

SEX - CONSUMER OR COVENANT

MATTHEW 5:27-30 | ERIC SIMPSON | October 31, 2021

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27 "You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' 28 But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

- The Integrity of Sex

There must be an integrity between body and life, you must not do with your body what you are not willing to do with your whole life.

The sex ethic in the Bible starts with covenant. No sex outside of a covenant.

covenant = a relationship that is personal, binding and enduring

- I will adjust to you because I've made a promise.
- The relationship is more important than my needs.
- You have a zone of safety to "be fully yourself", to stop posing and pretending.
- Freedom from being tethered to your feelings.

Sex is not a consumer good, it's a covenant good. In a covenant, when you have made a promise, sex becomes like a sacrament = an external visible sign to an invisible reality.

Sex is supposed to be a sign of what you've done with your whole life. When sexual intimacy is being shared in marriage you're saying—I belong completely and exclusively to you.

Sex outside of marriage lacks integrity because you're asking someone to do with their body what they are unwilling to do with their whole life. It's a selective vulnerability, it's a consumer approach.

"The monstrosity of sex outside of marriage is that those who indulge in it are trying to isolate one kind of union (sexual) from all other kinds of union which were intended to go along with it and make up the total union." – C.S. Lewis

- The Challenge of Lust

1. Jesus is not talking about the appreciation of beauty.

2. Jesus is not talking about the momentary flash of sexual desire.

"We should not make the bolstering of Jesus teaching too taught here. As if anyone who is merely tempted to look at another with lust is eternally damned, I cannot keep a bird from flying over my head, but I can certainly keep it from making a nest in my hair or from biting off my nose." – Martin Luther

3. Jesus is talking about when we gaze at a woman to get sexual gratification from her body.

"Anyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent." (ESV)

"Every man who is looking at a woman in order to lust after her." (Bruner)

"Anyone who stares at a woman in order to fuel sexual desire for her." (Mackie)

"Anyone who looks upon a woman for the purpose of lusting for her—using her visual presence as a means of savoring the fantasized act." (Willard)

"lusting after" = objectify women, gazing upon a woman with the intent of receiving some kind of sexual gratification from her visual presence

1 Corinthians 13...

Love is patient, lust wants it right now.

Love does not envy, lust is always looking for an upgrade.

Love is not self-seeking, lust is self-centered.

Lust is trying to sell you a cheap imitation of what only the agape love of God can provide.

Lust sabotages the entire agape enterprise! Which is why Jesus said, gauge out your eye, cut off your hand, do whatever you've got to do to root this out of your life!

The absurdity of the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees...

"You are right if you have done nothing wrong. You could avoid sinning if you simply eliminated the bodily parts that make sinful actions possible. Then you would roll into heaven a mutilated stump." – Dallas Willard

Jesus pressing for righteousness of the heart...

"The mutilated stump could still have a wicked heart. The deeper question always concerns who you are, not what you did do or can do. What would you do if you could? Eliminating body parts will not change that." – Dallas Willard

- The Hope for Renovation

Jesus offers a way of being human in this world that is free from lust, free from the objectification of a woman's body and beauty, free from adultery in the heart.

Jesus' way = discipleship, come with an open heart to Jesus' school of living

"Nothing, not even the best and noblest, can go on as it is now. Nothing, not even what is lowest and most bestial, will not be raised again if it submits to death. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body... Lust is a poor, weak, whimpering whispering thing compared with that richness and energy of desire which will arise when lust has been killed." – C.S. Lewis