

Chapter 12

Disregard of the Seventh Commandment

God's Law the Way to Happiness—Previous to the destruction of the old world by a flood, its inhabitants were reeking in corruption. Sin and crime of every description prevailed. The state of the world now is fast reaching the point when God will say to it, as He did anciently: “My Spirit shall not always strive with man.” One of the grievous sins existing in this degenerate age of corruption is adultery. This shameful sin is practiced to an alarming extent. The Sabbath and the marriage institution were ordained of God in Eden to be preserved sacred and holy. Both of these institutions of divine appointment have been disregarded and set at naught by men and women whose hearts are fully set in them to do evil.

Adultery a “Christian” Sin—But if the transgressors of the seventh commandment were to

be found only among those who do not profess to be Christ's followers, the evil would not be a tenth part as great as it now is; but the crime of adultery is largely committed by professed Christians. Both clergymen and laymen, whose names stand fair upon the church record, are alike guilty.

Many who profess to be the ministers of Christ are like the sons of Eli who ministered in the sacred office and took advantage of their office to engage in crime and commit adultery, causing the people to transgress the law of God. A fearful account will such have to render when the cases of all shall pass in review before God, and they be judged according to the deeds done in the body.... Adultery is one of the terrible sins of this age. This sin exists among professed Christians of every class....

Christians are called to lay their bodies a living sacrifice upon the altar of God. "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto

sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God” [Romans 6:12, 13].

If the bodies professedly laid upon the altar of God should pass that scrutiny that was given the Jewish sacrifice, how few would stand the test and be pronounced perfect before God, preserved unto holiness, free from the taints of sin or pollution. No lame sacrifice could God receive. No injured or diseased sacrifice would God accept. The offering given to God was required to be sound, in every respect without blemish, and valuable.

Origin of Impure Acts—None can glorify God in their body, as He requires, while they are living in transgression of the law of God. If the body violates the seventh commandment, it is through the dictation of the mind. If the mind is impure, the body will naturally engage in impure acts. Purity cannot exist in the soul of one who yields his body to impure acts. If the body is serving lust, the mind cannot maintain consecration

to God. To preserve a sanctified mind, the body must be preserved in sanctification and honor. The mind will then serve the law of God, and yield willing obedience to all its claims. Then, with the apostle, such can yield their members as instruments of righteousness unto God....

No Real Enjoyment of Life for Sinners—The Lord made man upright; but he has fallen, and become degraded, because he refuses to yield obedience to the sacred claims which the law of God has upon him. All the passions of man, if properly controlled and rightly directed, will contribute to his physical and moral health, and insure to him a great amount of happiness. The adulterer, the fornicator, and the incontinent, do not enjoy life. There can be no true enjoyment for the transgressor of God's law. The Lord knew this, therefore He restricts man. He directs, commands, and He positively forbids.... The Lord well knew that the happiness of His children depends upon their submission to His authority, and living in obedience to this holy, just, and good rule of government.

Thoughts and Actions Open to God—Man may pass on awhile, and conceal the fact that he is an adulterer; yet God has His eye upon him. He marks the man. He cannot conceal his crimes from God. He may apparently conduct himself properly before his family and before the community, and be esteemed a good man. But does he deceive himself in thinking there is not knowledge with the Most High?

He is exposing his corruption to the view of the Majesty of Heaven. He who is high and lifted up, and the train of whose glory fills the temple, sees and knows even the thoughts and the intents and purposes of the heart of the transgressor who is debasing himself in the sight of the pure, sinless angels, who are recording all the acts of the children of men. And not only is his sin seen, but it is marked by the recording angel.

The transgressor of God's law may pass on for a time without exposure; but, sooner or later, he will find himself overtaken, exposed, and

condemned. Whoever dares to violate the law of God will experience for himself that “the way of the transgressor is hard.”—The Review and Herald, March 8, 1870.

God’s All-Seeing Eye—If we were to cherish an habitual impression that God sees and hears all that we do and say and keeps a faithful record of our words and actions, and that we must meet it all, we would fear to sin. Let the young ever remember that wherever they are, and whatever they do, they are in the presence of God. No part of our conduct escapes observation. We cannot hide our ways from the Most High.

Human laws, though sometimes severe, are often transgressed without detection, and hence with impunity; but not so with the law of God. The deepest midnight is no cover for the guilty one. He may think himself alone, but to every deed there is an unseen witness. The very motives of his heart are open to divine inspection. Every act, every word, every thought, is as distinctly marked as though there were only one person in the whole

world, and the attention of heaven were centered upon him.—Patriarchs and Prophets, 217, 218.

Professed Commandment-keepers Guilty—Even some who profess to keep all the commandments of God are guilty of the sin of adultery. What can I say to arouse their benumbed sensibilities? Moral principle, strictly carried out, becomes the only safeguard of the soul.—Testimonies for the Church 2:352.

The Greater the Knowledge, the Greater the Sin—Not all who profess to keep the commandments of God possess their bodies in sanctification and honor. The most solemn message ever committed to mortals has been entrusted to this people, and they can have a powerful influence if they will be sanctified by it. They profess to be standing upon the elevated platform of eternal truth, keeping all of God's commandments; therefore, if they indulge in sin, if they commit fornication and adultery, their crime is of tenfold greater magnitude than is that of the classes I have named [First-day Adventists], who do not

acknowledge the law of God as binding upon them. In a peculiar sense do those who profess to keep God's law dishonor Him and reproach the truth by transgressing its precepts.

The Sad Example of Israel—It was the prevalence of this very sin, fornication, among ancient Israel, which brought upon them the signal manifestation of God's displeasure. His judgments then followed close upon their heinous sin; thousands fell, and their polluted bodies were left in the wilderness....

“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” [1 Corinthians 10:11, 12]. Seventh-day Adventists, above all other people in the world, should be patterns of piety, holy in heart and in conversation.—Testimonies for the Church 2:450, 451.