



**SERIES: LOOKING BACK – MOVING FORWARD**

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**Wednesday, August 4, 2022**

**Scripture: Matthew 5:27-30**

**TITLE: Real Sexual Fulfillment**

A popular proverb goes like this: “Sow a thought and reap an act. Sow an act and reap a habit. Sow a habit and reap a character. Sow a character and reap a destiny.” In other words, it all begins with the thought. It all begins with the heart. Our actions and our legacies are simply the reflections of the heart.

Today, there is probably no greater example of the fallen condition of the heart than the area of sexuality. We all can try to justify our actions. We can all try to mitigate the damage by behavior modification. But it simply won't work.

What is the solution? Is there a solution needed? Listen to Jesus' timely and challenging words in Matthew 5:27-30 (CSB).

“You have heard that it was said, Do not commit adultery. But I tell you, everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.”

Jesus has been tackling the issue of self-righteousness. False pride is ugly and offensive to God. Yesterday we tackled the issue of anger, bitterness, and murder in our hearts. We may not have physically killed anyone, but our hearts condemn us.

The same is true for the area of sexuality. Jesus specifically addresses adultery. The act of being unfaithful between a man and a woman in marriage. And the application seemingly encompasses all our sexuality.

Sex and sexual expression outside of a monogamous marriage between one man and one woman is a sin. Viewing pornography is a sin. Lusting after a girl at school, at the beach, or anywhere is sin. Fantasizing about someone is sin. Watching a TV show or movie to catch just a glimpse of the unattainable sensual pleasures or body is sin.

Jesus said it's better to pluck out your eye or cut off your hand than go to hell. What's His point? His point is we must be vigilant in pursuing purity. It's not enough, however, to simply address the behavior. We must address the heart.

And our actions of perpetual intentionality of eliminating temptation and pure living is, or at least should be, a reflection of our hearts.

So when the TV show comes on, turn it off. So when the friend offers you a romance novel, politely decline. When the girl walks by in the provocative outfit, bounce your eyes to somewhere else. Why? Because being tempted is no sin. Acting on it in our hearts or actions is.

So here's my challenge for you: clean house. Where are the areas you've compromised in, the area of lusting in your heart? We all do it. Now is our chance to admit it and ask God to help us remove it. So today, find the areas of compromise and ask God for a renewed heart and then remove the temptation.

When we reject temptation and pursue real sexual fulfillment, we will win the day.