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## **Adultery, Wife-Swapping, Cheating & Divorce**

**By David Wilkerson**

September 1, 1977 There is a media blitz aimed at the destruction of the Christian home. Satan is out to wreck every marriage, to break up every Christian couple and destroy the God-ordained concept of "faithful...till death do us part."

TV and magazine writers have begun a relentless attack on the old-fashioned idea of "being true to one another." They suggest that every marriage needs an "outside affair" and that marriage can be more healthy with a little cheating on the side. They would have us believe that everybody is cheating a little, that it is normal to be torn between two lovers. Adultery, wife-swapping and cheating is now so prevalent, we don't even raise an eyebrow about it. The pressure to cheat is getting stronger among Christians, too.

How in the world can God wink at the way so many Christians now discard their mates through separation and divorce? Christians by the thousands, including a host of ministers, are running off to divorce courts and forsaking their vows so they can pick up with someone else. Divorce is no more sinful today than spitting on the street.

Those who call it quits talk about being incompatible, that the marriage cannot be healed, that all love is gone, that it would be worse on them and the kids if they stuck it out. They don't want to stifle their personalities. Often, that is the case. On a few occasions, divorce is inevitable. But, in my observations, nine out of ten divorced people are dating someone else shortly after, and even during the divorce. The divorce is a way to discard an old lover for a new one. And so often the second marriage is no better. I have counseled many who confessed their second and third marriages were even worse than the first. People headed for divorce ought to look around and ask a few questions of others who have taken that route. Only a few are really happy the second time around. Usually, it's like jumping from the frying pan into the fire. Divorce is a dead end street - and life with another partner hardly ever provides lasting joy and peace. When two divorced people marry each other, it is usually a union between two losers. They bring to their second marriage a bundle of unsolved problems.

Divorce and remarriage is not the true plan of God, and only those who are innocent victims find a measure of happiness in another union. There are occasions where a person could not avoid divorce and remarried in the will of God. But, even then, both partners have to work and pray extra hard to maintain their love and joy. But, they are exceptions to the rule.

What a terrible shame, that so many Christians who claim Christ can heal and that God answers prayer cannot accept or believe Him for healing of their marriage. I am convinced that if two people really want to make the marriage work, and they are not secretly wanting someone else, the situation is seldom hopeless.

My heart breaks to see so many beautiful homes breaking up. It's frightening to see couples splitting up, even those who would seem to be so beautifully matched. We are right now experiencing a flood of separations and divorces among Christian couples. and all the "experts" are probing into the problem, trying to find out why one of every two marriages now end in failure.

Usually, husbands and wives cheat on one another because they no longer communicate with each other, or because they have grown apart. That is not always the case today. I have been counseling with a number of husbands and wives who claim to be deeply in love with their mates, who

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communicate well, who enjoy sexual fulfillment with each other, but who got caught up in a secret involvement on the side. They can give me no reason for turning to someone else, other than to say, "It just happened. We got thrown together, we began sharing with each other, working together, and we just started respecting each other. I love the one I married, but have such great respect for..."

There is a great difference between the swinger and the repentant adulterer. The swinger has an affair and hides it. He flaunts it, savors every moment of its secret allure, and he shows no sign of guilt or sorrow. He is willing to take the risk of getting caught. He plays a Russian roulette game of lust - secret meeting places, hushed phone calls, "business trips," coded notes and greetings, and an endless string of lies and deception. He goes to church acting like everything is pure and holy about him - and he shakes off all conviction by the Holy Spirit. He is given over to a lie, convinced his affair is different, and that God understands his need to be with someone else. The cheating wife plays the same game, but she usually overcompensates for her guilt by being extra kind and loving to her husband.

It is quite another thing for a husband or wife to get caught in Satan's trap, an unwitting, unwilling victim. This sorry husband or wife despises the compromise, weeps with guilt and prays constantly for strength to overcome. There is a sense of shame for having grieved the Holy Spirit. There is a fear of exposure, but more than that, a fear of hurting children and friends. While the cheating swinger justifies what he is doing, this sorry adulterer cries out from the depths of the soul, "Oh God, deliver me from the snare of Satan. Fill me with your holiness. Purify me. Set me free. Let me never disgrace your holy name."

A man who was caught recently in a compromising situation told me, "I'll bet almost every husband and wife has been in the arms of another person since they were married. I don't think there is anyone who hasn't kissed some other man or woman on the sly."

Another troubled man said to me, "I just don't think there are any really happy marriages left nowadays. Everybody's having trouble, and that's why so many are looking for someone else to talk to. They want to be understood. The woman wants someone to tell her she's still attractive, she wants tenderness. He wants peace and quiet and a little more thrill and romance. All these husbands and wives running around with such need is explosive. It ends in an affair."

I believe Jesus still forgives sorry adulterers. He allowed no one to cast stones or accusations against anyone caught in the act of adultery - if that person was repentant and willing to "go and sin no more."

I met an evangelist on a plane trip from Toronto to Dallas. This well-known brother sat opposite me, kissing a young secretary and drinking one cocktail after another. I jumped up, knelt beside him and rebuked him with real Christian love. He was shocked. I promised never to expose his adultery and drinking if he would forsake the woman and the bottle, return home to his wife, and ask God for help. He cried and thanked me for being so understanding and forgiving.

Two weeks later, he abandoned his wife, took off with his young secretary, and continued his drinking, adulterous ways. The man is still traveling, preaching - and living in sin. But, worst of all, he flaunts his adultery. He boasts, "Why, I've been doing this kind of thing every since I got saved. It's happened before. It's all right. I have these great physical needs. God is with me - He understands."

No! Never! God does not understand that kind of blasphemy. We must restore every fallen brother

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and sister in Christ, if they repent and are willing to change their ways. But, we must never coddle and comfort those who flaunt their sexual deviation.

I and all my minister friends are not above being tempted to unfaithfulness. Even the pastors of our largest churches, our most respected evangelists, the most saintly of God's servants all are capable of an escapade. Satan is determined to deceive "the elect, the very chosen of God." And, we should take heed when we think we stand, lest we fall. In a moment of weakness, any Christian can yield to the allure of another's charm. But it doesn't have to be. Christ has the power to keep us faithful. If we want it, there is ample strength and courage available to us to resist every enticement. Most important of all, we must hate the very thought of adultery and fornication. We must view it as a cancer that destroys everything that is sacred and holy.

I'm so righteously indignant at the devil's attempt to destroy Christian marriages, I want to wade into the problem with both arms swinging. Let's quit all the lying and game playing and get right to the heart of the problem. If you've got problems in your marriage, you better listen good. What I have to say refers only to true followers of Jesus.

I asked God in prayer one day why so many ministers - why so many apparently godly people, including evangelists, pastors, key laymen - are leaving their wives and falling in love with someone new. Why do they divorce and live in adultery? Why are multiplied thousands of Christians giving up on their marriages - separating and quitting?

The answer? Self-gratification, rather than seeking the glory and righteousness of the Father. Jesus said,

"He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him" (John 7:18)

The quitters are not seeking only the glory of God! They are not consumed with a desire to please Him alone. No! They prefer their own glory - their own gratification. Jesus said, in essence,

"You would remain true to your vows, there would be no desire to commit adultery, to divorce - there would be no unrighteousness in you, if you really wanted to seek my glory alone."

Nowadays, it's all me, mine! My satisfaction! My growth and development! My need for fulfillment! My loneliness! My frustration and emptiness! My yearning for someone to really understand. It's all self-centered. It's all focused on the needs of one's own self. What God thinks is now secondary. What brings glory to God is subjugated to what brings happiness to the individual. No more going the second mile. No more returning to the first love after repenting and changing. No more striving. No more repudiation of self! No more feeling for the other person's need! No more putting aside of selfish needs - it's all "give me what I need to be happy - no matter what it costs."

We have become so proud and self-centered. That pride is so strong today, many couples just exist with each other - in a living hell - only because they are too proud to split. And, if one of the partners does split, the other is often hurt only in their pride. When she walks out, his pride is hurt because he thinks people will consider him a failure. What a shame! Down with all this stinking pride. Away with worrying what other people will say! We should fall on our knees and ask God to forgive us for ever thinking of running out on our marriages.

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Yes, husbands do cheat. They run off on their wives. Some men are homosexuals and divorce may be the only way out. Wives do get fed up and leave. They do fall for someone else and take off. They move into their own apartments and try to make it on their own. but the real tragedy is that 95% of all this foolishness could be stopped! The majority of divorces should never have been. Most of those being contemplated should be stopped.

How? Beginning with you, sir. If you still love that woman and are not involved in a secret affair; if you are willing to change and be the man God wants you to be; if you are wanting your marriage to continue; if you have forsaken all your secret sins - then get alone with God and get right with Him! Your trouble is really not your wife; it is your poor relationship with your Savior! And you, Madam, I don't believe God will accept the excuse that "You just don't love him anymore." You may have left your first love somewhere back in all the agony and hurting. But God says,

"Repent, remember how it was, and go back and do it all over again" (Revelation 3:3).

Your second love for each other can be greater than the first. There is a first and a second love, and the second is always better. Nothing is dead when we serve a creative God.

Are you cheating! In love with someone else? If not, get alone with God and repair your lines of communication. Your first love for Jesus got misplaced, and that is why everything else in your life is out of focus.

You don't need to sit down with a counselor and rehash the past. You both need to humble yourselves and go separately to God asking for a renewed love for Jesus and a new sense of His holiness and righteousness. You don't mend fences by just talking things out. No! You pray it all out until there is nothing left but a willingness to obey God. And, God said,

"I hate divorce - let there be no divorcing..." (Malachi 2:15). LB

God hates it - you must hate it, too. And if your marriage is really hopeless, then having done all - stand still and let Him direct all the moves.

Take any two lovely people, male and female. Put them right up in front of the congregation, surrounded by weeping, praying saints. Let them sing, preach, pray and worship with the others. But, if those two have let down their standards, if they are indulging, if they have become adulterers before the eyes of God, she is a prostitute and he is a fornicator. All the talking in tongues won't change a thing. And if they keep on flaunting their sin, hiding it, going about as if no one knows or will ever find out, if they have no shame - watch out! God will hang them up and make a spectacle out of them. God will eventually expose them before all. If God's people would claim but two powerful promises, adultery and divorce could be avoided:

"Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24).

"For with God, nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37).