

CELL NOTES 15/4/08

ICE BREAKER

Which of your mum or dad's sayings do you recall? Which do you use?

THEME

How to affair-proof your marriage
Readings; Prov 6 : 20 – 32 & Mat 5 ; 27 – 30

SERMON OUTLINE

- 1) The seventh commandment may use a word that is a bit blunt and old-fashioned, but opens up an area of life and experience that is universal.
- 2) In the OT the idea of God's people, when they strayed from Him, were committing adultery, is often expressed. Implicit in this is a challenge to loyalty and faithfulness both in the spiritual realm, and in all human relationships.
- 3) We live in a very sexually-charged society. Sexual imagery is everywhere. The pornography industry is colossal.
- 4) At the same time marriage and stable family life has been in sharp decline for decades.
- 5) The Bible affirms sexuality – God made us male and female but also acknowledges in many places the ways in which this can go wrong, and be abused.
- 6) The Bible points to monogamous heterosexual marriage as the only safe and moral place for sexual activity.
- 7) The Matthew reading underlines the fact our sexual life starts as an inward matter – so none of us is innocent or undamaged in this area. This teaching is not to condemn, but to affirm what is right, and how we may find forgiveness, healing and cleansing when it has gone wrong.
- 8) The single line commandment underlines the universal need for stable, secure and loving relationships – very frequently expressed in marriage. Fidelity in various ways, including sexual expression, is vital in maintaining such relationships.
- 9) Adultery is very destructive – whatever words are used for it. Witness the Proverbs reading, and observation of life. J John :-
Adultery denies love, degrades people, destroys families, defiles marriage and defies God.
- 10) Falling to sexual temptation is not the unforgivable sin. If we are aware of an issue for us we need to repent, seek forgiveness, and, where necessary, take swift steps to end any inappropriate relationship.

11) We need positively to affirm and strengthen all healthy relationships, including marriage. Respect, Responsibility, Relate, Romance and Resolve.

12) This issue touches very deep areas of our lives. As God's people let us encourage each other to pursue purity, but know also that the gospel of forgiveness and renewal of life in Christ is as real in this area as any other.

QUESTIONS OF APPLICATION

Read the passages. What strikes you most?

1) How did you gain your sex education? School, magazines, TV, family, Bible/Church, something else? What would you feel is the ideal in this area?

2) If you were/are going down the wrong path, would you want somebody to correct you? Who? How?

3) When in your life, past or present, have you been burned, when playing with fire? How do the Bible passages suggest we may keep our lives pure?

4) Is Jesus fair in internalising the commandment? What is the difference between thoughts and actions?