

Thornbury Baptist: Loving God - Loving One Another - Loving Neighbour & World

Small Groups @ TBC Sermon Discussion Notes

Date of Sermon: 5th June 2016

Speaker: Paul Ferguson

Title: Sermon on the Mount: The kingdom of sexual purity

Introduction: This talk explored the idea put forward by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount that adultery is a matter-of-the-heart? To be a faithful kingdom people requires us not to just embrace certain types of behavior but to have right and loving attitudes towards our brothers and sisters.

Review: (invite one or more who have heard the talk to give their own brief review)

Read: Matthew 5: 27-30

Reflect:

- Jesus said that if anyone who looks at a woman (or man) lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. What is the difference between lusting and appreciating?
- Jesus understands the humanly unenforceable 10th commandment ('you shall not covet your neighbours wife, Ex 20: 17) as if it matters as much as the other more humanly enforceable commandments (e.g . 'you shall not murder' Ex 20: 13). If you do not break the letter of the other commandments, but you want to do so in your heart, you are guilty. Why might Jesus be so concerned with heart motivation at least as much as he is with right behaviour?
- Jesus goes beyond his contemporaries. The expectation was for women to wear head coverings is to prevent lust. Jewish writers often warned of women as dangerous because they could invite lust. However, Jesus placed the responsibility for lust on the person doing the lusting. Why do we seem to want to blame others for our own sins rather than taking responsibility?
- Lust is opposite to true love: it reduces another person into an object of our appetite - it objectifies the other person. What do you think of this statement? Are there other ways in which this can happen?

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- The account of David and Bathsheba (2 Sam 11) illustrates how lust can be a thin-end-of-the-wedge. Spend some time reflecting in this story. The text tells us that Bathsheba was someone's daughter (Eliam) and also someone's wife (Uriah). Does this realisation change the way we might look at someone? We may condemn David for his actions but I wonder how you and I would act if we had such kingly power?
- How can we respond faced with sexual temptation?
- Jesus calls us to take drastic action. Figuratively speaking to blind eyes and to cut off hands. What might this mean? Confess to a trusted friend? Ask for forgiveness? Seek counsel and help?
- We also considered the huge problem of internet pornography and how this contribute to relationship breakdown and all kinds of issues for ourselves and our children. How might we protect our families against such material?
- Some suggestions:
<http://www.covenanteyes.com/family/>
<https://www.opendns.com/home-internet-security/>

And finally:

As you conclude, ask each person:

- What is the main thing you are taking away as an action point?
- How can we pray for you?
- Is there anything we can check on next time we meet?