Warnings Against Adultery

(by Wes Gossett)

I heard something on the radio this morning that floored me. The people on the radio program were discussing the topic of adultery. They had received information about a specific scandal going on and asked for input from the listening audience. The first caller I heard grew up in a home where her father was cheating on her mother. The mother and children knew about the ongoing scandal and to hear the first caller describe her childhood was – heartbreaking. She was to the point of tears when she hung up. But the very next caller unashamedly admitted she was having an affair with two different married men! My jaw hit the floor. I thought to myself, *“We (the human race) are a terrible people! Do we not care about the consequences of adultery?”*

In **Genesis 20**, we see some serious consequences of taking another person’s spouse, but first we need to lay the foundation. Abraham and Sarah were sojourning in the land of Gerar where Abimelech was king. Abraham was afraid that the people would kill him because of his wife Sarah. So Abraham told Sarah to say that she was his sister (Abraham had told Sarah to say the same thing back in **Genesis 12:13**). When Abimelech heard that Sarah was Abraham’s sister, he sent for her and took her. And it was before he ever approached or touched Sarah (**Genesis 20:4**) that he received these warnings:

**‘You are a dead man.’**

***“Behold you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man’s wife”*** (**Genesis 20:3**). This offense was so severe that God saw that the only fit punishment was death. However, Abimelech was not the only one who would receive this punishment: ***“you shall surely die, you and all who are yours”*** (**Genesis 20:7**). Abimelech’s family and nation would also receive this punishment.

This punishment was fitting even though Abimelech had taken Sarah in clear conscience. He had not known she was another’s wife. God was still going to hold him accountable. Abimelech pleaded his case with God. God said, ***“Yes, I know that you have done this in the integrity of your heart, and it was I who kept you from sinning against Me. Therefore, I did not let you touch her”*** (**Genesis 20:6**). God had provided a way for him not to sin. It was up to Abimelech to return Sarah to Abraham.

**‘You will have no children.’**

***“For the Lord had closed all the wombs of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham’s wife”*** (**Genesis 20:18**). God was not going to allow Abimelech the ability to have children even by his own wife if he committed this sin. As a king, if he had had no previous children, then this sin would’ve stopped his lineage and brought great shame upon his name. This sin would’ve cost him his lineage.

Therefore, the morning after God’s warnings, Abimelech rose early to tell his servants about the warnings and to send for Abraham. The servants upon hearing the warnings were *“very much afraid.”* Abimelech and his servants did not want to pay the price for this sin and therefore did as God told Abimelech to do.

***“Return the man’s wife, for he is a prophet, so that he will pray for you, and you shall live”*** (**Genesis 20:7**). Abimelech not only returned Sarah, but he also sent Abraham sheep, oxen, and servants. ***“Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech, and also healed his wife and female slaves so that they bore children”*** (**Genesis 20:17**).

We need to be a society of Abimelechs; which fears God & the consequences of breaking His marriage law. We need to pray for our society in this matter. And if you know people (including “Christians”) caught up in this sin, please warn them with the words of Paul: ***“Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers…will inherit the kingdom of God”*** (**1 Corinthians 6:9-10**).

***“Can a man carry fire next to his chest and his clothes not be burned? Or can one walk on hot coals and his feet not be scorched? So is he who goes in to his neighbor's wife; none who touches her will go unpunished.”***

(**Proverbs 6:27-29**)

**Beatitudes For Marriage**

(Selected)

* **Blessed** are the husband and wife who continue to be affectionate, considerate, and loving through all the days of their life together.
* **Blessed** are the husband and wife who are as polite and courteous to one another as they are to their friends.
* **Blessed** are the husband and wife who have a sense of humor, for this will be a handy shock absorber.
* **Blessed** are they who love each other more than any other person in the world, and who joyfully fulfill their marriage vow of a lifetime of fidelity as husband and wife.
* **Blessed** are they who thank God for their blessings, and who set aside some time each day for the reading of the Bible and prayer.
* **Blessed** are they who never speak harshly to each other and who make their home a place of mutual encouragement and love.
* **Blessed** are the husband and wife who can work out their problems without interference from relatives.
* **Blessed** are the husband and wife who dedicate their lives and their home to the advancement of Christ and His kingdom.

***“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them.”***

(**Colossians 3:17-19**)