

➤ Parenting, marriage & family relationships also test the quality of your love for God.
➤^{ESV} 1 John 4:20 If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for *he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.*²¹ And this commandment we have from him: *whoever loves God must also love his brother.* 5:1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and *everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him.*

➤ A. Example of marriage vs. affairs

➤ *Patterns of guarding spouse-love in marriage are parallel with the relationship to God:* when we get and guard our love-affection for God, the world does not tempt us. For married couples who are nurturing a sense of being "in love" and who are content with the relationship, there is little attraction to having an affair.

➤ *In contrast, if you are easily tempted to love the things in the world, you have lost your love-affection for God (Rev 2:4).* You have ignored or forgotten his romantic care for your needs and the beauty of his holiness. Have you fixated on one or two things that didn't go as you had prayed, now blaming God, losing your romantic love for God? (contrast Job 1:20-22)

Gottman's progression of divorce:

➤ A. Example of marriage vs. affairs

➤ Marriage counseling expert Dr. Willard Harley has observed the dynamics of hundreds of affairs. *He observes that affairs happen when someone other than the spouse meets primary emotional needs, creating a surge of romantic affection (=emotional affair).* If they discuss their feelings, and both approve, then the sexual affair usually begins.

➤ A. Example of marriage vs. affairs

➤ Wives' emotional needs: face to face conversation, affection, financial help, honesty, family presence & help.

➤ Husbands' emotional needs: sexual relationship, recreational companionship, affirmation through touch, domestic support (cooking, cleaning, washing clothes), being able to admire your wife's body/beauty.

➤ A. Example of marriage vs. affairs

➤ One key to saving a marriage from affairs requires restoring the romantic love, the deep affection felt for the spouse.

➤ To protect a marriage from affairs and divorce, each spouse must commit to meeting the emotional needs of the partner, and normally that *requires* living together.

➤ A. Example of marriage vs. affairs

➤^{ESV} 1 Corinthians 7:4 For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.⁵ *Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer, but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.*

➤ A. Example of marriage vs. affairs

➤ "Depriving one another" (=danger mode) is not simply a reference to sexual intercourse. It includes all benefits the spouse derives from your presence and companionship!

➤ Wives: face to face conversation, affection, financial help, checks on honesty, family presence & help;

➤ Husbands: sexual relationship, recreational companionship, affirmation through touch, domestic support (cooking, cleaning, washing clothes), being able to admire your wife's body/beauty.

➤A. Example of marriage vs. affairs

➤Criterion for godly separation (work or necessity):

➤Agreement: Both husband and wife must agree because you have authority over each other's bodies. This means you have the privileges of the bodily comforts (woman: conversation/affection and man: sexual privileges)

➤For a limited time: (limited by the amount of time that you can resist adultery or prevention safeguards can be maintained that allow you to maintain self-control over eyes, heart and body)

➤Devoted to praying while apart: indicates a close spiritual walk with Christ in the absence of the spouse.

➤QUESTION: Are you saying that an affair is the fault of the offended spouse for not meeting the emotional needs of the offending spouse? No sin is always the fault of the offending individual. However, neglect or being sinned against in other ways may drive away one partner to seek comfort and meet needs in another person.

➤QUESTION: What if it seems that my spouse has insatiable needs that I can't seem to satisfy? It seems I can never give enough to please my spouse.

➤ANSWER: Healthy Christian marriage operates on two levels: learning contentment in Christ whether personal needs are met or not (Phil 4:12-13), AND learning to serve the needs of your spouse (Eph 5) with the goal of transforming you into the *servant likeness* of Jesus and transforming your spouse in the *holy likeness* of Jesus. Each needs to learn to be content and thankful; each needs to learn to understand the needs of the spouse and serve those needs with joy and self-sacrifice. Ultimately, God calls you to focus on how you need to change before you can see clearly to take the speck out of your spouse's eye (Matt 7:1-5).

➤QUESTION: What if my spouse continually deprives me in areas of my deepest emotional & physical needs? Can God meet my needs through someone else as long as it doesn't become a sexual affair?

➤ANSWER: These needs should be met by your spouse alone: 1 Cor 7:2-5: "*Do not deprive one another.*" *Because you have authority over your spouse' body, you should expect your spouse to meet your needs.* If you allow another opposite-sex-adult to meet them (or of the same sex if homosexually tempted) this is an emotional affair or dependence (& easily becomes a sexual affair). This damages the relational dynamics that ought to attract married couples toward each other. A husband needs to change so that the delights of the wife become his delights (& vice versa). To resign himself to letting another meet his spouse's needs because he can't seem to change is contrary to the goal of forming Christ's sacrificial love in him: Eph 5. Counseling may assist accountability to change in a resistant spouse.