

Matthew 5:27–32

²⁷ “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’

²⁸ But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

²⁹ If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.

³⁰ And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.

³¹ “Furthermore it has been said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’

³² But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.

Marriage and Morality

Matthew 5:27-32

INTRO:

These two pictures of what they have heard say about the Law and what God actually meant are related. They seem to involve the proper relationship between men and women and especially marriage. I want to consider them together so we not only get the warning, but also some positive truth.

I. Adultery (27-28)

II. The Seriousness of Sin (v.29-30)

III. Marriage (v.31-32)

I. Adultery (27-28)

“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” (Matthew 5:27-28).

A. The Pharisees and others believed because they never violated marriage physically, they had kept this commandment. They thought. "I have been physically faithful to my wife so God must be pleased with me."

B. The Lord Jesus asserted the commandment always included internal faithfulness to your spouse. Do we see how this applies to our love for God? If our obedience to God is only on the surface of our lives is it faithfulness at all? We must love our God from our hearts and we must love our spouses in the same way.

II. The Seriousness of Sin (v. 29-30)

"If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell." (Matthew 5:29-30).

A. These words are among the hardest for us to understand in the Sermon on the Mount. Is Jesus counseling self-mutilation here? No. He is speaking in hyperbole to make us understand that fighting sin is serious business.

B. We begin to grasp how serious it is when we read **Hebrews 12:3-4**.

"For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin."

Are we willing to struggle against our sin unto blood? The indication here is that we should, but we do not. This leads into the discussion of chastening. Fighting against sin is serious. It is serious because if we surrender too easily it may indicate that we don't belong to Him. Or it may indicate we may not love Him enough.

C. One note on how we should fight against sin. The Apostle Paul wrote in **Romans 13:11-14**,

"Do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts."

Just as we need to put off the old man and put on the new man in **Ephesians** and **Colossians**, we need to put on our relationship with Christ. We need to have a healthy diet in the Word of God so we will have the divine desire and ability to not feed our lusts.

III. Marriage (v.31-32)

“Furthermore it has been said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery” (Matthew 5:31–32).

A. While it may appear on the surface that our Lord is addressing the divorce problem here, He actually is dealing with the popular teaching of the Rabbis of the day that someone could divorce their spouse for any reason. Contrary to the thinking of the religious leaders and the world system of that time, the Lord declared that marriage was very important.

B. This is seen later in **Matthew 19**. Our Lord answered the question from some Pharisees.

“The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, ‘Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?’” (v. 3)

The Lord answered the question by taking them back to the original purpose of marriage.

“And He answered and said to them, ‘Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate” (Matthew 19:4–6).

Marriage was to be one man and one woman for life. Marriage was to be the oneness of body, soul, and spirit. Marriage was designed to glorify God by a husband and a wife being united in pleasing God. God who designed marriage holds it in high esteem.

C. One other reason Christian marriage is important to God is found in **Ephesians 5**.

“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.”

We all need to submit to Christ. Wives are to picture this submission. Now fellow husbands, I submit that we have the harder job.

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, in order that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.” (25-27).

What Do We Take Away From This?

1. God cares about what goes on inside of us. Outward sin is the fruit of an inward desire for us to love ourselves more than we love God.

2. Sin is serious business. We need to be willing to take radical steps to overcome sin. Are we willing?

3. Successful marriage requires the Lord's help. We need to work at it with the Lord's help. A good Christian marriage reflects more and more a picture of the Lord's love for we who are His Church.

Hymn# 364 *My Jesus, I Love Thee*