

Matthew 5:27–30
Hearts, and Whole Self, for Heaven or Hell

Saturday, January 20, 2024 ▫ Read Matthew 5:27–30

Questions from the Scripture text: What have they heard (v27)? To whom was it said? What was said? But Who else speaks (v28)? About whom does He speak? With what in his heart does this hypothetical man look at the woman? What has he already done with her? Where? What might cause a man to sin (v29)? What should he do to it? Why—what is more profitable to him than what? What might cause a man to sin (v30)? What must he do to it? Why—what is more profitable than what?

What does God want from us? Matthew 5:27–30 prepares us for the morning sermon on the Lord's Day. In these four verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **believers owe the Lord their heart, their hand, and their everything, with which they hope to enter heaven.**

The Lord Jesus Speaks His Law to Us. As we noted in v21, what they have heard in v27 is that something else was said to someone else. The “something else” is the seventh commandment. The “someone else” is the Lord, and now He stands before them in true humanity. It is the Lord Jesus who spoke the seventh commandment to those of old.

Their rabbis had repeated to them what was recorded in Scripture. But it was the Lord who had thundered it from Mount Sinai, and it was the Lord who had recorded it by His Spirit in the Scripture, and it is the Lord Who is now speaking it to them face-to-face. When He says, “But I say to you” (v28), He is obviously inviting a contrast between how their teachers address them, and how He addresses them.

In every sin, we sin against the Lord. Those in front of Him, hearing Him, had sinned against Him in every lustful look. There is interaction with himself, with the Lord, in the seventh commandment just as there had been in the sixth commandment in the prior passage. The Lord Jesus is teaching us to think of the second table of the law, not first and foremost in terms of our relation to one another (although that is the context that is being governed) but in relation to Himself. Even in loving our neighbor as ourself, we must think first and foremost of But our relation to God—of what happens in our hearts, and of whether what we do with our hands is honoring Him.

The Lord Requires the Heart. Recent versions have used the phrase “lustful intent” to translate v28, leading some to make the mistake of saying that desire in the heart is not a sin, but only becomes sin when intent to act is added. This isn't just a grammatical mistake; it is a grave error that threatens to destroy souls, obscure the gospel, and turn denominations apostate.

The language in v28 indicates not only intention to act, or intention to lust, but literally the propensity to lust for the woman. The presence of lust in the heart is sinful, needing atonement and cleansing. Looking at, or facing, a woman with lust is adulterous. But the reason for this is not in the man or in the woman, but in the Lord, Who created man and woman. The Lord created covenants. The Lord created marriage as a covenant. So, it is especially against the Lord that our heart is idolatrous and adulterous, whenever we lust.

The Lord Requires the Rest of Us, Too. Just as—and even more than—a man is one flesh with his wife, the believer belongs, body and soul, to the Lord Jesus. v29–30 are not so much about the removal of physical eye and physical hand as they are about what we call mortification. If we shrink from language of plucking eyes and cutting off hands, what will we think of offering our body as a living sacrifice (cf. Rom 12:1; Rom 6:11–22) or crucifying ourselves (cf. Gal 2:20, 5:24; Rom 8:13; Eph 4:22; Col 3:5–10)?

The only eye that should remain in a believer is the eye that is offered to the Lord as a slave for righteousness. The only hand that should remain in a believer is the hand that is offered to the Lord as a slave for righteousness. The former self should have been crucified. The lusting eye or the adulterous hand should be crucified with it, and when it makes an appearance, it should be destroyed.

The Lord Sanctifies Us unto Salvation from Hell. v20 spoke of the righteousness we need to enter heaven. Now v29 and v30 warn against entering hell. Either our sinful self was crucified with Christ at His cross, or it will be cast entirely into hell. And not just the whole body but the soul with it.

King and kingdom are at war with our sin. If we are not at war with all that remains from our original self, from our original nature, then we do not have good reason to think that we belong to King or kingdom.

Jesus literally warns us here about being in the church, but being in danger of our whole body being cast into hell. These verses are not given to us so that we can nuance ourselves into excuses. They are given so that we would not merely self-identify as Christians, but be identified (by tangible fruit!) as those who are actually united to Christ.

Salvation is real! And real sanctification, with real mortification, always accompanies real justification, which comes through real faith in a real Christ. We must come to define profit in heavenly and eternal terms. Let us be so sure of spiritual and eternal things that we consider these the truly “profitable” things.

How are you presenting your members as slaves unto God for righteousness? How is this profitable to you?

Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You for creating marriage. Forgive us for corrupting it. We thank You all the more for saving us from the guilt of our sin in Christ. By His grace, save us also from its presence, we ask in His Name, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP24 “The Earth and the Riches” or TPH538 “Take My Life, and Let It Be”

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Matthew chapter 5 verses 27-30. These are God's words. 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's lost for her. Has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you.

Further is more profitable for you that one of your members perish. Then 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.

Then for your whole body to be cast into town. Amen. So far. The reading of Gods inspired and inerined word. Lord, Jesus starts this section the same way that he started. The previous one with you have heard. And again, what they have heard. Excuse me. Was that it was said.

To those of old. And so what they're hearing about? Is. Something else that was said to someone else who heard it. Um, namely You shall not commit adultery. Which was announced thundered by. Uh, God, from Mount Sinai. It was said to those of old before it was written by the Finger of God.

It was said. Uh, and so he's talking specifically about Um, at the mountain when the Lord was thundering. And in Thunders, you shall not commit adultery. Now They have heard about this other hearing they've heard about this other event. Because God in his Mercy. Caused it to be written by his spirit and the scriptures.

And has preserved those scriptures. And now they're teachers in their synagogues, have the scriptures to tell them about And so, They have heard. Uh, that it was said, you shall not commit adultery. Uh, and again. There is the danger. Of thinking that that is all that is required just not to Um, Not to have the intimacy of a husband and wife with someone who is not your wife or with somebody.

Uh, who is not? Uh, husband. But when he says again, but I say to you, he's reminding us. First of all that he is the Lord who spoke these things at Sinai. And second of all that therefore he is the one who authoritatively. Interprets for us and teaches us.

Uh, what morality is what obedience? Uh, to the command and says what the Commandments require. This he does of course, because he is God. And Uh, the Commandments are Uh applications to our lives of the implications of who God is and what God is like. Uh, but he also Teaches as the Messiah.

The Christ who is, uh, fully manned. And you himself fully obeys these Commandments. That we might understand what his obedience is on our behalf. The Marvelous Obedience of the Lord Jesus, who always obeyed fully sincerely entirely with all the heart. Always loved God, with all his heart. Soul, mind and strength.

Always loved his neighbor. Uh, as himself. Which as Sevilla has been telling us this week, is the sum of the Ten Commandments. And we know that that's the sum of the Ten Commandments because that's what Jesus. Has taught us. And so he teaches us here that he wants our hearts.

Uh, that this commandment Places an obligation upon us of Upon Our hearts. Uh, and our whole self. And, Uh, that this is necessary. If we are to enter the kingdom, remember that we came into this section of Matthew chapter 5 With this statement of Christ. For, I say to you that unless your righteousness exceeds, the righteousness of the scribes, and the Pharisees, you will, by no means enter the Kingdom of Heaven, And so, the Lord Jesus is describing to us that which we must be to enter Heaven that which he is doing now.

And that which if it is not done. At the last. Uh, we will be cast into hell. So, Holiness is necessary. For entrance into heaven. And if in the last day, we are not found with the work of Christ finished in. Which, of course, if he has begun the work, you will finish it.

But if we were found in the last day without the work of Christ finished in us, then our whole self, our whole body. Leslie says here in verse 29 and verse 30. Will be cast into hell. And so that which is in our hearts that, which Um, That with which we look upon another.

Uh, there are Um, there are some who Uh, actually I think the ESV sadly Uh, translate to verse 28, say to you, that whoever looks at a woman with lustful intent And the text does not mean. With intent to act upon his lusts. But with lost in his heart, And he looks with.

Uh, the lost in his heart. Uh, so Even our hearts. Uh, and especially our hearts must be offered to God in all of the Commandments. We saw that with. Uh, with anger. Under the sixth commandment. Now we see it with lost. Uh, under the seventh commandment Uh, because God is the one with whom we are interacting.

First and foremost. Yes, the last six Commandments. Teach us Sophia. So hopefully, Uh, learned to tell us our duty to our fellow men. And that is the context in which those Commandments are obeyed. But even when thinking about our duty to our fellow men, The first and great part.

Of the what the Commandments require of us. Is a right heart towards God and therefore under God a right heart towards our fellow men. Uh, so the second great commandment is like the first first, great commandment love. The Lord, your God with all your hearts, all mind and strength and the second is like it in part because it flows out of it.

Because God is the one who made people in His image. And God is the one who is assigned to us. Our portion of whatever we have God is the one who has, who is the one before whom we live? And Um, whenever we speak or bear witness. Uh, we do.

So first and foremost, before the face of God, And so, the whole law, is first and foremost, primarily something. Uh, that we are to think of in our interaction with God himself. And yes, there is of course. Uh, the further application that which is not just in the heart.

Uh, but also with the hand, And so you see the parallels? The heart. Uh, in control of the l verse 29. And this is related immediately to what proceeded in verse 28, if your right eye causes you to sin. And then, in verse 30, if your right hand causes you to sit in.

So yes, the the law of course does govern our actions as well. Uh, it's just that the hardest primary and from the Overflow of the heart, the action proceeds. And if we have not positively transgressed in an action, we must not think. Therefore that we are innocent. Because the, the Lord makes demands upon our hearts.

Now, what our hearts must do then As our hearts must belong to the Lord and control our eye. And our heart must belong to the Lord and control our hand. To use the language of Romans 6. We are to offer our members as slaves unto God for righteousness. To use the language of Romans 12, we are to offer our bodies and there it uses the word corpses.

Uh, as Living Sacrifices. Unto God. As living sacrifices, holy and pleasing unto God. So, This isn't saying. Uh, that Uh, you should pluck your eyes out, and pluck your hand and cut your hands off and cast them from you. It is saying. That you should crucify your whole old self.

If your eye is being used, sinfully is that from your new self in Christ? That is going to enter Heaven. Where is that from your old self? That ought to have been and was by faith crucified with Christ. You see the the sinful man must go to hell, either.

He goes through. Hell suffers hell in Union with Christ on the cross. And the the person that we were was crucified with Christ, Or. We will actually be cast into hell. There's only two options Union with Jesus. Or. Being cast Body and Soul into hell. And so, what this is saying is, Don't let the old man eye.

Or the old man hand. Continue. It's, it should be cast into hell and you should cast it away from you. And it's actually the casting it from you. That is the main thing here. Block it out, cast it from you. Cut it off. Cast it from you. By using the two different body parts you actually emphasizes the casting away.

And we should think like that. These eyes belong to the Lord Jesus now. These hands belong to the Lord Jesus now. The I as it used to be. No, thank you. The hand as it used to be, get away from me. Our eyes and our hands. Our legs, our tongues.

Remember the lesson in James chapter 3? They all should be slaves to God, for righteousness. They all should be offered as Living Sacrifices. Holy and pleasing to God. This is how they live. Who are entering heaven. In Union with Jesus, And if we don't live that way, Then we can be sure.

We don't have Union with Jesus. And if we don't have Union with Jesus, we will be constantile. Because it's Christ Alone who saves. Only who he is, only what he has done. Send me dear children. Whenever you cut your eye doing something that it shouldn't Or whenever you cut your tongue saying something that?

It shouldn't Or your hand doing something that it shouldn't. Make the exchange immediately. Confess it to the Lord repent. And then refuse. For that hand or that eye, or that tongue. To be used that way anymore. Use it to serve the Lord. Use it like someone who is entering heaven.

One day. Body and Soul. We can even use these decaying eyes the way, we'll one day use our resurrected eyes. We can even use these decaying tongues. The one day we will use our glorious resurrected thumbs. We can even use our decaying hands. The way we one day will use.

Glorified resurrected hands. Because we are already already. United to Christ. So, let us live as those who belong to the king, let us live as those who belong to his kingdom. And who are entering one day. Spray.

Father, never know, pray that you would Grant to us the ministry of your spirit to keep us. Mindful of Christ and believing in him, and living in fellowship with him. Thank you that you have delivered us from what we were. We pray that you would give us Clean Hands and Uh, pure heart.

That as you sanctify us, you'd prepare. For the day that we will Ascend to your holy hell. And we will enter with our Lord Jesus. How we thank you for giving us your son to be our righteousness, to be our sacrifice. That in Union with him, we could survive crucifixion.

Because in Union with him, you have given us Resurrection. And so we thank you and praise you. And we ask that you would help us to offer ourselves to you. Through him. And his name. We ask it. Amen.