



Sermon: *The heart of the matter is the matter of the heart*

Text: *Matthew 5: 27-30*

Preacher: *Danny Mitchell*

Sermon question - How does Jesus take the sin of adultery and turn it on its head?

Introductory questions - Like murder, lust and adultery was and is offensive to God the Creator, who made human beings in his own image. Even before the Ten Commandments were given, we are read in Genesis 39:6-10 that Joseph knew that giving in to the advances of Potiphar's wife would be sinning against God.

1. Read Deuteronomy 22:22-27. What was the penalty for adultery? What was the reason given for such a harsh penalty?

God's law is severe toward anyone who willingly has sexual relations with anyone besides the person's marital partner. The provision against adultery is not some priggish rule by a divine kill-joy; it is God's protective measure to guard sexual purity within and outside of marriage.

1. Read Proverbs 6:20-35, in which a wise father warns his son against committing adultery. What does the father say of the man who commits adultery? What are the word images used in this passage? How do they expand on the danger and consequences of adultery?

Reflection questions:

1. What, according to Jesus, is the full meaning of the seventh commandment: "Do not commit adultery" (vv.27-28)?
2. Danny Mitchell defined lust as a desire for something that *we* believe to be good, that is outside of God's original design and intention. Is there such a thing as a good lust?
3. What's the "matter of the heart" in the struggle with lust?
4. Calvin Miller compares lust to "a cannibal committing suicide by nibbling on himself." How have you seen lust hurt yourself and others?
5. Some Christians have taken verses 29-30 literally and have mutilated their bodies. How do you think Jesus intends us to understand his warnings?
6. What's the significance of "the right eye" and "the right hand" in this passage?
7. In what situations might you need to "tear out an eye" or "cut off a hand"? What does the struggle to "relinquish control" look like in your life?
8. What are the Christ-given tools we should use in the struggle against lust?