

Kingdom Living

Studies From The Sermon On The Mount

Lust, Purity, and Marriage: Radical Faithfulness

Matthew 5:27-32

The central theme of the Sermon on the Mount is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Key Idea: Kingdom Righteousness is Radical Righteousness.

Matthew 5:27-30: Sexual Purity

Matthew 5:27-32 (NIV)

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.'

But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

"It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.'

But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Main Point: Lust is adultery of the heart and must be intensely guarded against to prevent it from leading one to hell.

Matthew 5:27

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.'

- Whenever God says, "No," it is so that He might say "Yes."

Matthew 5:28

But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

- Sexual impurity begins in the desires of the heart.
- The heart of the matter is the matter of the heart.
- Jesus describes deliberately feeding desire by objectifying others for personal gratification.
- A lustful heart is nourished by a lustful eye.

James 1:14-15

Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death.

Matthew 5:29-30

If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

- Deal immediately and decisively with sin! Don't taper off, cut off!

Colossians 3:5

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.

- What we tolerate eventually dominates. The call is to eliminate – not manage – sinful patterns.
- Kingdom love demands we honor the dignity of others, not reduce them to objects.

Matthew 5:30

"It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell."

- The eternal perspective is clear: purity is worth the cost.

Matthew 5:31-32: Divorce and Remarriage

Matthew 5:31-32 (NIV)

"It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.' But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery."

Main Point: Divorce and remarriage lead to adultery unless due to sexual immorality, and should be rare among God's people because he desires reconciliation.

Deuteronomy 24:1 (NET)

If a man marries a woman and she does not please him because he has found something indecent in her, then he may draw up a divorce document, give it to her, and evict her from his house.

- Jesus affirms the sacredness of marriage, calling out casual and selfish divorce.

Matthew 19:3-11

Some Pharisees came to Jesus to test him. They asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?"

“Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’ and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”

“Why then,” they asked, “did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?”

Jesus replied, “Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning. I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery.”

Jesus’ disciples then said to him, “If this is the case, it is better not to marry!”

“Not everyone can accept this statement,” Jesus said. “Only those whom God helps.”

- God’s plan for marriage is one man and one woman until separated by death.

Matthew 19:4-6

“Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’ and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”

- Sexual immorality constitutes biblical grounds for divorce.

Matthew 5:32

“I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, **except for sexual immorality**”

Matthew 19:9

“I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, **except for sexual immorality**”

- Divorce and remarriage without biblical grounds constitute adultery.

Matthew 5:32

“But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, **makes her the victim of adultery**, and anyone who marries a divorced woman **commits adultery**.”

Matthew 19:9

“I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman **commits adultery**.”

- The Old Testament law regarding divorce aimed to protect the wife from trivial divorces and character attacks.

- Although divorce is permitted under specific circumstances, it is never mandated.

1 Corinthians 7:12-14, 15-16

If any brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him.

But if the unbeliever leaves, let it be so. The brother or the sister is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace.

How do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or, how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?

- Even with biblical grounds for divorce, God's desire is reconciliation and restoration if possible.

1 Corinthians 7:10-11

To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. 11 But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife.

- Those who committed adultery should repent and reaffirm their commitment to God's sanctity in marriage.

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

- Jesus sees divorce as a rare exception, not the norm, in the faith community.
- Jesus is against divorce because He is for marriage.
- Marriage is a covenant: Like God's commitment to His people, it's meant to be faithful, sacrificial, and permanent.

Key Takeaway: Kingdom purity isn't just about what we avoid—it's about who we're becoming.