

## Deuteronomy 22:13-30 (March 12, 2021)

**Reflection:** How would you explain to a non-Christian how Christians think about the topic of sex? Does marriage change how sex is viewed?

**Goal:** Christians and non-Christians think about sex differently, and we should know how to articulate it with non-Christians. Marriage changes sex because God determines the right time and conditions to live by.

### Read Deuteronomy 22:13-21 – Marital Infidelity

**1. Summarize the situation in 22:13-21 and how the situation is resolved. What does it tell us about responsibility when the father and elders are involved in the verdict?**

#### **i. Summarize the situation in 22:13-21 and how the situation is resolved.**

- Man hates wife, consummates relationship with her and then hates her
- Accuses her of misconduct that she was not a virgin
- Bring out the evidence to the elders at the gate
- Family would defend the daughter, and they would bring out a cloak that the marriage was consummated on and show evidence of her virginity. This would be a blood-stained cloak, proving that she was a virgin
- If man falsely accuses wife: they shall punish him by whipping. Fine him a hundred shekels of silver to be given to the father, because he has tried to dishonor a virgin of Israel. He shall be his wife till the end of his days, and he cannot divorce her
- If man correctly accuses wife: woman would be stoned in front of father's house, and shall be stoned because such adulterous acts are evil among Israel's people, and they should purge this evil from their midst.

#### **Leader's note**

- **Notice:** the focus is on the woman who has been wronged (as that is how the passage begins), and hence the major purpose is to protect the wife
- **Punishment:** Is stoning (Deu 22:22)
- **Infidelity before God:** Under the Old Covenant law, the punishment for adultery was death. (Leviticus 20:10) God abhorred infidelity, not only because of its effect on the family, but because there is close parallels of marital unfaithfulness and Israel's unfaithfulness to God
- **Different verdict for men and women:** If man is sentenced to death, this would be like punishing the wife twice. She would not have the means to support herself, she was no longer a virgin, and may resort to prostitution. Hence the goal is restoration: public trial, public punishment, compensation to be paid, and he could not divorce his wife. Furthermore, Israel would be guarantor of man's good behaviour to his wife. He must treat her as a wife with all benefits, and hopefully work on reconciliation between them

#### **ii. What does it tell us about responsibility when the father and elders are involved in the verdict?**

**Goal:** that the sexual immorality is not just a personal issue but affect people around them. It affects their family.

- affects the honour of the family and the father must defend the honor of his daughter.

It also affects the covenant community.

- Israel was to be holy, as God was holy, and they were to live by the standards that God set for Israel, and everyone was held to this expectation, everyone participated, and it was enforced by elders of Israel.

**2. Unrepentant sexual immorality is clearly something the church cares about today. (cf. Eph 2:20-22, 1 Pet 2:9-10) Read 1 Cor 5:1-13, what is the impact on the church if this issue is unresolved?**

**i. Read 1 Cor 5:1-13, what is the impact on the church if this issue is unresolved?**

In 1 Cor 5:6, *A little leaven leavens the whole lump*: The leaven mentioned isn't merely yeast, but a pinch of dough left over from the previous batch, as in the making of sourdough bread. This is how bread was commonly leavened in the ancient world, and little pinch of dough from the old lump could make a whole new lump of dough rise and "puff up" - so the work of leaven was thought to be an illustration of the work of sin and pride. The presence of a little can corrupt a large amount. Paul says that just as the Jews were concerned to remove all leaven from their midst, so the church should have a concern to remove such notorious, unrepentant sinners from their midst. (blueletterbible) His command is to not associate with the sexually immoral, so their sinfulness doesn't mix with the whole lump. (v.9)

**Leader's note:**

**Sexual immorality defined** - Sexual immorality is the "selling off" of sexual purity and involves any type of sexual expression outside the boundaries of a biblically defined marriage relationship ~Gotquestions

**Read Deuteronomy 22:22-24, 30 – Sexual Promiscuity**

**3. What happens if a man is found lying with someone's wife? (v.22) What if a betrothed virgin sleeps with another man? (v.23-24) What is Moses' command about a man sleeping with his stepmother? (v.30)**

**i. What happens if a man is found lying with someone's wife? (v.22)**

- "If a man is found lying with the wife of another man, both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman, and the woman. So you shall purge the evil from Israel."

**ii. What if a betrothed virgin sleeps with another man? (v.23-24)**

- Bring them both out of city and stone them to death
- The appropriate response is crying out for help, though she was in the city
- Purge both because of their evil

**iii. What is Moses' command about a man sleeping with his stepmother? (v.30)**

- <sup>30</sup> "A man shall not take his father's wife, so that he does not uncover his father's nakedness."

**Leaders Note:**

**Father's nakedness:** Command is found in Lev 18:8. We know this is stepmother because "Father's nakedness" is stated only for sleeping with your stepmother, while if you sleep with your mother you would have, as v.7 says, uncovered your "mother's nakedness."

**Issue with sleeping with stepmother:** By entering intimacy with the same woman who had slept with his father, a man disgraced his father's sexual honor. They would both bare the death penalty that befalls people who commit adultery.

**4. In our world today the act of sex is often seen as a non-moral or even a good act between two consenting individuals. How is the world's view seen from God's perspective (cf. Gal 5:19-21, 1 Cor 6:13-20, Heb 13:4, Col 3:5-6) Why is the world's view so tempting for Christians today?**

**i. How is the world's view seen from God's perspective (cf. Gal 5:19-21, 1 Cor 6:13-20, Heb 13:4, Col 3:5-6)**

**Gal 5:19-21** – sexual immorality, which is anything outside of God's definition of how sex should be expressed, is fruit of sinful flesh

**1 Cor 6:13-20** – body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord. The body wasn't meant to have sex, the body was meant to honor the Lord. This is a sin against your own body, you are not your own.

**Heb 13:4** – Respect the marriage bed for there is judgment of the sexually immoral and adulterous

**Goal:** That sex is a moral act before God, and when enjoyed properly is a lovely thing. However, when not enjoyed properly it grieves him because our bodies are not our own

**ii. Why is the world's view so tempting for Christians today?**

**Goal:** Tempting for many reasons, and we need to be aware of it. We should remind ourselves, that we are not our own.

**5. We often speak of why sexual immorality is bad, but are there good reasons to be sexually pure? If you were to counsel a young Christian today about sexual purity, what would you say? (1 Thess 4:2-5,7, Gal 5:22-23) How would you counsel a young Christian today who did have sex before marriage (answer the question from both the standpoint of before they became a Christian and after they became a Christian)?**

**i. We often speak of why sexual immorality is bad, but are there good reasons to be sexually pure?**

**Goal:** Sexual purity isn't just avoiding what is evil; it's pursuing and enjoying what is good.~Tim Challies

*Some good things:*

1) Self control is something we learn which means we are growing in sanctification and Christian character (Titus 2:6, 1 Tim 4:12)

2) Experience abundant life (all of God's commands can be seen to be to have abundant life as reflected in John 15:11)

3) To focus our energy trying to please our spouse instead of ourselves

**ii. If you were to counsel a young Christian today about sexual purity, what would you say? (1 Thess 4:2-5,7, Gal 5:22-23)**

**Goal:** God's desire for us is our sanctification, which means the control of our bodies. Our bodies were made for God (1 Cor 6:13-20), and we should use our bodies to glorify God and not gratify the flesh

**iii. How would you counsel a young Christian today who did have sex before marriage (answer the question from both the standpoint of before they became a Christian and after they became a Christian)?**

**Goal:** That though there are many strong warnings about sexual immorality, for those who repent and turn to the Lord there is forgiveness and cleansing.

**Read Deuteronomy 22:25-29 – Sexual Abuse**

**6. What are Moses' instructions if a betrothed woman has been violated? (v.25-27) if a single woman has been violated? (v.28-29)**

**i. What are Moses' instructions if a betrothed woman has been violated? (v.25-27)**

<sup>25</sup> "But if in the open country a man meets a young woman who is betrothed, and the man seizes her and lies with her, then only the man who lay with her shall die. <sup>26</sup> But you shall do nothing to the young woman; she has committed no offense punishable by death. For this case is like that of a man attacking and murdering his neighbor, <sup>27</sup> because he met her in the open country, and though the betrothed young woman cried for help there was no one to rescue her.

**ii. if a single woman has been violated? (v.28-29)**

"If a man meets a virgin who is not betrothed, and seizes her and lies with her, and they are found, <sup>29</sup> then the man who lay with her shall give to the father of the young woman fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife, because he has violated her. He may not divorce her all his days."

**7. From the New Testament, is it only sexual immorality when the external act is committed? (cf. Matt 5:27, 15:19, Mark 7:21) How can we better protect ourselves from committing sexual immorality?**

**i. From the New Testament, is it only sexual immorality when the external act is committed?**

Sexual immorality isn't just the act, but comes from our heart/mind or being of a person, and that the sin is committed there first.

**ii. How can we better protect ourselves from committing sexual immorality?**

**Goal:** to discuss ways to overcome sexual immorality. Some ways to think about dealing with sexual immorality:

- Protect your eyes and body from things that you know can cause you to sin
- Repentance leads to right behaviour
- Transform our desire, and not just focus on fighting sin

**God has made us and our bodies to serve Him, and not to serve our bodily desires. When we deviate from His design, not only do we practice something that is bringing God's wrath, but ultimately, we hurt ourselves in the process. Certainly, there is forgiveness and grace when we sin, but it grieves God and there can be lasting consequences on our bodies when we practice sexual immorality. Be wary of adultery and sexual immorality in your thoughts and actions.**