



October 18, 2026

Sermon on the Mount

Reject Lust

Matthew 5:27-30

1. **Sermon Outline:**

- a. Sin In Your Heart Is Serious Sin!
 - i. Looking lustfully at someone forbidden is sin
 - ii. Looking lustfully at something is also sin
- b. How Far Will You Go to Escape Temptation to Sin?
 - i. Jesus commands us to fight urgently for holiness
 - ii. What are you willing to do to kill your sin?

2. **Sunday** – As soon as possible after the sermon, consider:

- a. What stood out to you the most in this sermon?
- b. What new truth did you learn, or what truth were you reminded of?
- c. Is there a particular Scripture passage you feel God is leading you to meditate on or commit to memory?
- d. What is one thing God is leading you to do after hearing this message?
- e. Did God convict you of a need to make any changes in your life and walk with Him?

3. **Monday:**

- a. Read and meditate on Matthew 5:27-30, Exodus 20:14, and Deuteronomy 5:18.
- b. As you read Jesus' second antithesis, what would you say was the subject of this portion of the Sermon on the Mount?
 - i. While not part of God's Word, section headings commonly added to our Bibles sometimes give us meaningful hints of what we are reading about. Compare the heading for the focal passage in the ESV with that in the NIV. Which do you think best describes what Jesus was addressing in this passage?
 - ii. If the subject is "adultery," what new truths does Jesus teach?
 - iii. If the subject is "lust," what new truths does Jesus teach?
 - iv. As you understand the terms, what is the difference between "lust" and "adultery"?
 - v. After reading the focal passage several times, what do you think Jesus was teaching about?
- c. If you are old enough to remember back to 1976, what was the general reaction to President Carter's admission that he was guilty of sin based on what Jesus taught here? Based on how people responded to his confession, what part of Jesus' teaching was the

world (society) really rejecting? How is that same attitude, that only actions matter and our thoughts are no one else's business, sometimes (often) displayed by Christians?

4. ***Tuesday:***

- a. Read and meditate on Matthew 5:27-28.
- b. Start today focusing just on verse 27. How true do you think Jesus' statement would be in America today? If a poll were conducted of 100% of the adult population, what percent do you think would admit that they had heard of the Commandment "You shall not commit adultery"? In the same poll, what percent do you think would agree that adultery was wrong? In responding to this hypothetical poll, how would most people be defining adultery?
- c. The Old Testament shows us clearly that not only is adultery wrong, a generally accepted view, but that it is a sin deserving of the most severe punishment. Beyond the seventh commandment you've read, consider these verses: Leviticus 20:10, Deuteronomy 22:22-29, Jeremiah 23:10-12; Ezekiel 22:11 & 15; and Malachi 3:5. What punishment did God prescribe for the physical act of adultery?
- d. Read these verses: Galatians 5:19, James 4:4, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, Hebrews 13:4, Revelation 21:8 and 22:15. What does the New Testament teach about the seriousness of adultery and sexual immorality?
 - i. Read by itself, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, could be discouraging since it tells us that adulterers (and many other types of sinners) will not inherit the kingdom of God. How does the next verse (verse 11) eliminate any concern a Christian might have (see also 1 John 1:9)?
- e. What is a very obvious difficulty (concern) with verse 28 as we teach it to Christians in our society today? Is the principle Jesus teaches applicable only to men? How does it apply to women?
- f. Reading verse 28 carefully, is Jesus saying that it is a sin for a man to admire a beautiful woman? Why or why not?
 - i. What single word in the ESV is particularly important in understanding Jesus' message?
 - ii. How does our own judicial system demonstrate the importance of "intent" in determining guilt?
 - iii. How does the placement of "intent" in Jesus' statement clarify what the subject is that He is addressing?

5. ***Wednesday:***

- a. Read and meditate on Matthew 5:27-28 and Deuteronomy 5: 18-21 (or Exodus 20:14-17).
- b. When Jesus starts by mentioning the seventh commandment, our thoughts are automatically directed to that particular sin, but when He introduces "lust" as the subject, what other commandment from Deuteronomy 5:18-21 comes into play?
- c. In what ways do "lust" and "covet" relate? In what areas do they overlap? Where do they differ?

- i. Jeffrey Niehaus writes: “coveting is lust directed at what belongs to someone else, combined with determination to obtain it.” Do you agree or disagree? Why?
 - ii. All sin is horrendous, but if Niehaus is right, which is most deliberate and destructive?
- d. How does Paul show his understanding of the difference between never committing a sinful act (actually committing adultery) and being guilty of sin because of his thoughts in Romans 7:7-12?
 - i. How does James address it in James 4:2-4? What does he present as the root cause (verses 3b and 4a)?
 - ii. How does the story of Amnon's rape of his sister Tamar (2 Samuel 13:1-22, especially verse 15) demonstrate that such lust/coveting is always self-serving?
- e. Verse 28 ends with the word “heart”. What does the Bible mean when it uses this term? How would you summarize these verses into a general description of the nature of this non-organ: Genesis 6:5, 8:21, Psalm 14:1-3, Ecclesiastes 9:3, Jeremiah 17:9-10, Matthew 13:5, 15:19, and Romans 1:21?
 - i. Given the Bible’s description of the nature of our “heart”, what are we doing when we look with lust (consider Ephesians 4:17 from last week’s study)?
 - ii. Read 2 Samuel 11:2-4. How is the truth of what Jesus is teaching demonstrated by David?

6. *Thursday:*

- a. Read Matthew 5:29-30, meditating especially on verse 29.
- b. By these verses, Jesus is not promoting self-mutilation (Origen (circa AD 185-254) tried it and realized later, when it was too late, that he had misinterpreted the passage). Why would gouging out an eye not provide any remedy for lusting (hint: could a blind man lust)?
 - i. Considering what we learned in paragraph e. on Wednesday, what would we need to remove?
 - ii. Since we can’t remove our heart (as the Bible uses the word), what needs to happen instead (consider Deuteronomy 10:16, 30:6, Jeremiah 31:31-34, Ezekiel 11:19, 18:31, and 36:26)? How do we describe that in New Testament terms (see John 3:3-7)?
- c. How important (what role) are our eyes to our sinful nature (consider Genesis 3:4-7)? Our eyes are a wonderful gift from God, but like any of His countless gifts, what does Genesis show us we can do with them?
- d. Now let’s get extremely practical. In your group, or individually, make a list of various things you might look at which might lead to lust, covetousness, or other forms of sin. From that list, highlight where it would be easier to gouge out your eyes than to control what you allow yourself to look at.

7. *Friday:*

- a. Read Matthew 5:29-30, meditating especially on verse 30.

- b. Jesus moves on from the medium through which temptation to lust arrives to the members involved in physically acting on the lust. Why do you think he chose to address the “right hand”? Does eliminating the physical ability to perform a sinful act eliminate the sin (see verse 28 again; Origen learned this truth the hard way)?
 - c. In both verses 29 and 30, what is the reason that Jesus gives for why someone should take such drastic measures? How would you paraphrase Jesus' message? What is he teaching about how serious and heinous sin is (see also Isaiah 59:2, Ezekiel 18:20, Romans 3:23, 6:23 and James 1:15)?
 - d. As you did yesterday, make this practical by preparing a list of things you do (or might do) that, while not sinful in themselves, could lead to sinful action. Is there anything on the list that you would rather amputate a hand than walk away from?
 - e. Again, while Jesus is not telling us to self-mutilate, why do we consider His language for dealing with sin so extreme when we would not hesitate to take these exact steps if necessary to deal with life-threatening cancer (for example, Pope Leo's lobectomy this past week)?
8. **Saturday:**
- a. Read the focal passage, Matthew 5:27-30, again, carefully listening to what the Holy Spirit is telling you about how these verses should be applied in your life.
 - b. Then go back and read the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-11). Which ones most apply to this lesson about lust?
9. **Application:** Our society is fixated on sex. The marketing adage, “sex sells,” has so permeated our media that it seems almost impossible to avoid seeing inappropriate or suggestive images. Our music, country or popular, ensures that we hear it. And there is no shortage of opportunities to “just do it” (hence “Sin City”). Christians living in such an environment should find Jesus' message about adultery and lust particularly relevant. In one of his sermons, John Owen said we must “Be killing sin or sin will be killing you.” We cannot be passive about avoiding situations and activities that lead to sin; we must take Jesus seriously about how important it is to eliminate sin from our lives. Most would say that they were willing to “take up their cross” and follow Jesus in the face of persecution, but are we willing to do so in the face of temptation? What pleasures, entertainment, or recreation should we avoid to be obedient Christians?
10. **Pray:** This past week we were privileged to have the African Children's Choir at LRBC. In recognition, let's pray for these unreached people groups from their country of Uganda:
- a. Aringa: Slightly more than 1 million Aringa live in the West Nile region in Northwest Uganda near the border with South Sudan. They are traditionally hunters and farmers, mainly for home use. Although their region has seen significant rebel activity in the past, it has been peaceful in recent years. They are primarily Muslims, but due to the extensive Christian influence in Uganda, there are now a small number of Aringa Christians.
 - b. Dodoth: The Dodoth migrated from Ethiopia to Uganda centuries ago, and the approximately 1.25 million members of the tribe live in the Northeast near the Kenyan border. They consider cattle royalty, and men's success and status are measured by livestock. Men with little livestock engage in violent cattle raids against neighbors. Most believe in a god named Akuj and in mysterious powers, spiritual beings, and divination, but a growing minority is Christian.