

## Discussion Guide Week of **August 9, 2020**

Text: **Matthew 5:27-30**

Big Idea (point of the sermon): **God's design for sex is never self-centered and dead ended,** and so lust with it's self-centered dead ended thoughts about personal pleasure have no place in the kingdom of God.

Jesus, as He has once already through the sermon on the mount, takes a commandment of scripture and then places His teaching right beside it. As the one who fulfills scripture He is capable to getting to the heart and goal of the teaching. This week He took the seventh commandment "do not commit adultery" and tells us it is not just about not sleeping around, it's about how we see people.

Before sin entered the world God had a design for human intimacy which can be summed up by the beautifully vulnerable and harmonious phrase "naked and not ashamed" (Genesis 2:25). The first couple was to use their imagination for creating rather than deconstructing one another for the purpose of personal pleasure. Working together instead of using each other. Sin enters the world distorting and destroying this intimacy leading to hiding, exploitation, and shame.

Anyone caught up in the sin of thinking lustfully about another person knows that it leads to shame and hiding. While it may not appear to "hurt anyone" it actually makes us less human. Jesus is the picture of human flourishing. Think about Jesus with the woman at the well in John 4 (maybe go read it), since Jesus was not trying to exploit her with His mind He was able to care for the needs of her soul.

Lusting makes us less human, and so Jesus is militant about our response to it (cut off your arm and gouge out your eye). Obviously Jesus does not mean these things literally. However, you get the picture that this is deeply serious. So maybe it's time to get rid of the smart phone or the personal computer. In the very least, you should look away when temptation comes. Enlist other people to fight along side you as you come out of the darkness and into the light (1 John 1-2). Know ultimately that God loves you. There are a lot of reasons that people lust after others; for some it is a coping mechanism, some are looking for affirmation, some are trying to heal. The reality is thoughts and images cannot love you as you desire, but God can and there is grace for your healing and forgiveness. It's important that we talk about this because it is part of what it means to be made in the image of God.

1. How is your week, what are you going through, how are you really doing?
2. What truth jumped from the text/Bible/Message at you this week?
3. What challenged you from the message? Was there something that you struggled with in the sermon? If not why not?
4. How have you done at applying the text and message to your life? How can we help each other live this out? (is there someone we can bless, something we need to memorize, a commitment we need to hold each other to? Be as specific as possible).

5. In what ways can we pray with and for each other?

Prayer Points:

- Pray to receive and understand the great love with which God has loved you.
- Pray for forgiveness for the ways you have used others in your thoughts for your dead end pleasure.
- Pray for the courage of vulnerability being open and honest about the sin in your life.
- Pray for the protection of your faith family that fights against this.