

Living The Good Life: Lust

Pastor Kevin Donoho

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Opening Discussion

- What thoughts, feelings, or impressions do you have about the sermon this week?

Thought #1: What does it mean to lust?

Matthew 5:28

“But I say, anyone who even looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

Pastor Kevin pointed out that the word used for lust in this passage is “epithumia” which is considered a neutral word. Neither good nor bad. It can be expressed in healthy or unhealthy ways. He reminded us that desires and cravings are not inherently bad, but we have to be aware when they become distorted.

According to the passage, what distinguishes healthy desires from unhealthy ones? How do these distinctions align with the teachings of Jesus?

Review the following passages:

Ephesians 2:1-3

“Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins. You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God. All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature. By our very nature we were subject to God’s anger, just like everyone else.”

Galatians 5:16-17

“So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won’t be doing what your sinful nature craves. The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires

that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires.”

In what ways do these passages contribute to our understanding of human nature and its inclination toward desires and cravings? How does the concept of lust, as discussed in the text, influence our relationships and interactions with others?

Consider the quote “The first look is natural; the second is intentional.” Discuss the difference between attraction and lust as depicted by this. How does intentionality play a role in distinguishing between the two?

Reflecting on your own experiences, how have you observed lust impacting relationships, either personally or in broader cultural contexts? From a Christian perspective, how can individuals cultivate a mindset that values others as persons rather than objects, especially in a culture that often promotes objectification?

Thought #2: What is Jesus trying to communicate?

How does Jesus challenge societal norms and expectations regarding adultery and sexual behavior? In what ways does Jesus' message aim to elevate the value and treatment of women, especially in a cultural context where they were often marginalized and subjected to harsh consequences for adultery?

Why does Jesus emphasize the importance of addressing the desires of the heart rather than focusing solely on outward behavior modification? How does the concept of re-ordering our desires align with Jesus' teachings about transformation and discipleship?

When you consider that Jesus leads and guides individuals with their sexual desires, how does this impact the way Christians approach intimacy and relationships? In what ways can the teachings of Jesus regarding desire and selflessness contribute to healthier and more fulfilling marriages within Christian communities?

