

Integrity in Relationship

Scripture Reading — Ephesians 5:3-20

"You shall not commit adultery." Exodus 20:14 —

Have you heard about the Sunday school class studying these commandments? The teacher asked the class if anyone knew what adultery was. One child put up his hand and guessed: "It's the sin of pretending to be an adult when you're still a little kid."

That definition may cause us to smile, but when we look at it closely, we can see that the child's answer touches on something significant. Adultery is about a devastating form of pretending.

The most common definition of adultery is sexual unfaithfulness in marriage. But that's not really at the heart of adultery, because marriage is not first of all about sex. The heart of a marriage relationship is about sharing love, pledging faithfulness, giving trust to someone and then, in return, receiving those same gifts from your spouse. When people play around with that trust and yet act as if things are okay with their spouse and with God, they are pretending to honor promises that are being broken. Relationships are damaged--even destroyed.

Because we're human, we know that in all our relationships damage happens. But God calls us to confess our sins to each other, take the damage to Jesus, and tap the grace by which we are forgiven and we forgive others. Pursuing this path with integrity leads to restoring our relationship with God.

Prayer

Lord, we all have some connection to marriage, even if we're not married. Help spouses pursue faithfulness in love; help us all to honor our covenants without pretense. Amen.

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