

Rev. Dustin Daniels | River Bible Church
Matthew 5:28-30 | The Lie of Lust
November 6, 2022

WELCOME:

- Please turn your Bibles to Matthew 5.
- Bibles in the back—our gift to you.

REVIEW:

We continue our study in Matthew's Gospel.

We are specifically studying Jesus's *Sermon on the Mount*.

This sermon by Jesus (Matthew chapter 5 through chapter 8) is the greatest sermon ever preached by the Greatest preacher ever.

We are in the part of Jesus' sermon where the subject matter hits close to home for many of us.

We discussed anger several weeks ago—and now we're in the middle of talking about adultery and lust.

Next week we'll be talking about divorce.

It's not a coincidence that Jesus puts all of these topics back-to-back within the Sermon on the Mount.

Anger and sex—are two of the most powerful human experiences.

Both reach deep into the sinfulness of our hearts.

If there is one central theme of Jesus' sermon—it is that He is dealing with our hearts—and not only our behavior.

Jesus

He is having us question our motives, our thinking, and our decision making.

Last week we focused on one verse.

Matthew 5:27—“You have heard that it was said, **Do not commit adultery.**

So we looked at this one verse, and we said that to understand the sinfulness of adultery—we must first understand the mystery of marriage.

And to understand the mystery of marriage, we had to rewind.

And that’s what we did—we went back to the very beginning—Genesis 1 and 2.

LW KEYPOINTS:

- Marriage is not only a physical union but also a spiritual reality.
- Sex is the exclusive activity that defines the marriage relationship.

We all know the consequences that come when someone steps outside the marriage and commits the sin of adultery.

So we spent a lot of time, first of all, learning about the mystery of marriage.

And secondly, listening to the Heavenly Father’s heart by reading Proverbs 5, 6, and 7.

And we saw how God, as a Loving Father, pleads with us not to commit adultery—

Prayerfully, we learned that when God says, “Don’t commit adultery,” we begin hear His words as “don’t hurt yourself.”

INTRODUCTION:

Today, we will finish this section of Jesus’ sermon regarding adultery.

He opens this conversation up to a broader discussion by talking about lust.

Today's Sermon is PG-13.

~~So we'll learn what Jesus has to say about lust today.~~

We're going to learn the lie's of lust and also the beauty of sexual purity.

Lastly, we'll also see the forgiveness found in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Please stand for the reading and honoring of God's Word.

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 5:27-30 CSB

Matthew 5:27— “You have heard that it was said, **Do not commit adultery,**

Matthew 5:28— *But I tell you, everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*

Matthew 5:29— *If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.*

Matthew 5:30— *And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.*

***This is the Word of the Lord for River Bible Church.*

EXEGESIS:

Matthew 5:27— “You have heard that it was said, **Do not commit adultery,**

Matthew 5:28— *But I tell you, everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*

Jesus uses a familiar phrase as He begins teaching His Disciples.

*“You have heard that is was said.... **But I say to you ...**”*

In using this phrase, Jesus was referencing the *halakha*.

The *halakha* means “the walk” and refers to the oral traditions of the Rabbis.

Jesus’ first point is foundational for us this morning.

When Jesus says, “**But I** ^{tell you} say to you...”

Our first question should be—“Wait. Who are you to have any authority over me?”

If Jesus is not God in the flesh—

If Jesus is not God incarnate—

If Jesus is not the Son of God and the Son of Man who came to take away the sin of the world—why listen to Him?

Who is He to tell me how to live or not live my life?

Why don’t we take our advice from Oprah or Dr. Phil, or Hugh Hefner?

Who does Jesus think He is barging into the most private aspect of my life?

Well, the reason that we, as Christians—listen to what He has to say is because we know Who He is!

We know that Jesus is indeed God in the flesh—He is the Lawgiver.

Jesus is the one who gave the Law to Moses with the Ten Commandments.

Now we see Jesus correctly teaching the spirit of the law with the Sermon on the Mount.

+ **Matthew 5:28**— *But I tell you,*

The pronoun *I* is *egō* in Greek—It's emphatic.

It ^{MEANS} indicates that Jesus puts His own word above the ^{authority} of the Rabbi's and all their oral traditions.

In other words, Jesus is teaching this commandment on adultery in the same spirit and with the same attitude in which it was given.

Jesus continues...

Matthew 5:28— *But I tell you, everyone who looks at a woman lustfully...*

Just as Jesus forbids the anger that leads to murder, Jesus forbids the lust that leads to adultery.

Looks comes from the Greek word, *blepō*.

It is to examine, gaze, and to keep on seeing.

This is not a casual glance.

It is a constant stare with the purpose of lusting.

This look is not accidental; it is planned.

It is an intentional and repeated leer.

Now, believe it or not, someone can see at a beautiful person and know that they are beautiful, and not lust after them.

However, this is uncommon for most men—and yes, even Christian men.

We, as Christian men, need to unlearn our deeply ingrained fleshly habits and replace them with godly habits.

This is where our spiritual disciplines come into play.

Discipline is TRAINING.

Our spiritual disciplines of:

- reading the Word of God by the Spirit of God,
- praying for one another,
- serving the Saints around you,
- serving your community,
- attending Bible studies,
- giving, fasting, and confessing sin—all these things spiritually form you into a new person.

We can't say it any better than the apostle Paul regarding spiritual formation.

Romans 12:2—*Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.*

Being formed and conformed is a painful process that lasts a lifetime.

And for many of us, there is no better example than our topic today.

of applying spiritual discipline

Back to...

Matthew 5:28— *But I tell you, everyone who looks at a woman lustfully...*

Lustfully - *epithymeō*—(epi-thee-mau) is not only to look but to crave a person sexually.

It is to desire someone you don't have—someone who is not yours.

This craving, desiring, longing, and yearning leads to another problem on God's top ten list of how to ruin your life.

Adultery comes in at number seven, and coveting comes in at number ten.

Lust is a form of coveting, and coveting is the gateway to many sins, including adultery.

So when a person looks and starts to crave someone sexually, he's not breaking one command but two—possibly three—more on that in a moment.

Definition:

Lust *epithymēō*—(epi-thee-mau)— Experiencing pleasure without love; the moment we separate someone's sexuality from their personhood. *the IT's the*

Lust is the desire to possess and use someone for your own pleasure.

There are many stories in the OT regarding the sin of lust.

Of the most famous stories is about King David.

2 Samuel 11:2— *One evening David got up from his bed and strolled around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing—a very beautiful woman.*

2 Samuel 11:3— *So David sent someone to inquire about her, and he said, "Isn't this Bathsheba, daughter of Eliam and wife of Uriah the Hethite?"*

This man sends a warning shot. "Don't do this David. This is another man's wife!"

2 Samuel 11:4— *David sent messengers to get her, and when she came to him, he slept with her...* *Afterward she returned home, it's very clear how David used this woman*
David didn't heed the warning. He gave in to his lust—which ruined His life.

King David's life was never the same—

Which meant the nation of Israel was never the same.

KEYPOINT 1:

Our sexual sin is not a private matter—it is a public testimony that reveals the condition of our heart ~~to others.~~

David not only stared and gazed and gawked at this woman—but coveted another man's bride and stole her from her husband.

Stealing is also on God's top Ten List of how to quickly ruin your life—it comes in at number eight.

~~It is not the lustful look that causes the sin in the heart—~~

~~But instead, the sin in the heart causes lustful looking, which then leads to coveting and finally to stealing.~~

I remember teaching at a men's conference one year on sexual purity, and a guy said, "If these women would stop wearing yoga shorts, I'd be okay."

The whole room started laughing.

I said, "No, yoga pants are not the problem—you're the problem!"

His response to his own lust was to blame the woman.

That should sound pretty familiar—Adam blamed Eve, and we haven't stopped blaming Eve since.

KEYPOINT 2:

The cause of lust is not beautiful people, but a sinful response to beautiful people.

If we're going to blame our lust on beautiful women, then ultimately, we are blaming God.

Because He's The Creator, Designer & Artist

That should also sound familiar—Adam not only blamed the woman, but he also blamed God...and we've been doing the same thing ever since. (Gen. 3:12)

Our lustful looks reveal the condition of our lustful hearts.

David's problem was not that he saw Bathsheba bathing.

His problem was taking a second look—which then turned into a stare—which then inflamed his lustful heart—when then demanded a sinful response.

He could have looked away.

Isn't this a man after God's own heart? (1 Sam. 13:14)

And if David, a man after God's own heart, is capable of lust, adultery, and murdering Bathsheba's husband— imagine what you and I are capable of.

Matthew 5:28— *But I tell you, everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*

If I had a nickel for every time I heard this excuse—

"I've already lusted in my heart so I might as well ~~engage in the sin.~~ ^{do it!}"

Jesus is not saying that lustful desires are identical to lustful deeds.

The desire and the deed are not physically identical, but, spiritually, they are equivalent—sin is sin.

But there is also a progression to sexual sin.

It's common sense for us to realize that lusting in our hearts is one thing—the consequences of that sin are different than the sin of committing the act.

Committing the physical act brings about a whole new level of pain, suffering, and self-inflicted consequences.

In verse 28, there is a bit of a riddle in the original Greek.

If you have the English Standard Version (ESV), you'll see it in your translation.

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

From this perspective, Jesus opposes the man who looks at a woman and wonders how he can cause her to desire him.

This man is leering at women hoping to stir up lustful thoughts in her.

He's playing the game of seduction—and this is called sin.

Matthew 5:29—*If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away.*

Everybody pause!

We have to take a break and see what Jesus is saying.

Otherwise, there will be some unnecessary drastic lifelong consequences that follow.

We got to check our biblical hermeneutics at this moment.

We must make sure that our interpretation of this verse is correct.

Are we to take Jesus' statement literally?

And if we are, why aren't most men walking around looking like pirates?

A crucial question for us at this point is to see what God's Word has to say about self-inflicted physical mutilation.

Because if we don't stop and pause and ask this question, we're going to interrupt this passage incorrectly—

Like Origen of Alexandria (a.d. 185–254).

Origen, a great church Father—but...he was so convicted by this verse that he had himself castrated.

Was that the right thing for Origen to do?

Origen didn't even follow Jesus' instructions correctly.

Genesis 1:27 says that human beings are made in the image of God—

And if we're created in God's image, we don't have the right to mutilate ourselves.

His Creation

There are several examples of people "gashing" themselves in Scripture.

In the Old Testament, self-mutilation was a common practice among false religions.

Remember the dramatic showdown between the prophet Elijah and the priests of Baal? (1 Kings 18:24-29)

Yeah, it didn't work out so well for those pagan priests.

So Scripture condemns self-mutilation.

Looking back on church history, we see that the Council of Nicaea also formally forbade it.

So is Jesus contradicting the OT?

No, Jesus is being hyperbolic.

We use hyperbole all the time in our own conversations.

"This thing weighs a ton! I've heard this song a million times!"

Jesus is doing the same thing to get our attention.

But how do we know with 100% certainty that Jesus is using hyperbole?

Let me ask you two questions:

If someone gouges out their right eye, can they still lust with their left?

If someone gouges out both their eyes, can they still sin in their mind?

Mutilation will not cleanse the heart.

Our Imagination is a gift from God.

What we feed our mind is of eternal importance.

What you watch on TV, what you read and what you listen to—

All have a perpetual impact on how you view life and view God.

Dear friends, Jesus is absolutely positively and figuratively speaking.

In other words, "You've got to take drastic action in getting rid of whatever tempts you to sin. You have to get radical and quit playing with lust like it's a cute harmless puppy."

Have you ever watched the movie “The Little Shop of Horrors?”

Back in high school, my friend took me to a midnight matinee—that was my first exposure to the Little Shop of Horrors.

If you haven’t seen the movie, spoiler alert: this person continues to feed this cute little plant ^{is water} until it grows up and eats them.

Now, I’m not recommending you watch the movie, but it is a good example of how lust works in our lives.

If we wanted to modernize this verse, we could say something like...

If your right eye causes you to sin...

- Throw away the TV.
- Destroy your computer.
- Get a flip phone.
- Cancel your social media accounts.

In other words, if you don’t have the self-control to have these luxuries in life—it’s time to get radical.

You need to do something now before lust eats you.

Now, why does Jesus say, “right eye?”

In Jewish culture, the right eye and right hand represent a person’s best abilities.

The right eye represented one’s best vision, and the right hand one’s best skills.

If you’re right-handed, think about how important it is compared to your left.

Matthew 5:29—^{continues} For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.

Matt 5:30—And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off
 3 throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than ~~you~~ for your whole body to go into hell

Wow...don't miss this—Jesus repeats Himself twice. *in verses 29/30.*

what's His point?

~~In other words~~—unrestrained, unconfessed, unrepented lust will send you to a very real place called hell.

Dear friends, this is not our only life.

God has created you for eternity.

Each one of us—Believer and Unbeliever destined for eternity in one of two places, Heaven or hell.

God says that He's really serious about lust.

The apostle Paul goes into greater detail.

1 Corinthians 6:9—Don't you know that the unrighteous will not inherit God's kingdom? Do not be deceived: No sexually immoral people, idolaters, adulterers, or males who have sex with males,

Paul defines who sexually immoral people are

1 Corinthians 6:10—no thieves, greedy people, drunkards, verbally abusive people, or swindlers will inherit God's kingdom.

1 Corinthians 6:11—And some of you used to be like this. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ changes everything!

None of these sexual sins is outside His grace without repentance.

We all have to evaluate our lives on this matter.

We have to choose:

- Our soul or our computer?
- Our sanctity or pornography?

We cannot have both.

When it comes to sex, sexuality, and gender, we are so conditioned and demonically jaded—

That it's nearly impossible to hear the truth as a 21st-century American.

I'm reminded of the prophet Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 6:15—Were they ashamed when they acted so detestably?

They weren't at all ashamed. They can no longer feel humiliation.

In other words, we are numb to God's truth.

Americans no longer blush about sexual sin because we're living through the third sexual revolution in the past one hundred years.

The first with the roaring '20s.

The second was in the 1960s.

And the third today.

Each one with its growing level of depravity.

Adultery doesn't just happen.

We have been conditioned for it—but at the same time, we're the only ones who can take responsibility.

How do we take responsibility?

+ **Job 31:1**—*I have made a covenant with my eyes.*

How then could I look at a young woman?

↳ EXAMINE, GAZE, LEER.

+ **1 Corinthians 9:27**—*I discipline my body and bring it under strict control, so that after preaching to others, I myself will not be disqualified.*

If we do not consciously and purposefully control what is around us, where we go, what we do, what we watch and read, the company we keep, and the conversations we have— then all of those things will control us.

+ **KEYPOINT 3:**

Lust is a radical problem that requires a radical solution.

That's the main point to ~~see~~ this text.

Dear friends, if you are living a secret life—

If you have secret email addresses or PO Boxes...

If you are surfing the Internet with all sorts of privacy filters...

If you are flirting with people on social media and text messages...

Jesus says, "Do not commit adultery."

In other words, "Do not hurt yourself."

+ **Luke 12:2**—*There is nothing covered that won't be uncovered, nothing hidden that won't be made known.*

What's that mean?

It means repent while you still have time.

You have two choices when it comes to addressing your lust.

Humility or humiliation.

The Lord is begging you to choose humility.

Personally, I've been through the humiliation route, and it's a road you don't want to travel.

PREACH

To give us God's perspective on lust, it's crucial to look at sexual sin theologically. Theology: to study the nature of God.

So let's study God's nature through the lens of sexual purity.

To do so—we must first define some terminology.

Love: A loyalty and fidelity that propels us to action for the good of others—no matter the cost to me. *-love is about sacrifice*

Lust: Experiencing pleasure without love; the moment we separate someone's sexuality from their personhood.

God purposed us to have sex with a person (our spouse)—not a body.

Sexual Sin: Any sexual thoughts, fantasies, or relations with someone or something outside the marriage covenant between one biological man and one biological woman, as defined in Genesis 2:24 and Matthew 5:28.

Now let's define the actual behavior and then look at the behavior from a spiritual perspective.

On your screen, I'm listing the most common types of sexual sin—and then we'll look at those sins from a Biblical perspective.

Adultery: Sexual intercourse between a married person and someone who is not their spouse.

Biblical View: Adultery miscommunicates that Christ will cheat on the Church and be intimate with another (Ex. 20:14, Lev. 20:10, Matt. 19:18).

Divorce: The legal dismissal of a marriage.

Biblical View: Divorce miscommunicates that Christ and the Church would be split apart after a certain period of time (Matt. 19:4-6).

Fornication: Sexual intercourse between two unmarried people.

Biblical View: Fornication miscommunicates that Christ and the Church experience intimacy without commitment (Eph. 5:3, 1 Thess. 4:3).

Homosexuality (Sodomy and Lesbianism): Engaging in sexual behavior with someone of the same sex.

Biblical View: Homosexuality miscommunicates that the proper coupling God intended was not Christ and the Church (a man and a woman) but two “Christs” (a man and a man) or two “Churches” (a woman and a woman) (Lev. 18:22, Rom. 1:26-27).

Polygamy: The practice of having more than one spouse at the same time.

Biblical View: Polygamy miscommunicates that Christ has many churches, rather than one Church (Gen. 2:24, Matt. 19:4-5). Please note that I’m not referring to denominations.

Pornography: The emotional, spiritual, and physical abuse of people performing profane acts of sexuality for the arousal of a viewer or audience. Porn divorces the dignity of the person made in the image of God from their sexuality.

Group of groups

Biblical View: Pornography miscommunicates that Jesus Christ would derive pleasure from viewing such profane acts. *WPA*

Prostitution: The practice or occupation of someone who engages in sexual activity for payment.

Biblical View: Prostitution miscommunicates that Christ and the Church are strangers who experience a brief form of sexual union based on a financial transaction (Lev. 19:29, Prov. 23:27).

Rape: The crime of forcing another person to have sexual intercourse against their will.

Biblical View: Rape miscommunicates that Christ would force Himself on an unwilling Church (Deut. 22:25-27).

This is not an exhaustive list but rather shows how these behaviors stray from God's original design for ~~sexuality~~. *sex, sexuality, gender = marriage,*

Now for all of us who have strayed from God's design in this area—please remember that God's grace is bigger than your sexual sin.

You are never outside the grace of God with repentance.

PRAYER

BENEDICTION

Revelation 1:5-6—*To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood ~~and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father,~~ to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

Reminder:Books/Meeting

PRAYER

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