

# IMMORALITY

- I. Representative Biblical references
  - A. Old Testament
    - 1. Hebrew word *zannah* - "adultery, fornication or harlot"
    - 2. Representative usage
      - Gen. 38:24 - "your daughter-in-law has played the harlot"
      - Ps. 106:39 - "they became unclean in their practices, and played the harlot in their deeds"
      - Prov. 5:1-23 (whole chapter)
      - Prov. 7:1-27 (whole chapter)
  - B. New Testament
    - 1. Greek words
      - porneia* - (noun) - "immorality"
      - porneuo* - (verb) - "to commit acts of immorality"
      - porne* - (noun) - "prostitute, harlot"
      - pornos* - (noun) - "immoral persons, male prostitute"
    - 2. Representative usage
      - Matt. 5:32/19:9 - "divorces..except for the cause of unchastity/immorality"
      - Matt. 15:19/Mk. 7:21 - "out of the heart come adulteries, fornications"
      - Acts 15:20,29; 21:25 - "abstain from idols and from fornication"
      - I Cor. 5:1 - "there is immorality among you..."
      - I Cor. 6:13 - "the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord"
      - I Cor. 6:18 - "flee immorality.. the immoral man sins against his own body"
      - I Cor. 7:2 - "because of immoralities, each man have his own wife"
      - I Cor. 10:8 - "nor let us act immorally"
      - II Cor. 12:21 - "not repented of impurity, immorality, sensuality"
      - Gal. 5:19 - "deeds of the flesh are immorality, impurity, sensuality"
      - Eph. 5:3 - "do not let immorality or impurity be named among you"
      - Col. 3:5 - "consider the members of your body to be dead to immorality, impurity, passion,..which amounts to idolatry"
      - I Thess. 4:3 - "the will of God is your sanctification, that you abstain from sexual immorality"
      - Rev. 2:14,20,21; 9:21; 14:8; 17:2,4; 18:3,9; 19:2
- II. Definition of the terms
  - A. Greek words *porneia* and variables
    - 1. KJV translates as "fornication"
      - a. English usage often refers to premarital sexual relations, but actually broad enough to be synonymous with "immorality"
    - 2. *porneia* refers to sexual intercourse outside of the context of marriage; sexual intercourse between two persons who are not rightfully married as husband and wife.
  - B. English word "immorality"
    - 1. Meaning: "Not consistent with morals"
    - 2. Morals
      - a. From Latin *moralis* - "custom, manners"
      - b. mores - binding customs of a particular group
    - 3. Immorality is whatever is contrary to the societal standards of a particular group

### III. Pornography

- A. What is pornography? How do we determine what is pornographic?
  - 1. Is exposure of the human body wrong?
  - 2. How much exposure? face? (Arabs); arms, legs?(Victorians); torso?; genitals?
  - 3. Exposure in art? Greek statuary. Italian art. Playboy magazine.
- B. U.S. Supreme Court has decided that pornography is determined by local standards of morality and custom.
- C. Defining pornography
  - a. *porneia* - sexual intercourse of persons not married; *graphe* - writing or pictures.
  - b. Technically, pornography is a graphic portrayal of sexual intercourse between persons not married to one another.

### IV. What is the real issue?

- A. The real issue is not morality.
  - 1. Christianity is not morality.
  - 2. Religion tries to attribute morality to actions
  - 3. Sexual intercourse is amoral. God made it possible when he created mankind "male and female" (Gen. 1:27). "Very good" (Gen. 1:31)
  - 4. Spiritual character of good or evil can be expressed within the act
    - a. godly, righteous, faithful character
    - b. sinful, selfish, unfaithful character
  - 5. The problem is not solved by censorship or censure of graphic portrayal or actions; legislated morality
- B. The real issue is the character of God.
  - 1. God's character is that of purity, holiness, faithfulness, love
  - 2. The only way to have and express such is spiritual regeneration
  - 3. Such character will first be found in thought and emotion, and then in action.
    - a. Possible to have sexual intercourse with married spouse and to be "immoral" in character
  - 4. Failure to have God's character in the midst of our sexual thoughts, graphic portrayals and actions will be "immoral"
  - 5. The alternative to having the character of God in such is to have the character of the Evil One, the Devil.
    - a. Immorality and adultery are identified with death  
Prov. 5:5  
Prov. 7:22,23,27
    - b. Immorality and adultery are identified with idolatry
      - (1) To do so is to ascribe "worth" to, and to live for, something other than God.
      - (2) Acts 15:20,29; Gal. 5:19,20; Col. 3:5; Rev. 2:14,20
  - 6. The avoidance and overcoming of immorality is only by the indwelling presence and outworking expression of the character of God in Christ within our sexual thought and behavior.