shoulder, a hug that lasts a little too long. Maybe it’s just a little gift that says, “thank you for this friendship, I enjoy your company.”

6. Inventing excuses to call or meet. “We’ve got to prepare our lesson together. We’ve got to get rid of the for that work assignment. Let’s meet. ”

7. Deceiving words and actions. We start lying about it. We start line to others and we start lying to ourselves.

8. Physical inappropriateness. One decision after another discussion, in the *baby step* our way into trouble.

Please understand. We have a spiritual enemy. Satan’s mission statement: **to steal, kill and destroy** everything that matters to the heart of God..

You will find few things closer to the heart of God than a covenant of a Christian marriage. That means there’s hardly anything that Satan would love to destroying more.

TODAY, Through God’s word (Proverbs 5), we are going to find out how we can protect our marriages from the attacks of the evil one. **Prov. 5.** Three things...

I. WE MUST LEARN TO RADICALLY REDUCE THE RISK OF ADULTERY.

Proverbs 5:8-10 - you radically reduce the risk. You keep a past far from the door of temptation.

That means we must redefine the line of sin. It is not (8) physical inappropriateness. The true line of sin starts all the way back at baby step number one. The first sin-line that we cross -it’s never physical, it mental and emotional.

In fact, Jesus in Matt. 5:28 said when you “look at a woman with lust you’ve already committed adultery *in your heart*.” (emotional and mental)

That means were going to radically redefine the line of sin, and were going to keep a path far from it. Were going to draw the line at “baby step number one” and we don’t even crossed the first line of temptation.

Ask yourself this. If a video was kept all day long of your interaction with those of the opposite sex, and your spouse saw that video, would your spouse be proud of how you lived, or would your spouse be hurt by it?

What I’ve got for you today is just some thoughts on how you do this.

We do this by

1. Have a growing relationship with Christ

2. Get accountability.

3. Never be alone with the opposite sex. That means no lunches, that means no business trips -you simply avoid the temptation.

4. Never talk about your marriage with the opposite sex. “You just listen to me better than my husband and I just enjoyed being with you.” “Well, my wife just nags all the time...” Bing! There is an emotional bond. Don’t let that happen.

5. Hang around strong and faithful marriages. Men, if you're consistently hanging around with men who trash talk their wives, who are going to strip bars all the time, who are cheating on their wives, **YOU BECOME LIKE THOSE YOU HANG AROUND WITH.** Same with women. That's why it's so important to be involved in relationships with other people with strong values. Another reason why you should be a part of a small group at church.

6. Get out of inappropriate places. Stay the heck out of the bars. Get out of the chat rooms. If there's someone that you work with that got your attention, if you can't break it, if you can't move to a different department, **YOU QUIT YOUR JOB!** To be taken down by that! ("How am I going to pay my bills?" God is your provider. If you honor God with your life, don't you think he will honor you and provide a job if you really need it?)

I want to **sum this up** before moving on. In 1994 John Maxwell spoke at a Promise Keepers event and quoted from the second promise of a promise keeper "A promise keeper is committed to practicing spiritual, moral, ethical and sexual purity",

He quoted [1 Cor 6:18](#) "*Flee from sexual immorality*". He spoke about Joseph, who wisely ran from the grips of Potifar's wife.

Maxwell told crowd, "*Let's keep our hearts pure and our consciences free from evil. The first guideline for dealing with sexual temptation is ... Run.*"

Run! You can't avoid all sexual stimuli, but we can keep them from taking root in us. In Martin Luther's terms, "*you can't keep the birds from flying over your head, but you can keep them from making a nest in your hair.*"

Our first duty is not to resist but to run.

There are those of you playing with danger today. *You play with fire, you WILL get burned.*

Radically reduce the risk. The Bible says keep a path far from that which will tempt you.

II. INVEST PASSIONATELY INTO OUR MARRIAGES.

Proverbs 5:18-20

Captivated is *chagah*. Translated - to be an enraptured, to be intoxicated, consumed.

My interpretation: "*get drunk on love with your spouse.*" That's what the Bible is saying. We invest passionately in our marriages

THERE ARE those today that have hurting marriages. Don't be embarrassed by it. Don't have this *spiritually proud face* that says we can't admit to hurting. Let's be honest. - let's invite God to do a healing work

I've got **five things** that **we need to GET** in our marriages, especially when they are hurting:

1. Let's GET OPEN. Lets communicate with one another. Let's get people we know and trust to be praying for us.

2. Let's GET ALONE. Gentlemen, there's a concept you might have forgotten, it's called a date. It means hire a babysitter, and get you and your woman alone.

(Gentlemen, You may say "Well I'm just no Romeo." On your way home stopped on the side of the road and get her a flower. Give it to her. And then when she like comes to, tell her it's because you love her... And watch her come back to life.)

3. Let's GET SPIRITUAL. Pray together. If there's one thing I can recommend for a hurting marriage, it's get together and pray.

According to John Trent, a study shows that couples who pray together four times per week, only 1 in 1052 ever end up in divorce. The power of prayer.

4. Let's GET HELP. Get some good Christian counseling. Go to a marriage retreat. Get help when you need it.

5. Let's GET NAKED.

(Listen, if you tell someone I said that in church, I'll deny it.)

Actually, I'm not kidding. **CULTIVATE SEXUAL INTIMACY.** Marriages that last, marriages that are adultery-proof, are marriages where the couple enjoys a fulfilling, satisfying sex life.

Yes you heard me right. Some of you are going crazy right now (especially my wife, "What is he going to say next?")

Proverbs 5:18-20 *May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth. A loving doe, a graceful deer— may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be captivated by her love. Why be captivated, my son, by an adulteress? Why embrace the bosom of another man's wife?*

In fact, did you know there is an entire book of the Bible that describes the beauty and importance of sexual intimacy between a husband and wife. (If you want to know which one, ask Pastor Jose.) Seriously, it's the **Song of Solomon**.

Enjoying sex together is the one of the greatest prohibitors of keeping someone from going somewhere else.

As married couples, we need to be careful that lovemaking doesn't get turned into a commodity. A commodity that we hold onto or give out like a reward when certain expectations are met.

GREAT SEX

You know, our culture portrays great sex as something that occurs between two people who meet and "hookup". But that's not true. Listen, we know that God created sex, and therefore it is good. But God says he created sexual intimacy for marriage. That's God's way, period.

(Young people, especially if your parents are here this may gross you out. But it's true.)

You see the best sex is not between two people who hook up, but the best sex occurs in a marriage where two people really love each other. Where they share not only physical intimacy, but emotional intimacy and spiritual intimacy as well.

Between two people who have a lifetime of practice!

SO, get open, get alone, get spiritual, get help. AND GET (well, you know what). Practice fulfilling-each-other on *every level*, including sexual intimacy.

First, we Reduce the Risk, Then We (chagah) Invest Passionately in our Marriages. The third thing we do is:

III. VISUALIZE THE DESTRUCTION

That you can cause in one, sinful moment of lust.

Proverbs 5:3-5. Can anything be clearer than that?

I've thought through what would happen if in one selfish moment I was unfaithful to my bride, Nina. What would happen if I messed up? Let me give you a glimpse of what I know, beyond a shadow of doubt would happen...

- First, I would drag the name of God through the mud.

- I would have to someday stand face to face and give an account of my actions.
- I would publicly bring disgrace to the name of God's work and our church family.
- I would hurt hundreds of people.
- Many of your kids will write Christianity off.
- Some of you would walk away from the church, others would walk away from the faith.
- I would lose my job like that.
- It would be years if ever before I was ever allowed to minister again. And IF I could work through the guilt, and step back into Ministry in some capacity, I would never, ever, ever be the same.

That's the easy stuff.

- I would take the heart of my best friend, a woman who has been nothing but absolutely faithful and sacrificial, giving her life to the cause of God and me, I would take her heart and I would crush it.
- I would lose one of the most precious gift she has given me, her unconditional trust.
- I would risk losing the greatest thing I have, our marriage.
- I would misrepresent God to my kids. There's no telling what would happen to the children of a pastor who is unfaithful.
- SUMMARY: In one moment of selfish lust, I could lose everything that is special to me today.

Visualize the destruction.

- Holidays without your kids there.
- In-laws that never speak to you again.
- The loss of the church family and friends.
- People who talk bad about you forever.
- Loss of your integrity.
- What should you do your kids.
- What you did to the name of God.

Visualize it.

If that hasn't convinced you yet. And somehow your convinced that "this person in my life is going to make me happy." Let's run **the stats** on what really happens if a person goes ahead and does it. What happens then?

- Those who commit adultery actually do get married to that person. - **3%**
- How many of those end in divorce? **75%**
- What are the odds of having a lasting marriage. **.075%** Why? Because you're trying to build a relationship on lying and deceit. And God never blesses sin.

And you told me earlier, nobody's planning on adultery. WELL, according to the statistics, 50% of the people married will do this!

CONCLUSION

My intent is not to cast condemnation to those who have done this. The best response can be found in the Bible in the way Jesus handled the woman who did commit adultery.

The "self-righteous" people were ready to throw stones. But Jesus made them leave and he said *"neither do I condemn you. Go your way and sin no more."*

The good news is, that when we are unfaithful, God is always faithful. And if we confess our sins before him, he is *faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Today is the day we get set free.

Prayer. (bow your heads, close your eyes)

God we ask that in the next few minutes your Holy Spirit would do what only you can do. Touch our hearts.

How many of you today would say, "I know I have been unfaithful to God. Maybe not adultery, but there are other areas of your life where you have allowed sin to enter into your life. Maybe you "baby stepped" into it. And today before God you feel the weight of your sin, and you want to come clean before God today. You would say, "God would you forgive them? Would you wipe them away? I want to be clean in your presence."

Those of you who would say, yes that's me, would you just lift your hands up right now as we are praying?

Would you just right now silently confess that sin to God. Give it a name. Now ask God to forgive you in your own words. Now tell him thank you. Thank you because we don't deserve it.

Now ask him to help you remain faithful in this area, never again, by his spirit. To be free.

Those of you today here who feel very far from God. How do you get close to God? You try but you continue to fall short. Scripture says we cannot do it. That's why God sent Jesus, His son. He came to do what we cannot do. He died in our place to forgive all our sin and to bring us into a real, lasting relationship with God.

And the way we're made right with God is by placing faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Bible says if you call on his name, and make him Lord, you will never be the same. You will be changed. That word means "take over." Be in control. If you call him Lord you will never be the same. You will be his.

Today will you surrender your life to Christ and be a new person?