

## SPIRITUAL ADULTERY

The standard of righteousness is higher than our culture would accommodate. Jesus often redefined or better defined Old Testament standards in His teachings with His “but I say unto you” comments. This can be easily seen when He was talking about adultery in the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 5:27-28

*“You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery'; but I say to you, that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart.”*

Notice that the determination is not limited to a physical involvement, but rather the intent in the heart. This is consistent with marriage being a covenant, where one totally gives him or herself (all he or she is) away – and what was theirs now totally belongs to another.

1 Corinthians 7:2-5

*“But because of immoralities, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.*

*Let the husband fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband.*

*The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband {does} and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife {does.}*

*Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again lest Satan tempt you because of your lack of self-control.”*

Therefore, the spouse owns the body of his/her partner and is, technically, defrauded or robbed if the body is given to another. However, we also know that covenant involves everything we are and possess, which includes the heart. In our covenant with the Lord (Matthew 22:37), He wants us to give Him everything, including our heart. In our marriages, our hearts must also be toward our spouses and not toward any other. Even desiring another’s wife/husband is considered being unfaithful, just as tying yourself emotionally to someone other than your spouse. While married, if you give yourself physically (or intend to) or emotionally to anyone else, you are technically an adulterer.

So, becoming emotionally dependent, focusing your attention on, or wanting someone else dilutes the bond or unity within a marriage and is termed spiritual adultery. No one is allowed to take the place reserved for the spouse unless that partner dies. Even divorce doesn’t really release someone, unless it was due to physical adultery, which is biblical grounds for divorce (and even remarriage, if desired).