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BIBLE TALK

Question: Is there any difference between "fornication" and "adultery"?

Answer: Fornication is usually defined as "illicit sexual intercourse on the part of an unmarried person," and adultery is "voluntary sexual intercourse by a married man with another than his wife or by a married woman with another than her husband" (Webster).

The Greek for "fornication" is "porneia" referencing every kind of unlawful sexual intercourse. Adultery is translated from the word "moicheia" which infers a more specific violation, yet is a form of fornication. Fornication manifests itself through different kind of behaviors. Incest is a form of fornication (I Cor. 5:1) in that it involves relations with blood relatives. Relations between male and female other than spouse, is sinful (Matt. 19:9). Sexual relations with same gender (homo-sexuality or lesbianism) are illegal in God's sight; a man/woman relationship is required in marriage (I Cor. 7:2; Rom. 1:21-32). Fornication is committed with sexual encounter out of wedlock (Heb. 13:4), for it is in marriage that the bed is made honorable. Human lying with beast is forbidden for it does not comply with God's use of sexuality (Ex. 22:19). All of the above constitute fornication; adultery is a more specific violation because it involves marriage. Keep in mind even if legalized or societally acceptable, it remains sin if against God.

How serious is the commitment of fornication you ask? Those who do such things "*shall not inherit the kingdom of God*" (I Cor. 6:9). Which of the two is more serious you wonder? If both can condemn one's soul for an eternity, they carry the same curse.

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