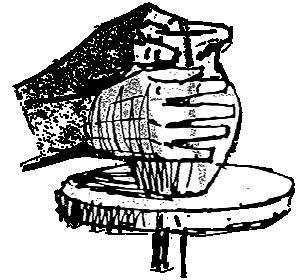


His Workmanship: Westside

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works."

—Ephesians 2:10



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Isaiah 64:8

Forgive: the Forgotten Command, by Rickie Jenkins

We have at least one thing in common: we've all failed someone. Each of us also knows the pain from someone's failure toward us. In a world characterized by personal hurt, even our most significant relationships are fragile. All relationships would eventually disintegrate if not for one healing and hard reality: we are called to be people who forgive and who in turn receive forgiveness, Mt 6:14-15. If we sincerely desire a close walk with God, we already embrace the concept of forgiveness. We know that forgiveness is always the best plan—until the one who needs to do the hard forgiving is me.

There are no easy steps to forgiveness. But we can be confident that what God directs us to do, He also provides the strength to accomplish. Consider the following Biblical principles when we are ready take the freeing steps of forgiveness.

First, consider God's example. Paul wrote, *"forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you,"* Eph 4:32. The word as means that we should handle forgiveness in just the same way God does. How has He handled forgiveness? His forgiveness is abundantly generous. He has forgiven willingly, leaving us free of guilt. He does not put us on probation or parole—He

releases us completely from the debt of sin and offense. It is not something we deserve or earn. God just gives it abundantly! Receiving is the easy part.

Then comes the hard part. Out of His great riches toward us, God asks us to share the grace He has given us with those who have failed us. That sounds really good, but how do we do it? Not without prayer and effort.

Second, we must realize that forgiveness is risky business. The person we forgive might fail us again—and again—perhaps even in the same area. How many times should we forgive someone? Jesus described this as the *"seventy times seven"* factor, Mt 18:22. He said we should set no limits. Forgiveness according to Jesus is not quantitative but qualitative. It is not how many times but how well. It cannot be measured and cannot be counted. It has but one substance, sweet mercy. It is important for us to realize that we have been forgiven. What a terrible price was paid for our forgiveness! What a marvelous attribute of God's kindness that we have been forgiven! Forgiveness cannot be measured. Neither can guilt (which is the ultimate object of forgiveness) be measured. You can't measure guilt, so that you come up with hyper-guilt or multiplied

guilt. Guilt is guilt. My guilt added to your guilt does not make more guilt—it just makes guilt. So it is with forgiveness. Forgiveness is getting rid of the guilt. Extend forgiveness as many times as needed. That is what God does. That is what He asks us to do.

Third, forgiveness is costly because it is not based on feelings but compassion. It means we have to get out of ourselves and feel what the person who hurt us feels. It means consciousness plays a role in compassion. It means we consciously say we know we were wronged but we want to forgive the offender anyway, because we know we also have done wrong in the past. Forgiveness is not related to deservedness but to mercy. Prompted by receiving forgiveness, the forgiven sinner will await opportunities to emulate his Master's forgiving spirit in forgiving others. **Fourth, if we harbor ill-will in our hearts, forgiveness gets harder and harder.** The harder our heart becomes, the more we will have a hardened conscience. Our hard heart says we are not willing to do even a small part for others of what was done for us. An unforgiving person will be hard and eventually will be lost. If we do not have an attitude of forgiveness, then we cannot be forgiven; we will not go to heaven. We don't belong with God.

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"Forgive, and you will be forgiven," Luke 6:37, from p. 1

We will harbor hate when He did not harbor hate against us.

Fifth, forgiveness requires follow up and follow through. Notice how Jesus restored Peter to his place as an apostle after he had denied Him: "So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?' Peter said to Him, 'Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.' He said to him, 'Feed My lambs.' He said to him again a second time, 'Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?' He said to Him, 'Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.' He said to him, 'Tend My sheep.' He said to him the third time, 'Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?' Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, 'Do you love Me?' And he said to Him, 'Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed My sheep.'" Jn 21:15-17. Do you see how Jesus gave Peter the opportunity to affirm his love for His Savior three times (just as he had denied three times)? Do you see how Jesus gave him back the work of an apostle—to feed His sheep? He did not overlook Peter's sin, but restored him to his place among His apostles. "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted," Gal 6:1. Restoration includes action for both the forgiver and the forgiven. The forgiver will see the relationship returned to its former good will. "Turn us back to You, O LORD, and we will be restored; renew our days as of old," Lam 3:21. The person who offended will try to make amends, to mend the relationship, to make things right. In the Old Testament, often the offender had to restore double or triple the value of what was lost or harmed, see Ex 22:1, 4; Lev 6:4-5; 22:14; 24:18-21; 25:27-28; Deut 22:1-4; 1 Sam 12:3; Neh 5:11-12; Job 42:10; Pr 6:31; Lk 19:8. David asked the Lord to "restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit," Ps 51:12; this feeling of having been fully forgiven, believing and accepting that truth, gives us true joy. "Restore us, O God; cause Your face to shine, and we shall be saved!" Ps 80:3, 7, 19. Pray for restoration.

Forgiveness is often neglected in the lives of Christians. Though we fail time and again—and are disappointed often by those we love—Christ forgives and restores. Let's follow His lead.

Pure Religion, by Sean P. Cavender

Many people today are turned off by "organized religion." They do not want to hear about church, morality, or responsibility towards God. They have drawn a foolish distinction between being spiritual and being religious. Being *spiritual* is portrayed as having a direct connection with Deity; while being *religious* is thought to be a useless endeavor of "going to church." These distinctions are arbitrary and rather silly.

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world," Jas 1:27. Being religious is not merely equivalent to being a regular church-goer; it does not mean that a person is a theologian. Our religion is important to God—it is how we live our lives before Him and in accordance with His word. (It literally means reconnecting with God, from the Latin word for ligaments/connectors. Men have longed for this reconnection since Adam, see Gen 4:3-5.) Being religious *is* being spiritual, 1 Cor 2:12-15.

James reminds us of the attitude we must first have towards the word of God. We must be "swift to hear." We should be always ready to hear and receive instruction from God's word, because that is how the righteousness of God will be produced in us, Jas 1:19-20. Furthermore, we must put aside evil deeds in order to open our ears, so we can receive the word of God that is able to save our souls, 1:21. The one thing that will prevent the word of God from taking full effect in our lives, thus making us non-religious, is wickedness. If our hearts and minds are bent on wrath, anger, and filthiness, then we will never be spiritual or committed to God. James describes the attributes of the godly man in 1:22-27.

1. Be a doer of the word. You might listen to the gospel. You might appease your friends or family members by hearing sermons. But until you

become a doer and act upon those words, you are deceiving yourself. "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves," 1:22. James uses a timeless illustration, comparing a "hearer only" to someone who would look into a mirror, not fix anything, and forget what he looks like. However, those who will be saved are those who look into the perfect law of liberty, examine their hearts and attitudes, and become doers of the work that is set before them, 1:25. The first step in becoming religious is to do what God tells you to do.

2. Control your tongue. The next aspect of pure religion is controlling our tongues. "If any man among you seem to be religious, and does not bridle his tongue, but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is vain," 1:26. Again we see that when it comes to spirituality, we are easily deceived. Being religious is not a mere show or act; it so penetrates our hearts that it changes our speech. Vain and useless religion is practiced by someone who is inconsistent and hypocritical. He merely "seems to be religious," but his heart is deceived. How sad is the one who believes he is religious, but he is so deceived that he does not know he is sinning.

If a person is a child of God and is a doer of the word, then he must also bridle his tongue. He must control and regulate his speech. The words that cross his lips, the stories and jokes he tells, the way he speaks when he is angry—everything must be consistent with what God's word teaches. Our speech reveals how consistent we are. If we gossip, lie, curse our neighbors, yell at our children, then our religion is useless. If we do not use our speech for good, seasoned with salt, teaching others about the grace of our Lord, then religion for us is worthless, Col 4:6. Our speech will show our interests—are we genuinely interested in spiritual and religious matters? Or are we deceived?

3. Care for those in need. A responsibility of every Christian is to "look after the fatherless and widows." We are to provide care, comfort, and necessities

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Psalm 133:1

God makes my heart clean in 2015 "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." —Ps 51:10

Adultery Website a Lie, from p. 4 together. Share your heart. Pray together. Rekindle the spark, reignite the old passion. Tend your own garden by regularly cultivating your own relationship. Work intentionally to be loving.

When we neglect our spouse's marital needs, we inadvertently make him/her feel vulnerable and unfulfilled. Yet both spouses are singularly responsible for their own commitment to the marital covenant, which explicitly promises to "forsake all others" and stay committed to the other no matter what.

Adultery is fundamentally about one's own character and integrity—and that has nothing to do with your marriage partner. The person who commits adultery lacks judgment: "Whoever commits adultery...lacks understanding; he who does so destroys his own soul. Wounds and dishonor he will get, and his reproach will not be wiped away," Pr 6:32.

As millions of Ashley Madison users discovered, the temporary adrenaline rush that may accompany an idealized fantasy is not grounded on the secure bedrock of unconditional commitment; thus it is destined to fall whenever the first storm of life passes by. In the secretive, illusionary self-deception of adultery there are no sick kids in the middle of the night, no in-law hassles, and no mortgage stress. Furthermore, both parties intuitively know they can never trust the other, because both know the other is a covenant breaker. Consequently, the divorce rates for second marriages are significantly higher than for first marriages. Adultery not only doesn't make sense, it can't work.

Discipleship Here At Home

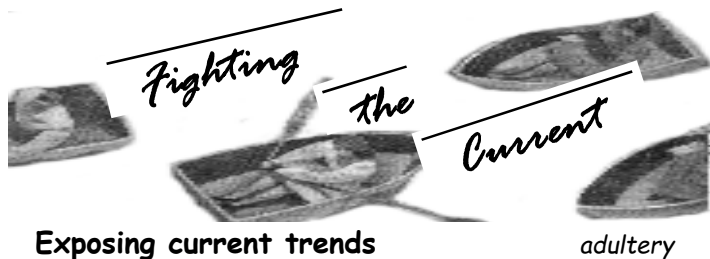
Hope after infidelity. How do we address the broken vow? Many seek divorce, and in some circumstances—especially when the unfaithful partner is unwilling to work on the marriage—there is little choice. However, in many instances opting for divorce is somewhat analogous to amputating a broken limb. A much better alternative to amputating the broken bone is to set the break, support it in a cast, and conduct physical therapy. Marriage therapy is much less costly in every way than attorneys' fees. As orthopedists know, the calcification around a properly set broken bone becomes stronger than the surrounding bone tissue—ultimately making the bone stronger than it was before. This amazing and miraculous illustration of God's redemptive forgiveness and healing power is true in relationships as well.

Don't believe the lie, succumb to the temptation, or be enticed by the counterfeit. Remember: life is short—stay faithful to your spouse!

Pure Religion, from p. 2 for those who lack someone to provide for them. God has established and provided a way for those who are lonely to be a part of a family. "God sets the solitary in families," Ps 68:6. If we are to be truly religious, then we will meet the needs of the distressed. We are not to ignore those in need. God judges those who treat the poor, widows, and orphans unfairly. "Woe to those who decree unrighteous decrees, who write grievousness which they have prescribed; to rob the needy of justice, and to take away the right from the poor of My people, that widows may be their prey and that they may rob the fatherless," Is 10:1-2. True religion calls upon us to serve those who are oppressed and needy in mercy and love. Pure and undefiled religion calls us to act. It is never self-serving, but it is always pleasing God. It is never satisfied with a mere form of godliness, but pierces the heart. True religion means we must be vigilant, because we are easily deceived and can become hypocrites. We must continue to look into the perfect law of liberty to see ourselves as we really are.

PRAY FOR healing, protection, help

- **Tracy Corray**—broken bone in foot; boot 3 wks
 - **Judy Sartin**—hairline fracture in left foot; ortho shoe
 - **Jonathan Hadders**—fractured rib, acute pain
 - **Judy Strand**—broken arm, post-surgery pain
 - **Sheryle McNeill**—pinched nerve
 - **Ernesto Gonzalez's father Fidencio**—stage IV lymphoma, has started chemo
 - **Linda Szymanski's mother**, age 88—fall, broke ankle, rehab post surgery
 - **Letha Fink's brother Kenneth Morrison** of GA—liver disease, recent diagnosis of neuro-muscular disease
 - **Charos' neighbor Evelyn Velasquez**—cancer
 - **Danny Dodd**, formerly of Westside—home after full brain radiation in Denver; improving; 275 Country Meadow Rd, Ignacio, CO 81137
 - **Kaylee Chavez**—age 10, cancer; has rallied so well from her PE that she has returned home (temp housing in Memphis until treatments finish in Nov)
 - **Bill Dennis**—home recovery following rehab
 - **Sandra Perry**—diabetes complications; back on oxygen; port to be inserted soon for dialysis
 - **Lary Campbell's FL partner Terry Hargadine's wife Michelle**—cancerous lymph nodes removed, latest scan shows improvement; picc line inserted for chemo
 - **Kayla Knighten, Christine Adams's daughter**, needs our prayers; **Judy Strand** requests prayer for her son **Joe**; pray **Ed's son Rodney Schulz** and Sheryle's daughter **Tiffany** receive the gospel; pray **Pat** and **Jeff's son Mike** and grandson **Drew** return to God.
 - **Sylvia Chapman, Brett's grandmother**—third stage pancreatic cancer; Brett's grandmother **Sue**, and Aunt **Bonnie Doss**—cancer returned
 - **Brittany Tope's mother**—breast cancer, improving; grandmother—on dialysis
- **CHRONIC CONDITIONS**
Logan Corray; Addison Tope; Christian Harrod; Rocco Jr.; Pat Wilkes—asthma
Autumn Hadders—epilepsy; celiac disease
Jonathan Hadders—RA
Kirk Johnson—MS
Menards—**Lloyd** diabetes, Alzheimers; **Virginia** blindness from macular degeneration
Cheryl Reames—fibromyalgia; diverticulitis
Judy Sartin—rotator cuff injury; spinal stenosis
Judy and Mike Strand—hepatitis trtment
Lynda Szymanski—COPD, lung weakness
- Travel** The **Topes** will be in DC 9/19-28.
Mina Gonzalez will return with her mother from Japan tomorrow. The **Wilkeses** will return from NC this week. **Ed Schulz** returns from IL Tuesday. **Ken and Wendy Boyd** return later today from travel.
- Moving** **Terry Smith** is moving to SC this week.



Exposing current trends

adultery

Ashley Madison Subscribers Chasing a Lie, by Jared Pingleton

Owners of Ashley Madison, the infamous adultery-facilitating website, bill themselves as being a source of “online personals & [a] dating destination for casual encounters.” They’re also a site and source of misery and lies. Now, thanks to hackers, millions of their users have had their private sins made public.

Hundreds of couples grapple with the excruciating pain and heartbreak of infidelity. The reality is there’s nothing new about sexual sin. Those who thought they had discovered a more “sophisticated” and creative way of deceiving their spouse realized that, sooner or later, you can “*be sure your sin will find you out*,” Num 32:23. Ashley Madison is simply the latest vehicle being used to facilitate sexual liaisons. But while the vehicle may change with the times, the outcome is almost always the same. The person being cheated is often consumed by feelings of shock, outrage, humiliation, confusion, rejection, and betrayal. The trauma is so intense that many marriages do not survive.

What causes adultery? Let’s analyze the anatomy of an affair. What would cause someone even to use Ashley Madison in the first place? Why do such a significant percentage of married people cheat? More important, what can be done about it? For most men, adultery is generally about the proverbial thrill and chase of the sexual conquest. So-called one-night stands, business trip dalliances, and office flings comprise the vast majority of husbands’ unfaithfulness. Men are particularly vulnerable to temptation within the first few years after the birth of a child when marriage dynamics inevitably adjust, leaving many men feeling secondary to their dependent infant.

For most women, adultery is primarily about seeking emotional connectivity and romance; thus they are more likely to engage in emotional affairs. Diminished self-esteem resulting from feeling emotionally neglected, under-prioritized, and/or taken for granted by their husband can increase their temptation to look elsewhere to feel special, appealing, and desirable.

Marriage therapists hear a common justification for adultery: “*I don’t have feelings for my spouse anymore*” or “*I’m not in love with him/her*.” Since we inevitably reap what we sow, it is certain that if that’s how marriage partners feel today, then they had quit investing in their marriage yesterday. The truth is that wise farmers (and spouses) keep seeding, watering, and fertilizing to reap a bountiful harvest. Loving feelings are the result of loving actions. How can we do these actions?

Plant a kiss on your mate. Again, but much longer. Flirt. Laugh. Plan a fun and romantic date (like you used to). Play. Take a walk

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meets at
13789 W. 8th Avenue
Golden, Colorado 80401
720-295-4530

Pastors

Larry Campbell (303) 246-8810
DeWayne Howell (303) 973-7283

Preacher

Jim Reingrover (303) 973-5102

info@thechurchingolden.com

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Westside-Church-of-Christ/276475819148309>

Assembly Schedule

Sunday

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
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Sunday morning

• **adult Bible class**, “The Gospel According to John,” Jonathan Hadders

Feeding on His Word Reading

Everyone is invited to an open Bible reading of 1 Samuel next Sunday afternoon, 9/20, 4 pm, at Mina Gonzalez’s house, to be followed by supper. See **Joel Walker** for schedule.

This evening is the last meeting of the Smoky Hill gospel seminar; there will be a singing at 5:30 pm.