

February 2, 2020
HEAVEN ON EARTH - Part 2
“Principles or Law?”

The Kingdom of Heaven/Kingdom of God/Eternal Life is where God reigns, and therefore God’s Will is *done*, and it has come *fully* in Jesus, and it has *begun* in each one of us who have made Jesus the Savior and Lord of our lives.

If God is our Creator, He really does know what is best for us, and the Kingdom lifestyle really is the way to true and eternal life, filled with God’s blessings.

Jesus uses a formula in each of six examples to show us what life looks like in the Kingdom.

Matthew 5:27 (NIV): “You have heard that it was said, “Do not commit adultery.””

Exodus 20:14 (NIV): “You shall not commit adultery.”

Proverbs 6:26 (TEV): "...adultery will cost [a man] all that he has."

Proverbs 6:32 (ESV): “He who commits adultery lacks sense; he who does it destroys himself.”

Hebrews 13:4 (NLT): “Give honor to marriage, and remain faithful to one another in marriage. God will surely judge people who are immoral and those who commit adultery.”

Leviticus 20:10 (NLT): “If a man commits adultery with his neighbor’s wife, both the man and the woman who have committed adultery must be put to death.”

Matthew 5:28 (NIV): “But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

The sin isn’t just actually *committing* the physical act of adultery – it also includes the *thought* of committing adultery, of lust.

Jesus is talking about the person who intentionally looks at another with the *intent* of lusting for them.

James 1:14-15 (NIV11): “¹⁴but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. ¹⁵Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.”

The pornography industry counts on the visual appeal to lust to make their money, and it is rampant today, especially because of easy access online.

At their core, lust and adultery are very selfish, as we put ourselves and our desires first, over the health of our relationships.

God calls us to use *things* and love *people*.

Jesus: “³⁴A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. ³⁵By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:34-35 ESV)

People who are striving to live in the Kingdom love *people*, and therefore they refuse to reduce them to *things* to be used.

Myron Augsburger: “Married or single, purity calls us to the highest regard for others, to see them as persons and not as bodies to be used for our pleasure.”

Jesus says we’re to do whatever it takes to avoid lust and where it leads.

Matthew 5:29-30 (NIV): “²⁹If your right eye causes you to sin, 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. ³⁰And if your right hand causes you to sin, 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.”

Resources to help overcome pornography:

- Celebrate Recovery – www.gateway-community.org/find-it/
- Covenant Eyes – www.covenanteyes.com

We usually can’t just *quit* addictive behaviors – we have to **replace** the desires with a desire for Someone else – God, as revealed in Jesus Christ!

Matthew 5:8 (NIV): “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.”

Jesus: “³⁷...You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.” (Matthew 22:37-40 ESV)

“All the Law and the Prophets” – essentially all God’s teachings in the Old Testament – is summed up by loving God and loving your neighbor as yourself.

Matthew 5:17 (NIV): “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.”

Love **accepts** someone for who they are and **works** sacrificially for their good. Love is the language and lifestyle of the Kingdom – and Satan hates it!

Matthew 5:48 (NIV): “Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

“perfect” = *teleios* (Greek) = describes something that fulfills its created purpose; maturity

When Jesus tells us to be perfect, he’s telling us to be fully all we were created to be.

Genesis 1:27 (NLT): “So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.”

We can’t be God, but His desire is that we reflect His love and character in our lives.

Every person, every situation is different, and the one who is “perfect” or mature seeks to love in that situation.

Next Week: A Life of Integrity

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