

Radiant Church, January 10, 2016
Mike Rydman

**A Disciple's Heart...is Passionate for Purity
Matthew 5:27-30**

Matthew 5:27-28 *You have heard that it was said, "You shall not commit adultery." But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*

At this point in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is giving illustrations of the radical, superseding righteousness that He brings

The first (last week) was taken from the 6th of the 10 Commandments
(You shall not murder)

This next one is built on the 7th Commandment, which prohibits adultery

But now Jesus is interpreting the 7th Commandment by using the 10th Commandment

Exodus 20:17 *You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's*

Jesus is challenging the narrow view of the 7th Commandment, because to view it narrowly is to view it as only the external manifestation of adultery, not the internal condition.

For the Pharisees' scribes and other teachers, it was either you're an adulterer or you're not.

People caught in adultery faced a death sentence

For everyone else, including us, it becomes quite natural to feel smug by saying, "Well, at least I haven't committed THAT sin."

But Jesus knows our hearts, and He is communicating a radical new standard of sexual purity.

And by His standard, we are all adulterers

Our society is blatantly sensual, sensualistic

We're being told that relationships should last only as long as they are mutually fulfilling

And, that access to regular sexual satisfaction should be viewed as a basic human right

But adultery starts deeper than just wanting fulfillment. Jesus has already related adultery to covetousness...wanting what someone else has.

And covetousness is rooted in dissatisfaction

Dissatisfaction in what we have and don't have
Ultimately, dissatisfaction in what God has or has not given
So we want to take it upon ourselves to decide what we need, and then to
go find it
Thus, we intentionally serve a false God...ourselves

And that false God, ourselves, can easily come to believe that we deserve
better than we have
We deserve sexual or relational satisfaction
We even deserve an "upgrade" when we want it

I had a hard conversation some years back with a guy who was in the midst of
having an affair. His rationale?
"She makes me feel like the king of the world"
And his wife apparently didn't

In 2 Samuel 11, David saw a beautiful woman in the next door housetop
Allowed his fantasies to run wild, and acted upon those fantasies
Even after his servant told him whose wife she was

Matthew 5:29-30 *If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it
away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole
body be thrown into hell. 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 your members than
that your whole body go into hell.*

The writer Oswald Chambers said "this line of discipline is the sternest one that
ever struck mankind"

The ancient church leader, Origen took it literally and altered himself
physically (causing the Council of Nicea to outlaw the practice)

But what Jesus is saying here in verses 29 and 30 is to do away with anything
that gets in the way of our pure relationship between God and us

Drastic measures are always appropriate in order to protect our spiritual health

In **Job 31:1**, Job makes what he called a "covenant with his eyes"
I have made a covenant with my eyes; how then could I gaze at a virgin?

Job understood that his eyes could get him in trouble

In the last part of Genesis, Joseph is the house manager for an Egyptian guy
named Potiphar. Potiphar's wife tries to seduce Joseph, and Joseph would
probably not have been able to resist Mrs. Potiphar if he had stayed around her
for very long. David should have done the same thing.

That's why we are called to "run" from anything that would cause us to be adulterers

1 Corinthians 6:18 *flee from sexual immorality*

2 Timothy 2:22 *flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness*

But here's the problem...it's hard to run away from what we think we want

If we run away, we're always tempted to run back toward it the next time
And for every success we will also have a another failure

Instead, real disciples of Jesus run...but they run toward something different

Philippians 4:8 *finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things*

This is saying that we have to willingly, aggressively put to death those things that lead to spiritual death

And instead, choose that which leads to life
We have to be willing to choose Jesus, Himself

And we cannot do this, unless we recognize our weakness and lean into the ministry of the Holy Spirit changing our minds about what we think is important

Romans 8:13 *but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live*

Philippians 2:12-13 *work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you*

So what do we each do, in response to what we've looked at today?

1. Admit your ongoing sin to God. Admit your fantasies to God. Admit your sinful desires for affirmation by wanting an upgrade. Come clean before God.
2. If you're married, love your spouse better and more so than you do, even more than you think you can. Be pure in your marriage. Run quick and run far from anything that would cause you to lose faith and trust in your spouse or yourself.

3. If you're not married, be pure in your unmarried state. Run quick and run far from anything that would cause you to already be an unfaithful spouse.
4. And for all of us, ask the Holy Spirit to give us a new sense of what we think is important, what we think we need, and to give us a deeper love for Jesus, knowing that Jesus loves us enough to tell us how to be clean and well and satisfied in Him.

Because a Disciple's heart trusts Jesus enough to be passionate about purity!

Next time we'll talk about what Jesus has to say about divorce.