

# Mental Adultery

By Donald Townsley

One of the great problems destroying the home today is mental adultery. If we are going to stop physical adultery we must first stop mental adultery. Mental adultery is to look with a view of feeding lustful desires; to look with an intentional and conscious desire to gratify the lust; to look to develop fantasies of conquest; to picture situations in the mind; to think adultery in the mind with a person to the point that if opportunity were presented you would commit the physical act.

JESUS DEALS WITH MENTAL ADULTERY: *"But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."* (Matt. 5:28); *"For out of the heart proceed...fornications..."* (Matt. 15: 19); *"Out of the heart of a man proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications,"* (Mark 7: 20 - 21).

JOB HAD A FIXED RESOLUTION NOT TO LUST AFTER A MAID: *"I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?"* (Job 31: 1) He said his heart had not been deceived (or enticed) by a woman, nor had he laid wait at his neighbor's door to seduce his wife (Job 31: 9). He said, *"For this (adultery, dt) is an heinous crime;"* (Job 31:11). This sin is heinous because it subverts the family relationship on which God has erected the fabric of human society.

DAVID, AN EXAMPLE OF MENTAL ADULTERY THAT LED TO PHYSICAL ADULTERY: *"And from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon"* (II Sam. 11:2). After looking, David lusted (committing mental adultery), then called for her and committed physical adultery with her ( II Sam. 11:4).

## HOW CAN ONE LEARN TO CONTROL HIS THOUGHT-LIFE?

1. Confess all lustful thoughts to God. I John 1:9
2. Ask God for help with temptation. I Cor. 10:13
3. Bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. II Cor. 10:5
4. Hide God's word in your heart. Psalms 119:11
5. Think on the good things about other people. Phil. 4:8
6. Avoid all suggestive material that you possibly can -- TV, movies and books.
7. Young people and unmarried people should channel their energies into outlets which have nothing to do with SEX:
  - (1) Hard work
  - (2) Sports
  - (3) Hobbies
  - (4) Doing good for others
  - (5) Church work

8. It takes thirty to sixty days to create new thought patterns. Success will not come overnight, but it will come if you will be a Christian and work at it. With God's help you will find it easier to control your thoughts (Prov. 4: 23).

*(Taken from "The Voice", August 1980)*