

Is Adultery Ever Justified?

Many families today are infected and polluted with sin. Selfishness and fleshly lusts have led to broken marriages and shattered homes. Lives are scarred by spiritual, emotional and physical wounds. The union of one man and one woman is not upheld honorably by many, but rather, adultery litters society's landscape.

God will judge adulterers (Hebrews 13:4). His inspired word condemns this sin (I Corinthians 6:9; James 4:4), describing it as a work of the flesh (Galatians 5:19). Adultery is unlawful sexual relations with the spouse of another person. The guilty persons may both be married, or just one of them married, but neither have the right to each other's body. Its wickedness is rooted in a disregard and disrespect for the relationship between a man and a woman, whom God has joined together, and the life-long commitment of intimacy.

Adultery, like all sin, is lawlessness and unrighteousness (I John 3:4; 5:17). God does not simply overlook unlawful sexual affairs, but He does grant forgiveness to penitent believers who obey Him. Jewish leaders once brought an adulteress to Jesus to see what the Lord would do. Christ exposed the evil motives of the scribes and Pharisees, and in the end, the Lord showed mercy and commanded the woman, "*Sin no more*" (John 8:11). Adulterers and adulteresses can be saved, but they must repent like all sinners (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 17:30). Repentance is a change of heart and of conduct. Although God's amazing grace provides the remission of sins, believers do not continue in sin so that grace may abound more on their behalf (Romans 6:1). A saved adulterer does NOT continue to commit adultery. Some of the Christians in the church at Corinth had committed adultery, but that was in their past, the old man of sin, before they were washed, sanctified and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus (I Corinthians 6:9-11).

With the increase of divorces, there has been an increase of remarriages. Listen carefully to what the Lord Jesus Christ taught regarding marrying again and the sin of adultery. "*And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for fornication, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.*" (Matthew 19:9) "*Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her. And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.*" (Mark 10:11, 12) "*Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced from her husband commits adultery.*" (Luke 16:18) All marriages are NOT lawful and honorable unions before God. Legally entering marriage according to civil laws does not justify adultery. The Lord plainly stated that a man or a woman who marry again commits adultery, if they did not divorce their previous spouse because of sexual immorality. God does not justify, nor excuse, adultery in any circumstance. He does call all adulterers and adulteresses to repentance, and repentance demands a change – even a change of relationships when necessary to walk in the light of God.