

Date: June 10, 2012

Subject: Matthew 5:28

"But I say unto you, That whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart."

-Matthew 5:28

We shall develop our text into the following four points:

I. The Deadly Fruit - "whosoever looks on a woman"

II. The Sin - "to lust after her"

III. The Conception - "has committed adultery with her already"

IV. The Root - "in his heart."

Notice how Christ begins with the outer sin, "looks" and works His way to the very core of sin, the "heart." Most people think that the look itself is the sin, but we see that this is only the result of the sin beginning at the heart; so the Scripture proves that the lust precedes the look.

It must also be observed that Christ is establishing a principle; namely, the thought in sin is the same as the act in sin. Therefore this principle applies to both men and women, as Christ shines the light on the sinful hearts of man, He also shines the light on the sinful hearts of women. One should not read this passage and think only men to be guilty; not so, this principle applies to both men and women... & children too.

For example, we read in 1 John 3:13, 15

"Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you... Whosoever hates his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him."

The word, "brethren" in verse 13 is masculine, does this mean that ~~it~~ it is ok for a woman to hate someone? No, the principle is that the inner offense of the heart, is still sin in God's sight, just as a physical murder. This also shows the use of the law, to expose the sinfulness of the heart; mankind never wants to fully submit to God's righteousness and so is always attempting to justify himself. Thus the law crushes the pride of man and eliminates all attempts of justification by works unto life.

We have all heard people say - and maybe ourselves too - "Oh, I'm not that bad; at least I never killed anybody..." The law says, "Oh yea? Have you ever hated anybody...? Guilty!!" This same principle applies to lust; which is our topic this week.

We read of the rapid progression of sin in James 1:13-15

"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust [this takes place in the heart], and enticed. Then when lust has conceived, it brings forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death."

Since sin begins in the heart, we shall begin our study with that of the heart and work our way back to the beginning of our verse, each section at a time, ~~also~~ following the progression of sin from the heart, to the "look", and beyond.

IV. The Root - "in his heart."

In Luke 6:45 we read,

"A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks."

Notice how a man doesn't speak out of the abundance of his mouth, but of his heart. Abundance means the heart is filled and so spills over and comes out of the mouth. Just like the water doesn't originate at the spout of a fountain, but how it reaches down deep within the earth and the water travels all the way through the pipes, and is finally released at the spout, so do words originate not from our "spout" (i.e. mouth); but from our heart. Every sin originates at this deepest level, i.e. of our heart, including ~~lust~~ lust. A man or woman desires to lust, and so that desire overflows to more evil thoughts, which leads ~~to~~ to the look, and can develop into still greater sin. The root of it all, is the heart.

III. The Conception - "has committed adultery with her already"

It is not sinful to be tempted, Jesus was tempted (Mat. 4:1 ff.), but He didn't sin, because we are told in Hebrews 4:15

"For we have not as High Priest [i.e. Jesus Christ] Who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

Temptations can come at anytime and to anyone; it could be the most sincere Christian, during prayer, or at night while waiting to sleep, or in the car, or anywhere, doing anything. When that initial temptation knocks on the door - it knocks on everybody's door - it only becomes sin, when you let it in. When you start entertaining thoughts that you know to be wrong, sometimes they start off so "innocuous", it could be the marriage you never had, your "perfect" mate that is yet out there for you and how you would be such a "good" husband or wife... and so you develop these thoughts and they snowball and intensify, and before long, you are engrossed in terrible thoughts leading to terrible actions. Maybe it's the raunchy pornography you know

you can find so easily on the internet, you know better ~~than~~ ^{than} to ever attempt these things with your spouse ~~and~~, yet you still live out that wicked fantasy that attracts your heart, and so... there you sit, hour after hour entertaining those filthy fornications in secret.

"Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant. But he knows not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell." Proverbs 9:17-18

Even worse is to go and "fulfill" these sinful passions on your spouse while they are yet in your mind... all the while your unsuspecting spouse is making love, to a stranger; but it is you, all the while who has been embracing the bosom of a stranger,

"And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?" Proverbs 5:20

O how many hours are spent with the legs of our heart opened wide to the abuse of this lust, second after second, minute after minute,

hour after hour, the hearts and minds are willingly embracing a sinful "love" which is not their own,

"Thou hast built thy high place at every head of the way, and hast made thy beauty to be abhorred, and hast opened thy feet to every one that passed by, and multiplied thy whoredoms." Ezekiel 16:25

O beloved, shut your feet, lock your mind, and guard your heart with all diligence (Prov. 4:23) against lust, or else it will race through your mind causing further chaos. Do you not bolt the doors of your house to prevent intruders from entering? How much more should you bolt the door of your heart and not allow lust to enter with all its sinister friends? You must prevent the conception of such a sin, this is why Christ said that he who allows the door of his heart to remain unlocked and willingly allows the conception of lust, "has committed adultery with her already" even though he has not even acted upon it physically, but in his heart... he - or she - already has.

II. The Sin - "to lust after her"

The Greek word here translated as "lust" is "epithumeō;" "epi" is a prefix meaning "on" and "thumeō" is from a Greek word meaning "anger, rage, etc."

At first it may seem strange that lust comes from a root meaning anger in the Greek; but I think it helps illustrate the intensity of just how strong a desire lust brings; what begins as a small flame, grows into an insatiable inferno.

We read of the Jews in 1 Corinthians 10 how

"with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after ["epithumētēs"] evil things, as they also lusted ["epithumeō"].

We read of this account in Numbers chapter 11,

"And the mixt multitude that was among them fell a lusting; and the children of Israel

"also wept again, and said, ~~Who~~ Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick: but now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes." Num. 11:4-6

We see their discontent with the will of God, then we see how they even lightly esteemed the manna (a figure of Christ Himself. see John 6:32 ff.)

The Israelites wanted flesh, they desired flesh, they lusted for flesh and violently rejected the word of God and so we read in the 33rd verse of the same chapter,

"And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, before it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was kindled against the people with a very great plague."

Lust is that chief desire that cannot be appeased until  satisfied with the gratification of itself, and once this is "conceived", the "stillborn" is sure to follow.

I. The Deadly Fruit - "Whosoever looks on a woman"

i call this "the deadly fruit" because all that has been nurtured in the mind, now begins to work itself into our actions, the members of our body will now become "instruments of unrighteousness" and every action is the fruit of this sinful passion bred in the heart, and so iniquity grows into greater iniquity. (Rom. 6:19).

Those who yet belong to the world are content with such a life; but the Christian will not. The Apostle Paul reminds us of the change that should effect our Christian life,

"For when we were in the flesh [i.e. Unsaved, before a true faith in Christ], the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death."

He goes on to explain the change that should be evidenced in our life now,

"But now we are delivered from the law [i.e. saved], that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." Romans 7:5-6

We live in a day when fornication is the way of life, it is celebrated and glamorized on television, newspapers, magazines, etc. It's like a fishbowl with a thousand hooks, getting caught is inevitable... for the fish, but not for the Christian - Glory to God!

Pornography is a deadly foe ensnaring many people, and seeks to plant those lustful seeds in the heart, thereby causing sin to God, to the spouse, and even yourself. Masturbation is wrong and never tolerated in the Bible and unbecoming of a saint. We are so duly warned in 1 Corinthians 6

"Flee fornication. Every sin that a man does is without the body; but he that commits fornication sins against his own body.

"What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price [i.e. a most perfect and glorious Price - our Lord Jesus Christ]: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." 1 Cor. 6:18-20

From this passage we observe how even Christians can be involved with such a sin, and how it is wrong and should not continue. The finger of the law has been removed from pointing at us, and was shifted to point at Christ - He willingly removed us from the curse of the law; so the Scripture appeals to us, not by the demands and threats of the law, but by love; by what Christ did for us, "For ye are bought with a price."

When you are tempted beloved, when those thoughts first arise, quench them, mortify them, and redirect your thoughts to actively & wholly remember that "ye are bought with a price." Remember Him who died for you, He died so that you may live - you are alive from the dead, let this be the "abundance"

of your heart and so yield your members - by faith - as instruments of righteousness unto God.

"Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." Romans 6:13

Beloved if you are struggling with lust, do not think of it as an "addiction" for you leave yourself no hope. Stick to the language of the Bible and call it what it is ... sin. Stop at the very first temptation, allow it no fuel to grow (Prov. 4:14; Rom. 13:14). Remember that God always makes a means of escape for us (1 Cor. 10:13) and that He has, "according to His divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life ~~and~~ and godliness, ..." (2 Pet. 1:3) and how we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us (Phil. 4:13). If you're a Christian, these principles apply to all of our life's problems, never be content with any sin but root it out by faith in Jesus Christ, this is our promised victory, "For whosoever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith." (1 John 5:4). I am forever gratefully,
Your servant for Jesus' sake. Dec 7. 1988

Take My Life, and Let it Be by Havergal 1874.

Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee.
Take my moments and my days; let them flow in endless praise.
Take my hands and let them move at the impulse of Thy love.
Take my feet, and let them be swift and beautiful for Thee.
Take my voice and let me sing always, only, for my King.
Take my lips, and let them be filled with messages from Thee.
Take my silver and my gold; not a mite would I withhold.
Take my intellect, and use every power as Thou shalt choose.
Take my will and make it Thine; it shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is Thine own; it shall be Thy royal throne.
Take my love; my Lord, I pour at Thy feet its treasure store.
Take myself, and I will be ever, only, all for Thee.
ever, only, all for Thee.

Supplement

As some of you already know, i have been studying Christian Counseling very seriously and have committed my life to the practice of it. It is my absolute joy to share God's solutions for our problems in life with others, and i fully trust in the Holy Spirit to change His people one soul at a time by building each other up in the Word of God.

The riches of the joy of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ is my greatest peace in life - and i write this right now from the confines of four prison cell walls - God knows how i believe the life changing power of Jesus Christ as Paul so beautifully said,

"I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds." Acts 26:29

So if you or someone you know is struggling through some burden, i willingly offer my time and talents unto you, as unto God. i am forever and most heartily,
Your servant for Jesus' sake,

Lei D. W. W.