

**Sermon on the Mount**  
**Lesson #8**  
**“Kingdom righteousness is a matter of the heart” Part II**  
**Matthew 5:27-30**

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:20 *“For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.”*

**Introduction:**

In the Antarctic summer of 1908-1909, Sir Ernest Shackleton and three companions attempted to travel to the South Pole from their winter quarters. They set off with four ponies to help carry the load. Weeks later, their ponies dead, rations all but exhausted, they turned back toward their base, their goal not accomplished. Altogether, they trekked 127 days.

On the return journey, as Shackleton records in *The Heart Of The Antarctic*, the time was spent talking about food—elaborate feasts, gourmet delights, sumptuous menus. As they staggered along, suffering from dysentery, not knowing whether they would survive, every waking hour was occupied with thoughts of eating.

Jesus, who also knew the ravages of food deprivation, said, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for RIGHTEOUSNESS.” We can understand Shackleton’s obsession with food, which offers a glimpse of the passion Jesus intends for our quest for righteousness.

Source unknown

**Transitional Statement:**

The righteousness of God something that is a matter of the heart. It is obtained by a deep desire to know God through His word. In today’s lesson Jesus will direct His disciples away from an understanding of righteousness based on law keeping, and tell them that after an understanding of God’s authority that they must get serious about sin.

**I. “You shall not commit adultery”**

Matthew 5:27

*You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY';*

A. *“You have heard”*

1. This, again is unlike it is written

2. Suggesting perhaps that the word's of God had reached their ears but not their hearts.

Isaiah 6:8-10

*8 Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I. Send me!" 9 He said, "Go, and tell this people:*

*'Keep on listening, but do not perceive;*

*Keep on looking, but do not understand.'*

*10 " Render the hearts of this people insensitive,*

*Their ears dull,*

*And their eyes dim,*

*Otherwise they might see with their eyes,*

*Hear with their ears,*

*Understand with their hearts,*

*And return and be healed."*

\* i.e. Stop operating on the surface but allow God to touch your hearts.

3. Thinking back over the whole time that man has filled this earth, I wonder how many lives Satan has destroyed by encouraging hard hearts that won't allow God's word to penetrate them and make a difference?

4. God's word is not superficial

- a. Our concern should not be with the exterior

- b. What is seen by men

5. You see the Scribes and the Pharisees had a heart condition

Matthew 23:27

*27 " Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness.*

- a. The Scribes and the Pharisees were shallow to the nth degree

- b. Church, sometimes we can be shallow too, not allowing the word of God to work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12

*" For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart."*

- 1) But Church the word of God needs soft fertile soil (Matt 13).

2) God's word has little effect on hardened hearts.

B. So with this in mind Jesus brings up a familiar point of the Law

*"You shall not commit adultery"*

1. Which was the 7<sup>th</sup> of the 10 commandments...Exodus 20:14
2. That is that a married person is not to engage in sexual relationships outside of their own marriage.
  - a. That their should be faithfulness between a man and his wife.
  - b. The penalty for violation of this command was death Lev 20:10
3. Of course the New Testaments clearly points out the same need for faithfulness inside a marriage relationship.

Hebrews 13:4

*4 Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.*

4. But long before Christ spoke these words, King David of Israel set an adulterous example for all of Israel with Bathsheba. 2 Samuel 11:2-5
  - a. An interestingly enough according to the Law of Moses He should have been put to death.
    - 1) But God's people did not follow the Law. They basically minimized this sin in their hearts and it remained this way until New Testament times.
    - 2) In John chapter 8 we see the Scribes and the Pharisees reduced to using adultery as a whipping post for the Law.
5. The Scribes and the Pharisees viewed righteousness through regulation, when true righteousness comes out of a heart relationship with God.
  - a. Their view of righteousness was that if the boundary of the Law was not crossed that God was pleased.

**II. But Jesus wants His disciples to understand that by the time you get to adultery, you've already taken many sinful steps.**

Matthew 5:28

*28 but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*

**A. Sin is a matter that begins deep in the heart before any actions are taken.**

1. Matthew 15:19 says that Adultery comes out of the heart

*19 " For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.*

- B. If we don't understand how sin happens we surely can't understand the righteousness that God expects in us.

1. Let's look at the roots of sin in the heart.

2. Read James 1:14-15

*14 But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. 15 Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death."*

- a. Temptation occurs when we are enticed by our own lust

- 1) That is when the deep desires of our hearts long for and even crave after what is forbidden by God.

- 2) So why would anyone want what God forbids?

- a) First and foremost they don't understand who God is.

- b) Don't trust God to take care of them

- c) They don't want to deny themselves Matt 16:24

-It is their pleasure that they seek...not God's

-1 John 2:16

*16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.*

- b. But notice when sin occurs.

- 1) Sin occurs when desire and willingness becoming willing partners.

- 2) Jesus points out to His disciples that sin happens long before any physical action.

Matthew 5:28

*"but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart"*

-C.S. Lewis puts it like this “If a man looks lustfully upon ham and eggs he has already committed breakfast in his heart.”

3) Lust is the point where desire has meet with action in the mind

-The point where a person starts taking off another persons clothes or even engaging in sexual sins in their mind.

4) And when lust has conceived

-It brings forth death James 1:15

-All this before a single touch.

5) There is not acceptable excuses

-1 Corinthians 10:13

*“No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it”*

C. Church , I think the deeper truth that Jesus is pointing to is our need for spiritual faithfulness to God first, and when we have that right, the physical things will fall in line.

1. Truly the root of sin lies in the heart.

2. You know a lot of people like these Scribes and Pharisees try to treat the effects of sin instead of their cause.

a. It’s kind of like a doctor prescribing anti itch cream for a person with leprosy.

### **III. Church, the bottom line is that we need to get serious about preventing sin**

Matthew 5:29-30

29 " If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. 30 " If your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to go into hell."

A. I have heard on countless occasions the disclaimer that we tend to use with this passage.

1. Oh this is not literal, but Jesus is pointing to the seriousness of dealing with sin

2. I surely agree that Jesus’ main point is the necessity of dealing with sin, but I see absolutely no reason to minimize the rest of what He is saying.

- a. Textually, I see nothing here that says He is using an analogy or that it is to be taken figuratively.
  - b. I think we are afraid of making it literal, because it's not politically correct or even that it might come with liability.
- B. But here Jesus is saying that we should be willing to go to extremes to keep from sinning, even if it is parting with an appendage.
1. You know I have visited with many a Christian man who has struggled with pornography in their lives and on most occasions it becomes a life long battle with short lived victories and many heart aches.
  2. But, I just wonder if they stepped up to the plate and gave over all they cherish the most, if they went to a surgeon and had their eyes removed, what level of faithful love for God would that man rise to. How would God bless their lives

**Conclusion:**

Church, God wants us to be right according to His measure not ours.

Are you deeply committed to knowing your God and pleasing Him with a full surrender?

To what length will you go to eradicate sin from your life?