

Introduction:

- Mt 5:27-30 dealing with lust, another part of the Kingdom Code of Conduct. We don't follow the code to get into the Kingdom we follow the code because we chose to come into the Kingdom. This is how life is to be lived in the Kingdom.
- Thomas Costain's history, *The Three Edwards*, describes the life of Raynald III, a fourteenth-century duke in what is now Belgium. Grossly overweight, Raynald was commonly called by his Latin nickname, *Crassus*, which means "fat." After a violent quarrel, Raynald's younger brother Edward led a successful revolt against him. Edward captured Raynald but did not kill him. Instead, he built a room around Raynald in the Nieuwkerk castle and promised him he could regain his title and property as soon as he was able to leave the room. This would not have been difficult for most people since the room had several windows and a door of near-normal size, and none was locked or barred. The problem was Raynald's size he couldn't fit through the door. To regain his freedom, he needed to lose weight. But Edward knew his older brother, and each day he sent a variety of delicious foods. Everyday he wheeled before Raynald, on a cart, the tastiest foods. But instead of dieting his way out of prison, Raynald grew fatter from the food. When Duke Edward was accused of cruelty, he had a ready answer: "My brother is not a prisoner. He may leave when he so wills." Raynald stayed in that room for ten years and wasn't released until after Edward died in battle. By then his health was so ruined he died within a year, a prisoner of his own appetite.
- Our topic today comes from the 7th commandment is found in Ex 20:14.

I. Keeping the Command vs Keeping the Heart

- A. We find in Mt 5:27-ff the second of five exhortations that start. *"You have heard but I say..."* The first three are found in the 10 commands and the last two are found in the law of Moses. The point of the phrase in all five "you have heard" is that there is more to life than just keeping the law it is about keeping the heart. Keeping the heart is what Jesus is after!
 1. Mt 5:8 *Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.*
 2. *"...For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."* (Matthew 12:34-37, NKJV)
 3. *"Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life."* (Proverbs 4:23, NKJV)
- B. All of the 'you have heard' passages are about the heart and not just the command. Jesus wants the righteousness of the people to exceed that of the Pharisees 5:20.
 1. It is not enough to go through behavioral modification. Jesus wants heart change.
 2. The Pharisees cleaned the outside of the cup but they never dealt with the issues of the heart.
- C. Now why do you think Jesus makes a point of bringing this all up? Why can't he just say that adultery is wrong and be done with it. Does it really matter what one thinks about just as long as they don't act on it. Isn't he being a bit nit-picky? Well, according to Jesus

it does matter what is in a person's heart. Because the heart is where all sin basically originates and it is the heart that God looks at will judge.

1. Mt 15:18 Jesus says, "*But what comes out of the mouth, comes from the heart. This is what makes a person dirty. From the heart come all kinds of evil, wrong thoughts, murder, adultery, stealing, lying, and slander. These things make a person dirty.*"
2. "*When evil desire is conceived in the mind it gives birth to sin and sin when full grown leads to death.*" James 1:15

II. The Higher Call

A. This passage is not just about keeping a command but about answering a higher call. Adultery is wrong! But so is lustful thinking according to Jesus! Lets break this down.

1. Adultery in the passage assumes that the one lusting is already in a committed relationship.
 - a) Jews were in relationship with God.
 - b) The adulterer in this passage has to be married to commit adultery with another woman.
 2. The word lustfully means deep desire. The word is basically neutral in the Greek. In other words, whether desire is good or bad depends entirely on what you are desiring. When you are married and desiring someone else you are stepping into sin according to Jesus.
 3. It is adultery to consummate an 'off limits' relationship. And it is sin to desire an 'off limits' relationship.
 - a) i.e. I heard about a man who decided he was going to go on a diet and so he cut out sweets. He did pretty good until one day he arrived at his office with a huge coffee cake in his hand. It was not just any coffee cake, it was oozing with icing and nuts. "I thought you were on a diet," one of his co-workers asked. "Oh this is different," replied the man. "You see this morning, I was driving by the bakery and I said to God, 'God if you want me to stop please allow there to be a parking spot in front of the bakery.' And sure enough, my seventh time around there was a spot." "Off limit" desire!
 - b) The word translated lust/sin vs 29,30 is actually, Skandalon - it is the trigger mechanism of a trap. It is where you place the cheese on the mouse trap.
 4. Samson had that problem and was probably in the mind of Jesus as he taught this.
 - a) Samson deeply desired/lusted. Sex is a desire that God put into humanity so that we would pro-create and also enjoy the marital relationship. But when we use that desire to meditate on 'off limit' relationships we are sinning.
 - b) Samson said of the Philistine woman to his parents: "Get her for me!" (Picture of desire) Then we see him going to a Gazaite prostitute (misplaced desire), then a Philistine woman Delilah (again misplaced desire). These were gentile women who were forbidden by Jews to marry and especially the Nazarite's.
- B. Radical command, radical action and radical consequences.
1. The radical command was not to lust after another person. Yet Samson found his head in the lap of Delilah. She gave him a hair cut and what happened? He became powerless not recognizing that God had even left him. Then what happened? They put his eyes out.

2. Jesus makes the leap stating, "It is better to gouge your eye out or cut off your hand than lust after another person". Issues of the heart require radical action.
3. "It is better to lose a body part than to be cast into hell." A missing body part will not stop you from lusting because it is an issue of the heart. The point of the matter is that it is a serious sin requiring radical action on the part of the hearer. "Guard your heart!"

III. The Consequence of Lust

- A. The consequence of anger was imprisonment and torture. 5:22, 26. Forced to repay a debt that cannot be paid.
- B. The consequence of lust is the whole body thrown into hell. Greek is Gehenna.
 1. If you lust after someone...you are in danger of hell. Gehenna was the Valley of Hinnom where Ahaz sacrificed children (he devalued life). Josiah the reformer, made a city dump of that place filling it with the altars of paganism to be burned...whose fire never went out. That is why Gehenna became a picture of the worthless to be thrown out and burned. (The branch that does not bear fruit) God's destroying power.
 2. Why is lust considered sin? Because at the root they are the basic devaluations of the worth of a human being. The devaluing of something God has called precious. **Here is where the value of human life begins – in the heart** – and when human life is devalued in any way it is an affront to the God who created that life. This is what the Pharisees were missing and this is what Jesus wanted the people to "get."
 3. Jesus was saying, that lust is a short term gain with long term pain. The sin has drastic consequences!
- C. To desire another outside of your marriage is devalue the one you are in covenant with.
 1. God created marriage to be the perfect picture of what His relationship with His people to be.
 2. That is why messing that up carries such severe consequences.

Conclusion:

- Our call in the Kingdom is to not just keep the commands of God but keep our hearts before God for out of the heart flow all the issues of life.
- *"But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts."* (Romans 13:14, NKJV)