

Weaving the Word

The Heart of Adultery

Part 24 – February 15, 2015

Welcome to a place where we count the cost to follow the One who paid the price!

So, how's your sex drive?



I mean, how *does* it drive?

Is it a *reckless driver*? A *drunk driver*?

An accident just waiting to happen?

Or, is it a *trustworthy chauffer*?



How's your sex drive driving you?

Jesus calls His disciples to a gratitude-based, selfless righteousness that surpasses the regulations of the religious leaders.

Because, **rules won't transform our heart.** But, **a new heart will transform our words and actions, and even our thoughts.**



On that hill, He cleared up some confusion.

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law [epitomized by the 10 commandments] or the Prophets [epitomized by Moses]; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them." – Matthew 5:17 NIV

The religious weren't requiring *too much*, but *too little*! Their focus was all wrong: **they concentrated on external behavior.**

So, after addressing *murder-of-the-heart*, Jesus now gets to the heart of the second most diabolical, deceptive, and insidious sin that plagues men *and* women alike: **infidelity-of-the-heart.**

"You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' [The hard-to-ignore 7th commandment: "You shall not commit adultery" (Ex 20:14; Deut 5:18); the one we can get caught doing] But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart." [The easily-ignored 10th commandment: "You shall not covet your neighbor's wife" (or house or animal or whatever) (Ex 20:14; Deut 5:18); the one we seem to get away with] – Matthew 5:27-28 NIV

The power of our sexual drive and desire is commanding.

But, it doesn't have to be controlling. Two different things.

When you see an attractive body, your eye might command your attention and your brain might command a physiological reaction. But, that isn't lust. It isn't sin.

It's your body responding the way Jesus designed it to respond.

It's all about where your heart chooses to take it from there.

Sin is when we try to meet God given needs in ungodly ways.



... each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. **[Picturing. Pondering. Playing with fire!]** Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. Don't be deceived, my dear brothers. – James 1:14-16 NIV

The devil may tempt, but we drag *ourselves* away.



What anatomy does for guys, romance does for gals.

X-rated porn tempts with over-sexualized females.

Romance porn tempts with over-emotionalized males.



Both distortions are conceived in the theater of our mind, and give birth to adultery in our heart. And, both will destroy our *real* relationships.

Don't be deceived.

Godly men reserve their sexual desire for their wife.



Godly women reserve their romantic desire for their husband.

For a believer, it's pretty black and white.



Can you think of any *righteous* shades of gray?

“What about nude art? Sexy people? Athletic bodies? *How long can we look?*”

There's no set time limit. It's individual. But, for all of us, it's *any time before* – before we begin picturing, pondering, and playing with fire.



If we don't bounce our eyes from our temptation, our corrupt desires *will* conceive. Keep in mind, your sex drive got a license without any training.

Lust turned loose is an *out-of-control, hit-and-run driver!*

Which is why Jesus won't allow us to treat it lightly.

Which is why He employs one of His most shocking analogies *ever*.

“If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.” – Matthew 5:29-30 NIV

Imagine the expressions on these mostly teenage apostles!

“Um, should you maybe have told us this part *before* we signed up?”

It's meant to shock us into facing the corruption of our heart.

“But, ‘boys will be boys’ and ‘a girl's got needs’. My eye craves to look. My hand longs to touch. *I'm flesh and blood*. I mean, *what choice do I really have?*”

Gouge it out. Cut it off.

I mean, what *choice do you have*, **if you really believe that it's your parts that cause you to sin?**

But, do you? Do they? Or, **is that just your license to lust?**



No doubt, **my eye can be a trigger, but it's not the decision maker.**

“You've heard that it was said, ‘DO NOT commit adultery.’” Who had they heard this from? Those who were concentrating their focus on the DO-NOTS of external behavior.



“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of **greed** and **self-indulgence**. Blind Pharisee! **First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean.**” – Matthew 23:25-26 NIV

Rules won't change your heart.

However, **a new heart will change who rules!**



We're aware of the judgment of God. And, even an animal, caught in a trap, will know enough to chew off its paw to save its life. **If you were handcuffed in a burning building or a sinking ship, and you had a cleaver, wouldn't you chop it off?**

Remember the rock climber who cut off his arm?

James Franco in “127 Hours”

So, why *don't* we chop off the parts that'll send us to hell?

Because, deep down, we know in our heart it's *our heart*.

"*IF your EYE causes you to sin ...*" Come on, you know your *eye* doesn't have the final say.

It can command your notice, but you can resist its control.

How many parts would you need to amputate before realizing that it's always been less about the part and more about the heart? Better to come to that conclusion *before* you start chopping!

Jesus is pushing His young apprentices to confront the sin within.

If you gouged out your eye, would you stop lusting?



If you cut off your hand, would you stop sinning?

Are you just the sum of your body parts?

If so, then by all means, hack away.

If not, then there is only One Way. *Because ...*

Our heart is the one part we can't cut off ... *without help*.

Thankfully, the Great Physician is ready, willing, and able!

I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees ...
– Ezekiel 36:25b-27 NIV

He disarms the old, implants the new, and dwells in us, by His Spirit, to empower us to pursue a true love and joy and peace. Otherwise, we wouldn't have a prayer.

But, we *do* have a prayer ...

Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. – Psalm 51:10 NIV

Is this something you pray?

Every day?

You should ... if it's your *desire*.