



Sexual purity brings greater joy and intimacy in marriage and helps men and women to become as God. (© Intellectual Reserve, Inc.)

A SCRIPTURAL BASIS FOR THE DOCTRINE OF SEXUAL PURITY



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Richard O. Cowan was already an institution when I joined the faculty of Religious Education at BYU. Because we were in different departments, we did not work on a lot of the college's projects together. There were, however, times I needed information concerning this or that fact of LDS Church history or temple development. I found Richard always willing to accommodate me. Where I really got to know him was on a writing committee tasked with producing Sunday School manuals for the Gospel Doctrine course of study. During the seven years we worked together, I learned what an excellent scholar, reviewer, editor, and, yes, taskmaster Richard was. Keeping the group on schedule and producing first-rate material fell to him, and he did an excellent job. Further, and most important, I got to know him as a friend. I continue to appreciate his gentle, kind, and caring ways and his ongoing willingness to assist others. He is the epitome of the gentleman scholar.

God has condemned and continues to condemn sexual immorality in all its forms. The Savior was very clear in his castigation of evil desires, noting that “whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” He then enjoined that if one’s eye or hand should cause one to sin in such a way, it should be severed and discarded (see Matthew 5:27–30). This graphic imagery emphasizes the Lord’s new way of

understanding sexual sin in marriage. However, as will be shown below, related sins are also castigated. We can best understand scriptures in this regard in the broader context of God's law and its prohibitions in general.

The First Pillar on Which God's Law Rests

The law of God rests on two basic pillars. We find the first in statements by Joseph Smith, "Happiness is the object and design of our existence; and will be the end thereof, if we pursue the path that leads to it,"¹ and by Lehi, "Men are, that they might have joy" (2 Nephi 2:25). The Lord seems very interested in whether or not we will end up happy; thus he has laid down a great plan to bring us to that state. He knows the shortest, most secure route from our semijoyful state to a full one and wants to get us there as quickly as he can. To help us make that transition as smoothly and efficiently as possible, he has given us commandments. They mark the shortest and firmest way to the happiness and joy that God intends for us.

The Second Pillar on Which God's Law Rests

We find the second pillar on which God's law rests in the writings of John. According to that Apostle, "God is love" (1 John 4:16). Of all the words John could have used to describe God—*kind, benevolent, merciful, just, zealous*—he chose the one that encompasses all of these and best explains all that God is and does. John's point is that God doesn't just love, he *is* love; it is not a part of him, it *is* him. The Greek noun the early Christians used to express this kind of love was *agapē*.² Christians nuanced the word to express a love freely given without respect of worth or merit. *Agapē* means acting out of the love that God has for all humankind, and the common bond shared by Christians. Its reach is very broad. It may include those who have nothing to give in return but also those who would spurn and abuse it.³ The noun *agapē* expresses an expanded understanding of God's love, a love through which he extends his grace to all.⁴

Some New Testament authors also focused on the part of God's love that is unyielding. He has declared, "As many as I love, I rebuke

and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent” (Revelation 3:19). If God did not love us, our behavior would be inconsequential to him. He does, however, love us, and consequently he sets rules and chastens us. Even his punishment, therefore, points to joy.

The Hebrew root for love, *’hb*, and its cognates denote love freely given, a love coming from what God is toward those who are his.⁵ This love is not drawn from him only by persons of unusual virtue, but is freely given even to sinners. The Old Testament underscores the unworthiness of many of those whom God loves as a means of highlighting the purity of that love. Therefore, as Leon Morris has said, “The constancy of his love depends on what he is rather than what they are.”⁶

My point is this: in God, we meet love in its purest form. Though full and kind, it is neither soft nor indulgent. His rebuke, therefore, is neither an expression of rejection nor even a display of temper.⁷ It is, rather, evidence of his desire to bring us to joy by whatever means he can.

A Jealous God

Thus we see that God’s love is unconditional, but because it is, so are his constraints. He demands devotion from his people. Consider the Lord’s statement in Exodus 34:14: “Thou shalt worship no other god: for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.”⁸ The Hebrew word *qannā* conveys the idea of intense emotion and can be translated as strong ardor, fervent zeal, or ardent jealousy. It identifies the strong feelings aroused when a cherished object or relationship is threatened. The Bible generally uses the word in a very positive sense.⁹ Still, the scriptures show it to be two-edged. On the one hand, jealousy causes God to cherish and protect even to bloodshed. On the other, it forms the basis of his demand for repentance or retribution when he is offended.

God’s law does not work like electricity, which flows whenever physical conditions for it are right. Electricity is impersonal, not caring what it does, how it helps, or whom it hurts. It reacts solely to its environment. That is not the case with divine law; the law expresses God’s love and power and responds strictly thereto. It is totally personal.



God requires devotion from his people and blesses them for it. (© Intellectual Reserve, Inc.)

God either restrains his wrath in patience and grace or destroys his enemies with an overrunning flood of judgment (see Nahum 1:8). From a humanistic and impersonalistic perspective, both the mercy of God to Assyria (see Jonah 3:1–4:3) and the judgment of God upon Assyria (see Nahum 1:1–3:19) seem disproportionate to reviewers. Humans, as they apply the law of God to each other, must judge the *actions* of others, but God, being absolute, judges the *total* person with total judgment. The jealousy of God is therefore the certain assurance of the infallibility of God's law court. Evil acts, which so easily escape the courts of state, cannot escape the judgment of God, which, both in time as well as beyond

time, moves in terms of the total requirements of his law. To make the point, the jealousy of God is the guarantee of justice.¹⁰

The Foundation of God's Moral Law

Having looked at the two pillars on which the law of God rests, let us now look at the stage on which God's moral law comes into play. One day, as Jesus taught in the temple, the Pharisees came tempting him. The particular issue in which they hoped to embroil the Lord was divorce. The Savior used the occasion to teach them about God's perspective on marriage. He began his teaching by asking, "Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matthew 19:4–6). The text clearly implies that God joined Adam and Eve in marriage. In Moses 5:59, it states that, under God's direction, "all things were confirmed unto Adam by an holy ordinance," and that likely included his marriage to Eve.

Jesus' reply referenced God's creation of humankind found in Genesis. From the outset, God knew that "it [was] not good that the man should be alone." The reason was that the male alone could not do the work God assigned him. Therefore, God said, "I will make him an help meet for him" (Hebrew, *'ēzer kēnegdô*; Genesis 2:18). The word translated "help" (*ēzer*) means "help or helper," while the word translated "meet" means "to correspond to, appropriate for."¹¹ Thus Eve was the appropriate helper working with Adam to fulfill the role that God assigned him.

In Genesis 2:23–24, Jehovah set a man's duty to his wife above his sacred obligation to his parents. In doing so, he stressed the importance of marriage. As deep and lasting as one's allegiance to parents is, that to spouse takes precedence. God commanded a man to love only two things with all his heart: his wife and God (see Deuteronomy 6:5; D&C 42:22).

The point is that God created gender and determined that the male component was to be married to the female component in a binding relationship. The Hebrew verb *dbq*, translated “cleave” in the King James Bible, means “to cling, adhere to.”¹² The adherence was to be so complete that the two were to become “as one flesh” (*bāśār ’eḥād*). The Hebrew reveals that marriage, as God designed it, was to be “the deepest corporeal and spiritual unity of man and woman.”¹³

To describe this relationship, the New Testament uses the words *sarx mian*, “one flesh,” and the King James translation notes that “they [the man and his wife] are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder” (Matthew 19:5–6). The Greek word translated “joined” is *synezeuxen*, literally “to yoke together” as a team.¹⁴ Genesis says, therefore, that God created the male and the female “and blessed them, and called *their* name Adam” (Genesis 5:2; emphasis added).¹⁵ Thus the phrase *sarx mian* describes the divine union between a man and woman that was not to be broken up by mortals.¹⁶

God had another reason for establishing and safeguarding marriage. When he first created the pair, he told them to “be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it” (Genesis 1:28). He enlisted marriage in his work “to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39). As he said, referring to the man and woman together, “We will prove *them* herewith, to see if *they* will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command *them*; . . . and *they* who keep *their* second estate [that is, pass their mortal probation] shall have glory added upon *their* heads for ever and ever” (Abraham 3:25–26; emphasis added).

In sum, God ordained marriage for four major purposes: to make one flesh, to fill the earth, to subdue it, and to assist him in his work of bringing to pass the eternal life of humankind. For him, marriage was not something to trifle with or take lightly. Indeed, it lay at the heart of all he wanted and wants to do for his children.

“Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery”

To protect marriage and its sacred purposes, God put strong safeguards around it.¹⁷ These included his laws against sexual immorality.

Fidelity to partner—that is, clinging to him or her alone—rests at the center of the whole. Therefore, adultery is specifically forbidden. The Lord is clear when he says, “Thou shalt not commit adultery” (Exodus 20:14). So important is this commandment that the Lord has repeated it in both ancient and modern scripture (see, for example, Deuteronomy 5:18; Matthew 19:18; Mosiah 13:22; D&C 59:6).

Adultery, for the purposes of this paper, means a married person engaging in sexual relations with someone other than his or her spouse. The Hebrew *n'p* and Greek *moicheia*, though translated as “adultery,” did, in some instances, include other kinds of immorality.¹⁸ The Proverbs particularly condemn adultery, teaching that “whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul” (Proverbs 6:32; see also 7:1–27).¹⁹

The Lord was very clear on the punishment for those who broke this law—both were to die. According to Deuteronomy 22:22, “If a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then they shall both of them die, *both* the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: so shalt thou put away evil from Israel.” The severity of the punishment emphasizes how abhorrent the sin was to God. There is good reason: God designed biblical law to sustain a familial society, and the central social offense to his intent was adultery. He placed it on the same level as murder in that both require the same penalty—death.²⁰

God’s feelings did not diminish in New Testament times. In fact, the book sharply broadens and intensifies the concept of adultery. No longer was it just a matter of physical intercourse, as it was in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, it now included desire and lust. Both, the Savior said, broke the law of fidelity that he demanded of his disciples (see Matthew 5:27–30). In doing so, “Jesus as a religious teacher [tried] to make men realize how absolute is the divine requirement.”²¹

Jesus sharpened the concept of adultery in another way. He taught, “It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her

to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery” (Matthew 5:32). He assured his hearers that “Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so” (19:8). With these words we see that Jesus rejected the permissive attitude toward divorce that some Pharisees held, especially those who followed the views of the contemporary Jewish leader Rabbi Hillel.²² Jesus proved that divorce “is in conflict with the will of God. . . . For this reason the remarriage of a man after divorcing his wife, or the remarrying of the divorced woman, is tantamount to adultery.”²³

The preaching of the Apostles shows they took very seriously the Lord’s assessment of adultery. Nowhere do they budge on the importance of marital fidelity as an unconditional and ongoing divine commandment (see 1 Corinthians 5:1–5; 6:9). Adultery was more than a matter of civil law (see Romans 7:3); its prohibition was based on the holy will of God (see 1 Thessalonians 4:3; 1 Corinthians 6:18). This included both males and females (see 1 Peter 3:7).

We find in Hebrews 13:4 a particular stress that marital fidelity must be maintained at all times.²⁴ Just because no one found out about an affair, that would not make it proper. The omniscient God, the writer assured his readers, would be the judge of the adulterer (compare Hebrews 10:30–31).

In summary, the New Testament no longer confined the Old Testament prohibition of adultery to the mere avoidance of the sinful act. The commandment, in the gospel sense, finds its true fulfillment only in the love of spouses who are joined together by God (see Romans 13:9). Under the new law, the uncontrolled—even impulsive—lustful glance is sinful (see 2 Peter 2:14).²⁵ In sharpening his position vis-à-vis the Old Testament, the Lord gave a higher standard for those who would be his disciples.

Nothing has changed today. In both the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord commanded, “Thou shalt not commit adultery, and he that committeth adultery, and repenteth not shall be cast out” (D&C 42:24).²⁶ With those words, the Old Testament prohibition became part of the Restoration. But what of the New

Testament position? In the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord says, “He that looketh upon a woman to lust after her shall deny the faith, and shall not have the Spirit; and if he repents not he shall be cast out” (D&C 42:23; see also 63:16). Even unrepentant, lustful looks evidence spiritual bankruptcy and are cause for concern and could lead to disciplinary action. From these verses we can see that the Lord’s attitude has not softened toward this sin.

Flee Fornication

Adultery is not, however, the only sexual sin that comes under God’s censure. In the book of Leviticus, the Lord gives a comprehensive list of sexual sins and forbids Israel from engaging in any of them.



God established laws to sustain a familial society. (Photo by Matt Reier, © Intellectual Reserve, Inc.)

Because the Canaanites practiced various polluting sexual sins, according to the Lord, “the land [was] defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants” (Leviticus 18:6–25).

These sins did not come under the more specific heading of the Hebrew *n'p* or the Greek *moicheia*, both denoting the sin of adultery,²⁷ but the more general *znh*, “to be immoral,” or *porneia*, the act of fornication.²⁸ The Old Testament prophets used the term *znh* very broadly, but more specifically to designate the house of Israel’s turning from God to idolatry. More literally, it denoted prostitution.²⁹ At heart, however, it demonstrated an act of apostasy from a love relationship. The Proverbs condemn every form of extramarital sex and uphold marital chastity as the only standard (see Proverbs 5:1–23).

The Greek term for fornication, *porneia*, is derived from *pornēmi*, to sell. Thus, a *pornē* was often used to denote a woman for hire—that is, a prostitute. In the classical world, the word group could refer to harlots, prostitution, and sexual debauchery.³⁰ This was also the case among Jews and later among Christians. The Diaspora Jews who translated the Hebrew Bible into Greek adopted the word group *porneuō* to translate *znh* and its cognates (for example, see Deuteronomy 23:17; Hosea 3:3; 4:14). This set of words denoted all kinds of immorality, including adultery, but emphasized prostitution. By the second century BC, however, the Jews had diminished the particular emphasis on prostitution and broadened *porneia* to include all forms of extramarital sexual relations, and the early Christians took up this nuance.³¹

The Apostle Paul stressed the incompatibility of *porneia* with the kingdom of God. For him, such acts unmasked apostasy. No *pornos*, therefore, could have any part in God’s kingdom (see 1 Corinthians 6:9; Ephesians 5:5). The Church had to excommunicate such people because a man not only shamed his own body but also brought blame upon the temple of God (see 1 Corinthians 6:19) and could jeopardize the operation of the Spirit of God within it (see 1 Corinthians 3:16–17). The reason was that licentiousness expressed the unbridled passions of the flesh (Galatians 5:19) and therefore opposed the work of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22).

Some have suggested that the New Testament shows a softening attitude toward *porneia*. Such is not the case. It is true that the Lord invited publicans and sinners into his fold, and those likely included repentant harlots (see Luke 7:36–50; Matthew 9:10–11; Mark 2:15; Luke 15:1–2). However, he did this—and this is the point that is often overlooked—only on condition of repentance (see John 8:11). The *porneia* must be repented from, for it was at heart an anti-God state of mind that excluded the person from fellowship (see Matthew 15:18–19).

In sum, as with adultery, the New Testament heightened the Old Testament prohibition on fornication, making the sin not only a physical act but also a state of heart. Those whose lives and hearts were set on *porneia* polluted the body of Christ and had to be cut off for the sake of the holiness of the Church. Nothing less would do, for to compromise was to destroy the communal body of the Saints.

Again, Restoration scripture follows the New Testament lead. The Book of Mormon prohibits fornication outright (see Jacob 3:12), with God insisting that “whoredoms are an abomination before me” (Jacob 2:28). In this connection, Mormon ascribes the destruction of many Nephites to the murders and fornications that were so rampant among them (Helaman 8:26). But none are clearer on the depth of the sexual sin than is Alma. To his immoral son, Corianton, Alma asked, “Know ye not my son, that these things are an abomination in the sight of the Lord; yea, most abominable above all sins save it be the shedding of innocent blood or denying the Holy Ghost?” (Alma 39:5). He clearly viewed fornication as among the worst of sins.

The Doctrine and Covenants contains little on the sin. Even so, it prohibits admitting anyone guilty of fornication into the Church unless “they shall repent of all their sins” (D&C 42:77); that is, they must change not only their actions, but their hearts as well.

Other Sexual Sins

In the Old Testament, additional sexual sins came under the Lord’s censure. His law clearly forbade sexual violence, rape, and seduction (see Deuteronomy 22:23–29 and Exodus 22:16, 17), and a heavy penalty was levied against anyone who committed them. The perpetrator



Keeping God's commandments marks the shortest and most secure path to joy. (© Intellectual Reserve, Inc.)

had to pay the family fifty shekels of silver and marry the woman without right of divorce. If she refused his hand, he had to pay the virgin's dowry price (see Exodus 22:17). Thus, possessing a double dowry, the victim became attractive to other suitors.³²

There were other sexual sins that, though they fit under the broad category of *porneia*, were sometimes separated out for emphasis. Among these were homosexual relations. The Lord, in Leviticus 18:22, 20:13 (the holiness code), and Deuteronomy 23:17, condemned homosexual acts, making them (like adultery) punishable by death.³³ In God's words, "If a man also lie with mankind as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them" (Leviticus 20:13).

Paul condemned the same act and thus brought the Old Testament position under the new covenant. He asked the Corinthian Saints, a people well acquainted with every kind of sexual immorality, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind . . . shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 6:9; see also Romans 1:26–27).³⁴

It is important to note that same-sex attraction does not come under condemnation, but acting on that attraction does. Those who have these feelings are sons and daughters of God and are embraced by his love. As President Gordon B. Hinckley has stated, “They may have certain inclinations which are powerful and which may be difficult to control. Most people have inclinations of one kind or another at various times. If they do not act upon these inclinations, then they can go forward as do all other members of the Church. If they violate the law of chastity and the moral standards of the Church, then they are subject to the discipline of the Church, just as others are.”³⁵

Conclusion

Paul’s discussion clearly demonstrates that God’s laws against immorality, as reflected in the Old Testament, are still relevant in the New Testament. The Savior, as noted at the beginning of this paper, was very clear on his moral standard: “Thou shalt not commit adultery,” and that act included “whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her” (Matthew 5:27–28). It is clear that the gospel did not replace the Mosaic law but fulfilled it (see Matthew 5:17) by bringing in a higher standard. Under the gospel, all extramarital sexual relationships remain sins, just like murder, theft, and covetousness. The coming of Christ did not abolish the ethical portions of the law but instead expanded, sharpened, and fulfilled to its fullest extent.

So where does the clear biblical prohibition on sexual sin leave us? For many Latter-day Saints, the position is clear and has been articulated so many times by those in authority as to be without doubt. We, however, do not stand alone, and the view of those outside reinforces our position. For example, Stanton Jones observed, “There are only two ways one can neutralize the biblical witness against homosexual [and all other forms of immoral] behavior: by gross misinterpretation or by moving away from a high view of the Scriptures.”³⁶

Another scholar, Mark Smith, asked the obvious question. Since there is no doubt the Bible prohibits all forms of extramarital sexual relations, he asked, “How should Christianity respond?” The question is, do the writings of Paul in particular and the other biblical

authors in general have any meaning for Christianity today? To put it more succinctly, “Does Paul’s perspective represent the word of God to churches?”³⁷ I must admit that I am impressed with Markus Borg’s candid approach to the problem. He notes that the issue is not so much about what the Bible says, but what the Bible is, and I would add what the other scriptures are as well. Are they the expression of God’s laws, Borg asks, or source books helping us to see how people viewed certain practices during specific eras? If one believes the Bible to be the word of God, then that person will treat its rules as permanent and binding. If not, then the Bible is a reference book on what people believed anciently and has little relevance to what we believe now.³⁸

For me, the scriptures remain the word of God, expressing his will not only anciently but also today. His words in the scriptures are as valid and binding as ever. They teach me one overarching lesson: God created people to love and to be loved. He commanded us to love him with all our heart, might, mind, and strength; our spouses with all our hearts; and our neighbors as ourselves (see Matthew 22:27–28; Mark 12:29–33; D&C 42:22). None should be outside the circle of that love. God ordained both love and his expression of that love—that is, the commandments—to bring us to joy. We must see his prohibitions against sexual immorality in that context; he wants us to be as he is. That means not only in what we do but in what we think and in how we feel. Because he is pure in body, mind, and heart, he wants us to be pure in the same ways. Thus we must always remember the Lord’s statements: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God” (Matthew 4:8), and “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15).

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Notes

1. Joseph Smith, comp., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2nd ed. rev., ed. B. H. Roberts (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1973), 5:134.

2. The lexical studies in this work come from William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2000), hereafter cited as *BDAG*; Gerhard Kittel, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), hereafter cited as *TDNT*; Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs, eds., *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), hereafter cited as *BDB*; and G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, trans. John T. Willis, 15 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), hereafter cited as *TDOT*.

3. G. Quell and E. Stauffer, “ἀγαπάω,” in *TDNT*, 1:21–55; Leon Morris, *Testaments of Love* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), 128.

4. Morris, *Testaments of Love*, 128.

5. Both the noun and the verb come from the stem *’hb*, “to show love or affection.” *BDB*, 12–13.

6. Morris, *Testaments of Love*, 12.

7. H. H. Rowley, *The Faith of Israel* (London: Westminster Publishing, 1956), 65.

8. The Joseph Smith Translation translates this as follows: “Thou shalt worship no other god: for the Lord, whose name is Jehovah, is a jealous God.” Though it clarifies the name of God, it underscores that he possesses the attribute of “jealousy.”

9. E. Reuter, “אָנֵן,” in *TDOT*, 13:47–58.

10. Rousas John Rushdoony, *Institutes of Biblical Law* (Phillipsburg, NJ: The Craig Press, 1973), 24–25.

11. *BDB*, 740. See also C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, reprint, 1976), 1:87–91.

12. *BDB*, 179–80. The word means “cling to, stick to, cleave” and was used to describe soldering scales on a breastplate. See G. Wallis, *TDOT*, 3:79–84.

13. Keil, *Commentary*, 1:90. Though this work is dated, the point it makes is very well taken.

14. *BDAG*, 954.

15. According to Rushdoony, “Adam was given Eve, *first*, not in fulfillment of a *natural* or merely *sexual* need, although this was recognized (Gen. 2:20), but, after delay, in fulfillment of his need for a ‘helpmeet,’ which is what Eve is called. She is thus very clearly a *helper* to Adam in his life and work as God’s covenant man.” *Institutes of Biblical Law*, 343.

16. Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14–28* (Dallas: Word Book Publishers, 1995), 548.

17. “*The covenant family* is central to the Kingdom of God and hence marriage was at its inception hedged about with safeguards in order to establish the precedent of responsibility.” Rushdoony, *Institutes of Biblical Law*, 342.

18. H. J. Fabray, “אָנֵן,” in *TDOT*, 9:113–16; F. Hauck, “μοιχεύω,” in *TDNT*, 4:729–35. See, for example, Jeremiah 3:9; Ezekiel 23:37; Luke 16:18; Romans 2:22.

19. The adulterer or adulteress is worse than the prostitute, for the latter takes mere payment, while the former, in his or her lust, devours the partner with fatal consequences.

20. Rushdoony, *Institutes of Biblical Law*, 395.

21. F. Hauck, “μοιχεύω,” in *TDNT*, 4:734. The story of the woman taken in adultery (see John 8:1–8) is often used to suggest that the Lord softened his views on the act. The context, however, shows us that the Lord was only rejecting the purely legal view of the law (see vv. 4–5). He took this same stand in connection with the contested estate (Luke 12:13–14). In the case of the woman taken in adultery, he did not say the woman should not be stoned. What he did demand was that all requirements of the law be met, namely the judges must be free from sin as well. She no doubt came under the death penalty, but he maintained a religious and moral position vis-à-vis the law. He appealed to a judgment of conscience: only he who himself was without sin should cast the stone. Jesus did grant the woman pardon, but this only on condition of repentance. He preserved the unconditional demand of God by adding his stiff warning that the woman must “sin no more” (John 8:11). Thus his was not a civil judgment but rather a religious one. He in no way interfered with whatever action her husband, if she had one, might have taken against her.

22. Mishnah, *Gittin*, 9:10; Hagner, *Matthew 14–28*, 33b:547.

23. F. Hauck, “μοιχεύω,” in *TDNT*, 4:733. In this regard, see Matthew 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11–13; Luke 16:18.

24. In this passage, Paul admonishes the reader to “let the marriage be held in honor among all” (*Timios ho gamnos en pasin*). In so doing, he places the responsibility upon the whole community to safeguard marriage. He further exhorts his audience to “let the marriage-bed remain pure” (*hē koitē amiantos*). (Here *koitē*, literally “bed,” is a euphemism for marital sex. Again, it is the responsibility of the Christian community to protect the sacred character of intimacy. Those who do not, Paul assures his readers, will find God to be their judge.

25. F. Hauck, “μοιχεύω,” in *TDNT*, 4:734. Second Peter 2:14 contains a clear warning against those who “have eyes full of adultery” and thereby “cannot cease from sin” (literally “are insatiable for sin,” *akatapaustous hamartias*). The idea is that once one falls so deeply into sin, there is no restraint.

26. In the Book of Mormon, see 3 Nephi 12:27–32.

27. *BDB*, 610; *BDAG*, 656–57. The Hebrew *taznūt* was used generally to mean fornication, but more specifically for whoring. *BDB*, 276. For an example, see Ezekiel 16:5, 29.

28. *BDB*, 266; *BDAG*, 854.

29. S. Erlandsson, “זנה,” in *TDOT*, 4:99–101.

30. Cultic prostitution (widespread in Asia Minor) carried no stigma to it, since the debased religion required that most girls give their virginity to the gods. The same

is true of hierodules, or temple prostitutes, whose wages went to the gods. But this did not carry over into Judaism. See F. Hauck and S. Schulz, “πορνή,” in *TDNT*, 6:580–81.

31. F. Hauck and S. Schulz, “πορνή,” in *TDNT*, 6:580–81. *Porneia* differs from adultery in some uses. Note that Matthew 15:19 lists both fornication and adultery as offenses against God (see also Mark 7:21). Though Romans 1:29, 9:21, and 1 Corinthians 6:15–16 include all sexual sins, the word generally denoted lewdness, illicit sex between unmarried partners, and whoring. 1 Corinthians 6:13, 19 looks specifically at prostitution. Galatians 5:19, 21 shows it companies with adultery, uncleanness, and licentiousness. Ephesians 5:3 says that, like uncleanness and covetousness, it should not exist among the Saints. Colossians 4:5 lists it with uncleanness and insists that it, with other gross vices, must be put to death. All these show the word is very broad, and though it can include uncleanness, licentiousness, and adultery, it can also stand apart from them to include other sexual sins: for example, incest, pederasty, and homosexual practices. Rushdoony, *Institutes of Biblical Law*, 407.

32. Rushdoony, *Institutes of Biblical Law*, 397.

33. There is some debate on the interpretation of these scriptures. A careful look at the scriptures, however, shows that there is little question but that they condemn same-sex immorality.

34. For a discussion of these issues, see Mark D. Smith, “Ancient Bisexuality and the Interpretation of Romans 1:276–27,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* (Summer 1996): 223–51.

35. Gordon B. Hinckley, “What Are People Asking about Us?,” *Ensign*, November 1998, 71.

36. Stanton L. Jones, *Christianity Today*, July 19, 1993, 20.

37. Smith, “Ancient Bisexuality,” 250–51.

38. Marcus J. Borg, “Homosexuality and the New Testament,” *Bible Review*, December 1994, 20–21.