

God With Us

A Study of Matthew: "Relationship Commands-Part 2"

Matthew 5:27-30

But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.
(Matthew 5:28)

I. The Issue of Lust

- a. This second "relationship command" spoken by Jesus, *But I say to you* addressed the issue that sexual impurity begins in the desires of the heart.
- b. Adultery - Any act of sexual intercourse with a person who is not his or her spouse.
- c. Lust (*epithumeo*, Gr.) – to strongly desire to have what belongs to someone else.
- d. Just as anger is the root of murder, lust is the root of adultery (sexual impurity). Adultery does not begin in the bed, but in the heart.
- e. Jesus is not saying that lustful desires are identical to lustful deeds, if that were the case a person might as well go ahead and commit adultery.
- f. The focus is not on sexual attraction, but on the desire for and perhaps on an illicit sexual liaison. (2 Sam 11:2-4) For many men this is the most difficult of all Jesus' commands.
- g. The looking desire to her can practically translated, "wants to have sex with her."
- h. The lustful look goes beyond the desiring. How can we desire if we do not look?

II. Spiritual Surgery not Self-Mutilation (compare to Mark 9:43-48)

- a. Origen, an early church father, castrated himself because of the domineering urge of lust.
- b. Jesus does not want us to literally mutilate, by cutting off limbs and plucking out eyes.
- c. However, the Lord tells us to deal with sin as radically as necessary to cut off avenues of access that may lead us to lust.
- d. Jesus wants His followers to take immediate and direct action. He does not advise Band-Aids or ointment, no you must "cut it out", "tear it out and throw it away" lure you away from holiness.
- e. A right eye and right hand are highly valued, but what is their value compared to eternal life?
- f. Do you agree that obedience to God requires us to "cut" things out of our lives?

III. Thoughts and Considerations for Action

- a. In today's culture erotic books, films, magazines, commercials and pornographic websites nurture lust.
- b. It may seem impossible to live sexually pure in such a sexually explicit culture, but there are faithful marriages and young pre-married people who are able to control sexual desires.
- c. Jesus gives us a personal command, *I say to you*. We must each look at our own lifestyles and desires and determine where spiritual surgery occur.
- d. It's never too late to do the right thing.
- e. Jesus teaches us the *bad news* about ourselves so that we would seek the *Good news* of God.