

# The Real Issue

Series on Prayer & Holiness

Matthew 5-9

- Life in God's Kingdom – revolutionary
  - relationship not religion
  - counter cultural
  - followers of God live differently
  - what God means – not man's interpretation

# The Real Issue

*"You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 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. "It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.' But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery. Matthew 5:27-32*

# The Real Issue

## 1. The Problem of Lust

a) You have heard it said....

- Exodus 20:14 *“You shall not commit adultery.”*
- sin with consequences – put to death
- serious business – not ever OK

b) I Say.....

- lusting after another = adultery
- what happens in the heart affects relationship

# The Real Issue

## i) Critical to Control Your thought Life

- suggest – what you long for eventually affects actions
- what you harbor as a desire – you will seek
- Satan – father of all lies, master of deceit, destruction
- convince you that \_\_\_\_\_ will bring you satisfaction, peace, happiness, significance
- Greatest commandment – Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength
- when we harbor lust – affects relationship with God
- belief that self satisfaction will bring what we seek

# The Real Issue

- Lust looks at others as objects to desire
- example of King David

\* If we are to be transformed in heart and actions....

- *“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” Romans 12:2*

- *“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Phil. 4:8*

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c) Need To Take Action vs.29-30

i) Figure Out The Weak Spots

- where is the temptation coming into my life
- where is my view skewed by my environment

ii) Build Great Fences

- cut it off!
- accountability with others you can trust
- radical action is not only ok, it's called for!

# The Real Issue

## iii) Reject Cultural Answers

- not simply built this way – effect of sin in world
- ok to look not touch – what's inside makes unclean
- not hurting anyone – broken relationship with God
- no one can see – what is in the heart becomes evident

# The Real Issue

## 2 Jesus On Divorce

### Setting the Stage

i) God's Design is Marriage - Gen. 2:20-24

- leaving, cleaving, becoming one

ii) Moses Gives Insight – Duet. 24:1-4

*“If a man marries a woman who becomes displeasing to him because he finds something indecent about her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house, and if after she leaves his house she becomes the wife of another man, and her second husband dislikes her and writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house, or if he dies, then her first husband, who divorced her, is not allowed to marry her again after she has been defiled. That would be detestable in the eyes of the LORD. Do not bring sin upon the land the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance “*

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iii) Decision Explained - Matthew 19:1-11

*“Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?” “Haven't you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,’ and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’ So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.” “Why then,” they asked, “did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?” Jesus replied, “Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning. I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery.”*

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iv) Clear In Scripture – Malachi 2:16

- *"I hate divorce," says the LORD God of Israel,*"

v) Understanding of their Culture

- wife displeased husband for any reason – divorce
- wife could not fulfill husband's desire – divorce
- wife was unfaithful or unwilling to honor – divorce

# The Real Issue

## a) There Are Not Irreconcilable Differences in God's Eyes

- His example clear about reconciling with us
- His teaching clear about:
  - forgiveness, humility, others first, sacrifice, loving one another, honoring
  - difficulty due to sin – sickness, toil, persecution, hardships, grief, trouble
- His promise is clear:
  - rest for the weary, comfort for the broken & grieving, hope for the hurting, peace in conflict, empowering to live differently

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## b) God's Design Is Strong Relationships

- those who model repentance and forgiveness
- those who put others before self
- those who endure in difficulty
- those who honor vows – restore broken people
- those who point others to God's intervention & enabling in difficult days

## c) In The Case of Unfaithfulness

- when unrepentant – opportunity for new blessing

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## So What

### 1. The Battle for Your Mind is Real

- bombarded by images, false teaching, cultural norms
- enemy desires deception & destruction
- God is to be the focus, number one in heart
- Lust begins in the thought life – things allowed to reside

### 2. Things harbored in the Heart affect relationship

- it has consequence with God

# The Real Issue

## 3. There is Action Required

- Find the Weakness – identify the hole in the fence
- Build a Good Barrier – accountable, removing
- Spot the Lies – identify where culture wrong, know truth

## 4. Get the Right Perspective

- what God does for me, forgiving, loving, dying....
- set down your rights in the relationship
- begin a process to reflect God in difficulty