



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: The Last Step on the Way Down - Part 2

Guest(s): Adrian Rogers

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Dr. James Dobson: Well, hello everyone. This is James Dobson bringing you today's broadcast on the James Dobson Family Institute. We began listening to a powerful message yesterday delivered perhaps 20 years ago by the late Dr. Adrian Rogers. He was senior pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee, for 33 years, where he spoke every Sunday until shortly before his death in 2005. He was married to Joyce, and we still are in touch with her and love her. I know she is anticipating being with her beloved husband in heaven someday.

The videotaped message you're about to hear is titled "The Last Step on the Way Down." You can figure out what that means. He was referring to the depravity that has engulfed our great nation. That was then, and it's far worse today, and Adrian's message is even more relevant in today's society. That's why I've chosen to let you hear this two-day recording. It was telecast a few weeks ago on the Daystar Television Network, and Shirley and I were listening that day. When we finished, I looked at Shirley, she looked at me, and we said, we've got to let that sermon be heard again. So here we are at the second half of this message titled "The Last Step on the Way Down."

Adrian Rogers: Kent Hughes says this, and I want you to listen: "The man who commits adultery tells his child, 'Your mother is not worth much, and your father is a liar and a cheat. Furthermore, honor is not nearly as important as pleasure. In fact, my child, my own satisfaction is more important than you are.'" That's what the man who commits this sin tells his child. Would you like to hear that again? The man who commits adultery tells his child, 'Your mother is not worth much, and your father is a liar and a cheat; furthermore, honor is not nearly as important as pleasure. In fact, my child, my own satisfaction is more important than you are.'"

You see, God established monogamous marriage to meet the deepest emotional, physical, psychological, and spiritual needs of a child. Because, you see, a child needs the context of the home, and the glue, the glue that holds the home together is sexual faithfulness. Adultery is a sin against oneself. Adultery is a sin against the home, and the home is the foundation of society.

Thirdly, adultery is a sin against the church. If you're a member of this church and you're living an impure life, you have sinned against the rest of us, because we're in this together. 1 Corinthians 3:16, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" Paul says in 1 Corinthians 12, that we are members one of another. Folks, we're in it together. And what affects you affects me. And you cannot say what I do is nobody else's business, not in the covenant relationship of a church. When one member suffers, every member suffers. When a part of my body is sick, the rest of my body feels it. I cannot isolate any member of my body and say, "Well, that doesn't really make any difference to me."

Adultery is an infection in the body. The church is the Body of the Lord Jesus Christ, and I beg you, I beg you, please, please, if there's immorality in your heart and in your life, get right or get out. You say, Pastor, are you telling me that I can't come here for help if I have a problem? Yes, friend, that's what we're for. We are a society of sinners who finally realized it and have banded ourselves together to do something about it. Church is the only organization I know of you have to profess to be bad before you can join, unless it's Hell's Angels.

What I'm saying is this, that if you think that this is a minor sin, that this is something you intend to practice, you're in the wrong place. You have sinned against the church. And the Bible says, "If any man defile the temple of God, which temple ye are, him shall God destroy." Adultery is a sin against oneself. Adultery is a sin against the home. Adultery is a sin against the church. It is an infection in the body, and adultery, ladies and gentlemen, is a sin against the nation.

Adultery is an act of treason. In the Old Testament, not the New Testament, in the Old Testament, adultery was a crime worthy of death. Deuteronomy 22:22, "If a man be found lying with a woman married to a husband, then they shall both of them die, both the man that lay with the woman and the woman." Now listen to this. "So shalt thou put away evil from Israel." Put this sin not only away from the people of God, but from the nation itself. Put away evil from Israel. May I tell you something foolish? It is foolish to say that character and leadership are not synonymous. No man is morally fit for leadership who is sexually impure.

Proverbs 14:34, says "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." Character counts. Now here's the rubric we are listening to today. Here's what people will say today. They'll say "Character has nothing to do with it. Ability is what matters." If you're on an airplane and the pilot is a good pilot, and he can fly the airplane, if he can take you off safely, if he can keep you in the air safely, if he can land you safely, then what difference does his character make? It makes absolutely no difference unless you want the blessing of God on that airplane. When you say that character doesn't count, do you know what

you're saying? You're saying God doesn't count. You're saying we can do it by ourselves. We don't need God. We know how to do it.

We don't want the blessing of God. Yes, character doesn't count. I agree, if there is no God, but there is a God, and we want his blessing. A skilled, but an ungodly leader is dangerous. That would be like a skilled surgeon, a surgeon who is skilled to do brain surgery, but he does not scrub before he does surgery. He will infect everything he touches. I want him to be clean if he's going to do surgery on me. Proverbs 16:12 says "It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness, for the throne," listen, "The throne is established by righteousness." You say, well, we don't have Kings.

We have leaders. You see, leadership is stewardship. The leader, whomever he may be, the city council or anybody else, they are acting for God. The Bible says in Romans 13 he's the minister of God. You are a steward. You're acting for God. The man who commits adultery is a liar. He's lied against his marriage vows, and liars and leaders are not the same. The Bible says in Proverbs 20:28, "Mercy and truth preserve the king."

Abraham Lincoln. We call him Honest Abe. Abraham Lincoln said, "You can fool all of the people some of the time, and you can fool some of the people all of the time, but you can't fool all the people all the time." I would add, Mr. Lincoln, you can't fool God any of the time. God knows, and God sees. There was a king in the Old Testament. His name was Lemuel. He had a mother who gave him some good advice. Proverbs 31:3, is the advice. She said, "Give not by strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings." No man is fit to lead who is morally impure. Immorality was the sin that led to the downfall of Greece, Rome, Egypt, and Babylon, and it will be the ruin of the American Empire. If we do not learn to take a stand for that which is right and that which is holy, you can kiss America goodbye, because God will give up on this nation.

Josiah Gilbert Holland, who was born in 1819, wrote these words, but they were never more needful: "God give us men! A time like this demands strong minds, great hearts, true faith, and ready hands; men whom the lust of office does not kill; men whom the spoils of office cannot buy; men who possess opinions and a will; men who have honor, men who will not lie; men who can stand before a demagogue, and damn his treacherous flatteries without winking! Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog in public duty, and in private thinking; for while the rabble, with their thumb worn creeds, their large professions and their little deeds, mingle in selfish strife, lo! Freedom weeps. Wrong rules the land and waiting justice sleeps." Yes, God give us men.

Adultery is a sin against the nation, but I'll tell you what else it's a sin against. Not only against oneself, not only against the family, not only a sin against the nation, but adultery, my friend, is a sin against Almighty God. There is a God in the glory. And when people say what difference does it make? You may as well ask, what difference does God make? Exodus 20:14 says, "Thou shalt not

commit adultery." You see, this sin is against God, because God says it is wrong. When King David recognized what he had done, King David wrote a penitential Psalm. He did not try to cover it up, because what we try to cover, God uncovers, and what we uncover, God will cover.

David said in Psalm 51:4, praying to God, "Against thee, and thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight." David realized that he broke both God's law and God's heart, and sin was against Almighty God. Adultery, friend, is a sin that God will judge. If you're making notes, jot these following scriptures: Hebrews 13:4. "Marriage is honorable in all and the bed undefiled, but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." I didn't say that, God said that. God will judge. Proverbs 6:27-29, "Can a man take a fire on his bosom and his clothes be not burned? Can a man go upon hot coals and his feet not be burned? So he that goeth into his neighbor's wife, whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent."

Proverbs 6:32, "But whoso committeth adultery with a woman, lacketh understanding. He that doeth it destroyeth his own soul." Proverbs 7:27, speaking of the adulterous woman, "Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death." 1 Corinthians 6:9, "Know ye not that the righteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither fornicators," that's sex before marriage, "Nor idolaters, nor adulterers," that's illicit sex when married, "Nor effeminate," that is sexual perversion, "Nor abusers of themselves with mankind." God says, "Don't be deceived. They're not going to heaven unless they change." Thank God, he goes on to say, "And such were some of you." He doesn't say there's no hope. He doesn't say there's no forgiveness. He's saying that if this is your lifestyle, your choice, your practice, you need to get saved.

Ephesians 5:5, "For this ye know, that no whoremonger or unclean person or covetous man who is an idolater hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." Then the last book in the Holy Bible, Revelation 21:8, here's the roll call of the damned. "But the fearful and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and whoremongers and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." You see, God is a holy God. God has given His commandments, His laws.

Law without penalty is only advice. God is not giving advice. No matter how immorality is laughed at, glamorized, rationalized, legitimized by the social engineers and the pundits, God brought me here to tell you, and I prayed about this message, this is a sin that God will judge. Do you know the reason that some people think that God's not going to judge this sin? Look in chapter 2 in verse 5; Romans 2:5, "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up onto thyself wrath against the day of wrath." Wrath against the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God.

You see, people are just treasuring up wrath. Every day they put a new deposit in the bank, and the sun comes up and the sun goes down, and they say, "Well, look! I did it again. No judgment." After thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up wrath against the day of wrath. One more deposit is put in the bank.

Well, what must we do, quickly? We cannot change the hearts and minds of others, and revival is not going to come to this nation from the White House, the State House, or the school house. It's going to come from the church house. And it's going to begin with the people of God. One by one, we need to take our nation back. Let me tell you, young people are here, listen to God's Word. Don't sacrifice the ultimate, the eternal, on the altar of the immediate. Don't be so foolish. Quickly, first of all, make a decision. Give your heart to Almighty God, because he is the only one who is able to guide you. After you make that decision, depend upon him. Look to him. He will deliver you from sexual immorality if you trust him.

Number three, after decision and dependence, devotion. Love God with of your heart, and love your own wife. Love your own mate, your own husband, with a supernatural love. The Bible says, "Husbands, love your wives." That's not a suggestion. That's not a request. It is a command, and anything God commands you to do, you can do.

Number four, development. Look, decision, dependence, devotion, and development. Feed your love. Help your love to grow. Love is not like a diamond, something that you find hard and brittle and beautiful and you keep it to save it. Love is like a flower. It's got to be cultivated and watered and cared for and nurtured. If you don't love your wife more today than you did when you married her, you probably love her less. Continue to feed that love from day to day.

Never flirt with another woman, and never fail to flirt with your own wife. Just develop that love, and then discipline. Guard your company. Give attention to what you read and what you see. Decide there's certain things you're not going to watch. Discipline your life. You wouldn't put garbage in your mouth. Don't put garbage in your mind. Guard your company. A companion of fools will be destroyed.

Last of all, determination. Determine. Joshua said, "I don't know what course others will take, but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." I love what the Psalmist said when he said, "My heart is fixed, oh God." If you'll make up your mind about one big decision, you won't have to keep making up your mind about a lot of little decisions. You won't have to determine every time you go to the Holiday Inn whether you're going to watch your filthy movie or not, because your heart is fixed. You have determined, oh God, my God, I will serve you.

Now you say, "Pastor, you made me feel bad today, because very frankly, my life has been touched by immorality." Well, I want to tell you something. That's what this book is all about: good news, good news. Good news. It's the bad news that makes the good news good. For the Bible says, through the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, "it is the power of God unto salvation." God is a God of grace, and God is a God of forgiveness, and God is a God of another chance.

God is a God that says, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Hallelujah for such a gospel. Thank God for that. "If any man be in Christ Jesus, he's a new creature. Old things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new," but there's one thing that God will never accept for sin, and that is an excuse or an alibi. But oh, when it comes to confession, thank God, the cleansing tides of Calvary sweep across the human soul, and every blot, every blur, every blemish, every stain that ever came, Jesus' blood washes whiter than snow. Hallelujah. Amen and amen.

Now what I'm going to ask today is this, that you'll give your heart to Jesus. Not because you've done these things. If you've never done these things, it's all the more reason to give your heart to Jesus so he will keep you and preserve you, and is all the more reason also that you want to find a church. I don't think Bellevue is the only one, but you want to find a church without stutter or stammer or apology that will open the Word of God and say, "Thus saith the Lord." And if you'd like to be a part, if you need to be saved, I want you to come and say, "Yes, I need Jesus." Pastor, if I went down there this morning, everybody'd think I'm an adulterer.

No. No. But you may be. That's not the point. Whether you are, whether you're not, that's not the point. We need Jesus. And you need to get your life in a church. This one or some church that gives a standard in this unsure age. We need foundations for our faith, amen?

Father God, bless an invitation. And I pray, dear God, that many today will come and say an everlasting yes to Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Lord, just grant repentance today. Father, just help people openly and publicly to trust you. Help little boys and girls today to say yes to Jesus, teenagers, husbands, fathers, mothers, daughters, business people; Lord, college students, may they say yes to Jesus today, in His name, amen.

Dr. James Dobson: We've just heard the second half of the message delivered by Dr. Adrian Rogers about 20 years ago at Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee. Once again, the title of his sermon was "The Last Step on the Way Down." He was addressing the country we all love. And as you just heard, he was referring to the moral depravity of that day.

Adrian, if he were still alive, would be even more concerned and alarmed by what's taking place today with millions of federal dollars being poured into

Planned Parenthood and the abortion industry, and how marriage is declining and the birth rate is falling. And of course, major concern to Adrian when he preached this message was the sexual sin that had engulfed the nation. That's worse today than it was then. So I'm sure Dr. Rogers would join us in calling for concerted prayer for a spiritual renewal to sweep the nation. There've been two other great awakenings in the past when people repented and turned back to God. Perhaps that's what will happen in our future if we stay on our knees.

Our time is gone. Thank you for being with us today. Monday is Memorial Day, and we're featuring a patriotic program called "Beyond Black Hawk Down", and it features an interview that I conducted with Jeff Struecker. Thanks to all of you for being with us, and have a good weekend.

Announcer: This has been a presentation of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.

Roger Marsh: Hey, everyone. Roger Marsh here. When you think about your family and where they will be when you're no longer living, are you worried? Are you confident? Are you hopeful? What kind of legacy are you leaving for your children and their children? Here at Family Talk, we're committed to helping you understand the legacy that you're leaving for your family. Join us today at Dr. James Dobson.org for helpful insights, tips, and advice from Dr. James Dobson himself, and remember, your legacy matters.