

Unshackled

Breaking Away from Seductive Spirituality.

"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." 2 Corinthians 11:2, KJV

The story possesses the ingredients of a modern day soap opera. She was a well-kept, but neglected and desperate wife of Potiphar, a man who had one of the most demanding jobs in the kingdom—protecting the king's life. Joseph was a handsome, successful, and "unattached" young servant whom Potiphar, head of the secret service, appointed to manage his finances and oversee his household's day-to-day-operation. As Pharaoh trusted Potiphar with his life, so Potiphar trusted Joseph with his wife.

But whiling away the hours of her boring days, Potiphar's wife became restless. She began to feel herself attracted to the handsome and successful household manager. Unable to restrain her sexual "desires," and for reason of her husband's neglect, she came to a breaking point and tried to seduce Joseph. Bluntly, she propositioned him, "**Lie with me.**" But Joseph rebuffed her advances being restrained by the following question: "**How then could I do this great evil, and sin against God?**" (Genesis 39:7, 9). But when she could no longer contain her desires, and knowing herself to be alone with the young servant, she again forced herself upon Joseph and pleaded, "**Lie with me.**" But breaking from the seductress' grasp, Joseph fled.

This incident from Joseph's life illustrates the challenge faced by godly people through the ages. Appalled at how Israel and Judah had been seduced by Canaanite spirituality, Jeremiah asked:

Have you seen what faithless Israel did? She went up on every high hill and under every green tree, and she was a harlot there. . . . And I saw that for all the adulteries of faithless Israel, I had sent her away and given her a writ of divorce, yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear; but she went and was a harlot also. (Jeremiah 3:6, 8, KJV)

And for reason of the world's infiltration into the early church, James protested to the early Christians:

Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is

enmity with God? (James 4:4, NKJV)

So as the Canaanite religion tested Israel's fidelity to Jehovah, the New Spirituality tests the church's commitment to Jesus. Until Christ returns, the seductive spirituality known as, "**Mystery Babylon, the Mother of Harlots,**" will continue her attempts to lure the Bride away from her Groom (See Revelation 17:1-6.).

Thus marriage becomes an appropriate metaphor helping to explain God's relationship to His people, for as Ray Ortlund observes, "God is a perfect 'husband' to his people, our sins really are a betrayal of him, and thus a moral category exists for which the image of a harlot is a reasonable fit." [1] He adds that, "when God's love is primarily in view, our 'harlotry' is a meaningful description of our rejection of his love for the love of others." [2]

Peter also warned believers about false teachers who having "**eyes full of adultery . . . allure through the lusts of the flesh,**" and about the devoted masses that "**follow their sensuality**" (2 Peter 2:14, 18, KJV, and 2 Peter 2:2, NASB). By flirting with seductive spiritualities like those *The Shack* pictures, evangelicals who considered themselves to be *betrothed* to Jesus may abruptly awaken and find themselves to be the *mistresses* of false gods (See 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Please read Proverbs 7:1-27.).

The question arises, why does God tolerate the spiritual adultery of the unfaithful? Perhaps it's because the availability of alternative spiritualities serves to separate true believers from false. As Paul wrote: "**For there must be also heresies among you that they which are approved may be made manifest among you**" (Emphasis mine, 1 Corinthians 11:19; Compare 2 Peter 2:1 which says that, "**there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies.**").

So the question must be posed: *Are we His bride or a harlot?* It is no wonder that John's last words in his first letter are, "**Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.**"

ENDNOTES

[1] Raymond C. Ortlund, Jr., *Whoredom, God's Unfaithful Wife in Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996) 183.

[2] *Ibid.*

The above writing forms the CONCLUSION of Pastor Larry's book, *Unshackled: Breaking Away From Seductive Spirituality* (Indianapolis, IN: Moeller Press, 2009) 116 pages. The book is available through: *Discernment Ministries*, P.O. Box 520, Canton, Texas 75103-0520, phone number (903) 567-6423.