

Which is worse?

[Note: This article covers mature subject matter. Parental discretion is advised.]

(James 2:10, NIV) For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.

A few weeks ago, Nickelodeon, the cable children's network, aired a program for kids about "kids with two moms or two dads." It was intended to encourage tolerance for homosexual families.

The response of the Christian church, at least the more conservative, Bible-based groups, to these kinds of shows is either disgust or outrage. Because of the growing emphasis on "tolerance" for homosexuality in the media and society in general, Christians have been "up in arms" about it, speaking out against this sin. Rightly so.

However, there's more to the sixth commandment than just homosexuality, and we seem to have lost sight of that. If two men are living together, they are immediately suspect, yet the number of men and women living together outside of marriage is at an all-time high, but that, somehow, doesn't seem as bad. Spouses abuse each other, both physically and emotionally. The pornography industry is booming. It doesn't seem "unnatural," but any kind of sexual expression, even impure thoughts ("Hmm...I wonder..."), outside of marriage is unnatural in the eyes of God. Any activity of this kind that is not within the framework of one man, one woman, married, and loving, is the will of the devil. It's neither worse nor better. Sin is sin, and it's *all* enough to earn hell.

So you've broken the sixth commandment. What should you do now?

First, acknowledge your sin. Stop making excuses and get out of it. Recognize that your sinful relationships are idols in your life, coming between you and God, and recognize that our earthly relationships are temporary, but our relationship with our Heavenly Father is eternal. If your sin is publicly known, understand the message that your life is sending to you family, friends, and neighbors, and what it tells them about Christianity. If you have anything like pornography in your home, throw it out, and if you're tempted by internet pornography, get blocking software, and make yourself accountable somehow.

Next is the most important part, and it's nothing you need to do. God still loves you. Adultery, in whatever the form, is forgivable and forgiven. Jesus' blood wipes that sin away. Jesus, by paying for your sin on the cross, has restored you to God and forgiven and forgotten your sin. Consider coming to your pastor for private absolution: personal forgiveness direct from God.

Finally, recognize that, even if you haven't been engaged in public sin of this kind, you are still a sinner and have broken the whole law, and you are still a Christian. (If you think you have never broken this law, ask your spouse, "Has there ever been a time that I didn't honor you?" I'm sure he or she would be able to help you out in this regard!) Love and forgive those who have abandoned their sin as God loves and forgives them. Pray for those who are still in their sin, and *lovingly* share the truth with them. Remember that they, too, are so valuable in God's eyes that He was willing to give up His Son for them, just as He did for you.

(John 3:17, NIV) For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.