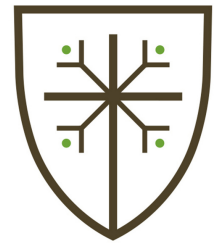


# Epiphany on the Mount

Sermon Series for the Season of Epiphany



# SERMON NOTES



January 22, 2023

## SERMON INFO

### TITLE

Lust & Lying

### PREACHER

Rev. Tim Frickenschmidt

### TEXTS

Isaiah 9:1-4

1 Corinthians 1:10-18

Matthew 5:27-30, 33-36

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In Matthew, Jesus says "if your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away." Obviously, this is not literal. What kind of radical change is Jesus calling us to?
2. Tim mentioned certain motivations for lying. What are some common motivations in the culture or in your own life for lying?

## SERMON SUMMARY

This week, Tim continued our series on the sermon on the mount looking at two more obstacles to Christians living as salt and light in the world – lust and lying.

**Definitions:** The definitions Jesus presents for sexual love and for lust are very different from the definitions from which the people in the world at that time and still in our culture today operate. There are two main views of sexual love the culture swings toward, opposite sides of the spectrum but both finding their roots in the tearing apart of body from soul. The culture of the world says that sex is simply an act satisfying an appetite. It is biological, natural. "It's just sex," is the common phrase. It denies that sex doesn't just join people's bodies, it joins their souls. The other side of the coin, historically associated with parts of the Church, is that sexual love is defiling and its only redeeming factor is that of procreation. This side ignores the goodness of the body and its connection with the soul by casting it aside and only focusing on the soul.

But what Jesus presents to us in Matthew's Gospel is a sexual love in which body and soul are inextricably woven together. As Pope John Paul II says, "sexual love is the least inadequate sign" of all the signs of God's presence in the world. It is the most complete picture; a real taste of what God is like.

Lust in this passage is not just a look, not simply noticing beauty. Lust is staring, looking over and over again. It is staring that aims to possess without any regard for the other person. It doesn't want the person, it just wants their body in order to be used.

**Connection:** People often lie about what lust produces. But the connection between lust and lying is even deeper than that.

A baseline of dishonesty in the culture made oaths necessary in the culture in which Jesus spoke. The closer thing by which you swore was to God, the more serious you were. It "made God present" in a way. But Jesus says you don't need oaths if you aren't operating from a baseline of dishonesty. God is always present.

The word "Integrity" is literally translated as wholeness. When you lie, you fraction off a part of yourself. You are no longer whole. As you fraction off pieces of yourself, it is not only exhausting, but you will lose yourself. Both lust and lying split apart our very self.

**Good News:** Jesus, the very definition of wholeness itself, was torn apart in our place that we might become whole. Jesus bore the pain of betrayal that we would be forgiven. And he was resurrected, reborn and whole, that he might share his life with us.