

Matthew 5

27 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time,
Thou shalt not commit adultery:

28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a
woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her
already in his heart.

29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast
it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy
members should perish, and not that thy whole body
should be cast into hell.

30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it
from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy
members should perish, and not that thy whole body
should be cast into hell.

31 It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife,
let him give her a writing of divorcement:

32 But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his
wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to
commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is
divorced committeth adultery.

Introduction

- Jesus is dealing with “self righteousness”.
- Last week “your hating heart” of the song “your cheating heart”. Today could be “shot to the heart, your to blame, you give love a bad name”.
- Pastor showed us how Jesus is mocking the way religious people had tried to change the meaning of the Bible to make their wicked, hating, hearts comfortable.
- Today we see how their self righteousness continues in the area of adultery.

I. We have a tendency to build self righteous facades around our hearts.

A. “Thou has said” are the readily available, easy to make bricks we use. **v. 27**

1. God sees the heart even though may see the externals. **Luke 16:15**
And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.

2. Christ warned people to beware of false prophets because they have a home made version of righteousness. **Matthew 7:15** *Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*

B. You see the Pharisees and the scribes, had such a superficial view of sin that they were able to accommodate it with a superficial view of salvation.

1. We would do good to remind ourselves of what is sin.

a) Rebellion towards God. Lev. 26:27

b) Breaking of His law. 1 John 3:4

c) Attitudes and acts that expresses ingratitude Acts 17:28

d) It is humanly incurable. Jeremiah 13:23

e) It is hard work. Jer. 9:5, Psalm 1:1

2. How serious is sin.

a) Sin brings death. **Romans 3:23**

b) Drastic measures where needed so we could be forgiven of it.

c) Drastic measures should be taken for us to avoid it.

C. They were hiding and ignoring their adultery.

1. In their heart by lack of action. **v. 28**

a) The heart is filled with adultery, wanting to find an object to which to attach the fantasy.

- b) It is the vile adulterous heart that results in the wanton look, do you see?
 - c) **Illustration of the posters in middle school.**
 - d) It is all about the heart. It always has been as we will see shortly.
2. They created a rule (write a letter) and they followed it. **v. 32**
- a) They looked for permission for divorce in God's teaching to prevent adultery.
 - (1) They took Deut 24:1-2 said they could divorce their wives for any reason.
 - (a) Summary: A man finds fault with his wife (obnoxious), gives her a letter of divorcement, she remarries, the second husband finds something against her, he gives her a letter of divorcement, she cannot return to the first husband because she has become an adulteress. Which was caused by the first husband.
 - (b) They read these and say "so we have to get the divorce on paper"
 - (c) That is the logic produced by the mind from a person with a self righteous heart!
 - (2) God was teaching them to not add the sin of adultery to the sin of divorce.
 - (a) There should not be musical chairs in marriage. This was happening then and now!
 - (b) Article in 1979 in Newsweek concerning divorce "'My friends after 18 years of marriage are getting a civilized divorce. I object. I think people should be upset about so serious a thing as divorce."
3. We do it today by saying it is just a "biological thing"
- a) We are painfully uncreative in excuses before God. This excuse had been tried.
 - b) Meat for the belly and belly for meat. Common idea today.
 - c) God says the body belongs to Him. **1 Cor 6:13 Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body..**

II. Jesus destroys the wall and reveals the heart.

- A. They were unconcerned about God's heart on the matter. They were just concerned about their image and what they were legally allowed to do.
1. Jesus never condones divorce, but just states it will happen as the result of the sin of adultery.
 2. God not only doesn't only not mandate divorce for adultery but he gives a vivid example in Hosea of a promise kept.
 - a) Remember the story.
 - (1)Hosea marries a prostitute.
 - (2)He provides for her and tries to win her back.
 - b) It is a powerful testimony to God as the promise keeper to the children of Israel.
 - c) He is our example of a faithful, covenant keeper
- B. Jesus reveals that man is unable to accomplish this with the Rich young ruler. **Matthew 19:21** Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. **22** But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions. **23** Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. **24** And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. **25** When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? **26** But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.
1. External behavior but nothing was happening on he inside.
 2. No love for his neighbor.
 3. Easy for a camel to enter through the eye of the needle.
 4. Disciples what to know who can be saved, this is impossible.
 5. Jesus tells them He is not asking for man to do something that could be accomplished apart from him.
- C. Teaches there is no physical remedy for a heart problem.
1. Just cut off your arm and pluck out your eye. **v. 29, 30**
 - a) There should be nothing too precious to eliminate from your life if it's gonna cause your heart to be pandered in its adulterous desires.

- b) We are told to mortify our members. **Col 3:5** Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:
 - c) Job said don't let me eat if I break this covenant with my eyes. Job 31:8
 - d) Drastic measures need to be taken.
 - e) Illustration: The magnet / he was drawn into this relationship / it wasn't biological, it was circumstantial, it was a matter of the heart
2. How to we go about cutting off these members. (before you get a knife)
- a) Kill the body members that sin by setting you affections on things above. **Col. 3:2** Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.
 - b) You see the problem is not the arm but the heart it is connected to.
3. If you do not address the “appetite” your systems will never help you.
- a) The heart not the eye of arm must be replaced.
 - b) Joseph did not avoid adultery just by running. He was prepared in his heart.
 - c) This service will not help you if you did not prepare you heart to receive. **Ezra 7:10**
 - d) Daniel purpose in his heart before he even began to make decisions. **Daniel 1:8**
 - e) What is your heart prepared to do? What is it “set on go to do”?
 - f) You should pray as the Psalmist **139: 23** Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: **24** And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting

III. How do we zone the areas around our heart to prevent this type of construction.

A. We must fill our hearts with the “I have saids” of Scripture. **v. 28**

1. I didn't come to set Moses aside, I didn't come to change one single thing, just put it back where it belongs. **Matthew 5:17** **Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.**
2. The self righteous would love to replace a relationship with God for a rule book that they got to carry around. Then they could be the authority and could reinterpret the laws. **(Tinsley Picture)**
3. Parenting and Christian life: Rules without a relationship yield rebellion.

B. You need to know as the Scribes that Jesus teaching here was a continuation of the Old Testament. God is unchangeable.

1. The OT is not building a relationship on law, it is building a relationship on **LOVE**.
 - a) God repeats: I want you to love Me, I want you to love Me, I want you to love Me, I want a heart commitment, I want a heart devotion, I want a wholehearted kind of genuine affection for Me.
 - b) The law was not the cause of the relationship it was the result of it.
2. Reminder that God in His love freed the children of Israel before we have even got to the law of Exodus 20.
3. The 10 commandments did not establish the relationship. God's love did. These help teach us how to love.
 - a) No other gods before me - because love is loyal.
 - b) No graven images - love is faithful
 - c) Dont take His name in vain - because love is reverent
 - d) Remember the Sabbath - love is separated for purpose.
 - e) honor father and mother - love is respectful
 - f) dont kill - because love values people it is humane
 - g) dont commit adultery - because love is pure
 - h) dont steal - because love is not selfish
 - i) dont bare false witness - love is honest

4. What does God require from His children. Deut 10:12, 13, 19
And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, To keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good? **19** Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

5. That's no different than the Gospels, that's no different than Paul, that's exactly what the New Testament says, love God and do what He says.

6. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself

a) It is about the heart! It has always been about the heart!

10:16 Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked.

7. The remainder of Deuteronomy.

a) He then takes the principle of loving God and the principle of loving your neighbor and applies them to every daily situation, to every kind of living matter, to everything that goes on in life. He does that all the way through chapter 26.

b) **Big dedication service in chapter 26. 16** This day the Lord thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.

c) Chapter 27 he tells them Joshua would be taking them into the land and when they do they need to remember and rehearse what they just heard.

d) Chapter 28 sets out two options. Be blessed or cursed. Depending on if you love the Lord with all your heart.

e) Chapter 29 & 30 they are called upon to make a heart commitment.

15 See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; **16** In that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the Lord thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it

C. It is with this understanding why Jesus answer in Matthew 22 makes

sense. **36** Master, which is the great commandment in the law? **37** Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. **38** This is the first and great commandment. **39** And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy

neighbour as thyself. **40** On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

D. So this is God's divine internal standard that no one could keep. As we saw with the rich man.

1. We see we are not only guilty for what we do but for who we are.

Matthew 19 25 When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? **26** But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.

2. And the sacrificial system didn't make men right with God it simply pointed out that only God could make them right with Him. It pointed out they needed a sacrifice, it pointed out their inabilities.

E. So what are we to do with this teaching?

1. Maybe you have seen today that your facade does not change the fact that you have the heart of a adultery.

2. Maybe you have recognized or remembered how your actions in the past concerning a former spouse did not reflect the heart of God.

3. You should stop..

a) Trying to manufacture your own righteousness.

(1) Don't hide it deeper expecting God does not see it.

(2) Do not try to justify your actions by manipulation of your perception of a rule.

b) Taking your sin lightly. Take drastic actions. Change the affections of you heart and the directions of your eyes today!

4. You should..

a) Be excited in the fact God has established His relationship with you based on love and not rules.

b) You should address the issues of the heart that will cause or have caused you to outward break the laws of God.

c) Recognize your need of the SACRIFICE of Christ on the cross because you could not meet the divine internal standard.

d) Love the Lord your God with all your heart soul and mind. And love mankind as you have loved yourself. Knowing that all the prophet and the law hang on this.

(1) This is true in your relationship with God. Your spouse. Your kids. And all other relationships.

(2) Love precedes right actions or right actions will try to replace your relationship with the one you love.