

The Mind of Christ - Lesson 79

November 6, 2020

Section 54 The Sermon on the Mount

A. T. Robertson's Harmony of the Gospels

Welcome to another edition to The Mind of Christ. We've been studying The Mind of Christ for some time now; we're in the Sermon on the Mount. We are following a chronological sequence to through the life of Christ in order to look at everything Jesus said and everything Jesus did in order to determine what is in the mind of Christ. How does He think? This is a very in-depth study. You're going to need your Bible and you're going to need to be able to even pause, and take notes and do a number of things if you are going to keep up in this study because it's such an in-depth study into everything Jesus said and did. But with that said, I am sure I'm going to miss quite a bit. I will not say everything; I will not cover every point because the mind of Christ is vast and I am not capable of comprehending everything that may be in there.

But we're here today and thank you for joining us. Again we're in the Sermon on the Mount in **Matthew 5:27-30**. We're going to be looking at just four verses today and here is what they say. I'm reading from the New American Standard Bible because it is a very literal translation of the Bible, and one of the best in my opinion, Bibles to use as a Study Bible. It doesn't 'read' as well as some of the other translations, but it is very literal in its translation.

Matthew 5:27-30

²⁷ "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery'; ²⁸ but I say to you that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart. ²⁹ If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. ³⁰ If your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to go into hell.

Those are the texts that we will be dealing with. This passage is particularly challenging. There are a lot of things to consider here, to understand what Jesus meant.

Just as with "anger", when He talks about *being angry, and anger being related to murder*; just as with anger which naturally wells up within a person, so does "lust". In this case, Jesus discusses lust from the perspective of the man towards a woman. Now a "legalist", if they are just taking the plain language just as it's written, a "legalist" might conclude: 1) either that it is okay for a woman to lust after a man, which would be ridiculous, or 2) that Jesus was saying a woman does not have lustful thoughts or fascinations towards men, which experience tells us that that is not true either. So, even though He's approaching this from the standpoint of a man lusting after a woman, which might be more prevalent, He is *not* making the opposite point that somehow women are left out of the equation and therefore they're given free reign to do whatever they want.

The command not to commit adultery is another of the Ten Commandments ... "Thou shall not commit adultery"; so we will be looking at that.

It is used in **John 8:4** to talk about the woman who was caught in the very act of adultery. It's used in **Romans 2:22** where it alludes to the spiritual adultery of idolatry which is often used that way in the Old Testament. Later, Jesus, when He speaks about divorce says that the *cause* for divorce is unchastity or fornication which is another word, "porneia" which is usually used as a wide range of sexual activity applying to the married and unmarried. Adultery indicates a person who is in a married relationship and who is violating their vows.

So, is Jesus concentrating here on "unwarranted" looks by a *married* man at a woman not his wife ... **or** does His teaching extend to the *unmarried* as well? Again, is Jesus saying, "What I'm teaching here is just for married men, looking at women, not their wives, and that constitutes adultery?" But is he not saying anything about *unmarried* men where that might constitute fornication but it doesn't meet the definition of adultery (at least in the most limited sense)?

Again, legalism might try to find the loopholes in this to *justify* a "single" man viewing pornography not violating a "marriage relationship" (because he's not married). But Jesus' words are everyone, He says. Everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart. So even though He uses the word adultery He kind of captures **every man** in that statement.

The intent of the 'look' in this case is "to lust for her". That's the intent. So what does it mean "to look". Well, the word is a word that's translated simply "seeing". It's the present active participle. So, what does that mean?

Matthew 18:10 it says, "See that you do not look down on one of these little ones; for I say to you that their angels in heaven continually see the face of My Father who is in heaven." It describes a little one's angel who always beholds the face of the Father. In **Revelation 5:3**, no one is able to open to "look into" the Book ... In **Acts 3:4** Peter and John "fix their gaze" on the beggar. In **John 13:22**, the disciples "looked at" each other when told that one was going to betray Jesus. In **Luke 9:62** putting the hand to the plow and "looking back" is forbidden.

In all these, it is more than a *glance*. In all of these contexts, what is under consideration is more than simply a glance. It is more of a *stare* "with intent" and so it is a longer look. The "intent" is *lust*, intention. It is to "set the heart upon something". That is what the word means. It means "to long for", either rightfully ... or otherwise. It can be used in a positive way or a good way. It can be translated "covet", to "desire", but often it is translated "lust". The context will determine what the focus of the desire or the lust, whether it be good or bad. It comes from two words, "epi" which means "in" and "thumos" which is the word for "the mind". So, it is something "in the mind".

It can be used in a **general sense** as in **Luke 17:22** "longing to see the days of the Son of man" or can be used in a good sense again as in **Matthew 13:17**, "many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it." It's the same word for lust. The prophets desired to see what the apostles saw and to what they heard.

It is used in a **physical sense** in **Luke 15:16** where the prodigal son **longed**, **lusted** or **desired**, if you will, to fill his stomach with the *pig's* food. Then it is used in a **bad sense** as in **Romans 7:7** where Paul talks about coveting, "What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? Far from it! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about **coveting** if the Law had not said, "You shall not **covet**." Perhaps Paul knew it experientially but did not have inspired words to articulate it. In other words, when he was a child he understood it in an experience, but when the Law came, he was then given divine words to articulate what covetousness really was.

If you want a good understanding of this, there is a book I read called, "**Stolen Innocence**". I was reading this at the time when I wrote this back in 2011. It is about a fundamentalist Mormon church and their treatment of sexual matters; the way they treated them. They did not provide words to articulate this, but the experience was there. In other words, *they were involving young girls in some very bad things, but the girls didn't have words to describe what was actually going on.* So, sometimes people are experiencing things like **lust**, or desire, or covetousness or such things, and they don't know what "to call" that. They don't know what it "means". And that may be associated with this idea of "**lusting**" after a woman.

Maybe a young boy, when he's reaching puberty doesn't really understand it; he's experiencing something different but he doesn't really understand in his mind exactly what that's all about until, maybe, he understands God's word and then that puts meaning to what He's experiencing in his life.

In **1 Corinthians 10:6** it says, "... not crave evil things as they indeed craved them." The "**cravings**" of our lives are most profound on a sexual level. But there are other levels. People "**crave**" sex, they "**crave**" power, they "**crave**" food and wealth, sometimes chemical substances to make them 'feel better', and in my opinion, sometimes people "**crave**" beauty. Now, beauty may not be necessarily a bad thing, but it can be something that people may be so *fixated* on that they try to make everything beautiful...like on the outside ... that they become obsessed with that. Now these are all fine within a context but the "**cravings**" become wrong or destructive outside a defined context ... and these have to be defined by Jesus or His apostles.

James 4:2 says, "You lust and do not have, so you commit murder. And you are envious and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask.³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask with the wrong motives, so that you may spend what you request on your pleasures." James is indicating here that there are some things that you can desire that you don't get simply because you don't *ask*. There are other things you don't get because you want to spend it on *your own* pleasure and it's something that God is not going to give you. You may *take* it, but He's not going to give it to you. So if you look in this context, if a man looks on a woman and he thinks she's very beautiful, say in the case of David who looked at Bathsheba, if he had asked God saying, "God, I really think she's a beautiful woman, would You give me this woman?" God would have said "No, she's not your wife." But he went and "took" her anyway because he was lusting after her. So he wanted to 'spend it on his own pleasure'; that was what he had in mind.

It would seem that desire that is not subjected to the fundamental desire for *intimacy with God* will inevitably divert itself into illicit ways of getting that “otherwise” good desire filled. So any desire that is not tied to our fundamental desire for *intimacy with God* is a desire that will “go off” on an illicit tangent.

1 John 2:15-17 is a summary Scripture on “lust”. John writes, “Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. ¹⁷ The world is passing away and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God continues to live forever.”

The desire that is a worldly desire is wrong. So what determines if something is ‘of the world’? In our present context, it is God who made woman to be desired. Is there something different about a man who would look longingly after a woman with a desire to have physical contact with her, and a man who would spend hours and hours looking at, say, cars ... vehicles to own, knowing that they’re not his and they probably couldn’t be because they’re too expensive and you can never afford them? Is there something fundamentally different from the man who would look longingly at a woman or women versus someone who would look longingly, you might even say ‘**lustfully**’, at cars that they would want? Are both “**lust**”? Are both of the same character ... covetousness? Is one inherently evil and the other not?

How about looking longingly at pictures of beautiful landscapes and desiring “to be there” in your mind? In both cases, does one’s desire for something ‘out of reach’ cause a lack of appreciation for what one may have? Satisfaction or contentment is virtuous. A man who is not content with “the wife of his youth” and “**lusts**” for someone else betrays an emptiness inside that says *what God has provided is not adequate*. That’s basically what we’re saying.

So, if a man has a wife and that’s the “wife of his youth”, they may have married when they were young; and he man ‘**lusts**’ after another woman, is he basically saying that what God has provided for me is not adequate and *God is not capable of meeting my needs* verses **Psalm 20:4** which says, “May He grant you your heart’s desire and fulfill your whole plan!” indicating that God will fill the desires of our hearts. These must be taken in context of all He says elsewhere. If not restricted and kept in numerous contexts, this would make God a hedonist, or at least an accessory to hedonism; a worldly genie always giving us what we want, giving us what we desire, and that’s not Who God is.

In the Ten Commandments regarding covetousness, Moses adds ‘not coveting your neighbor’s wife, donkey, house, servants’ or anything that belongs to your neighbor. So how does the idea of what ‘belongs to you’ figure into this matter? I would call your attention to Psalm 37. **Psalm 37:4** says, “Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you *the desires of your heart*.” It mentions the desires of your heart. But “*the desires of your heart*” is tied to “*delighting in the Lord*”. So it is predicated on delighting oneself in the Lord, committing your ways to the Lord, trusting in Him, resting in the Lord, waiting for Him, ceasing from anger and forsaking wrath and do not fret. I don’t have time to really unpack of that but go back to Psalm 37 and when He talks about the desires of our heart being fulfilled by God, *it’s in the context of those 7 things* that are also a part of our lives.

But in this text our desires, which will produce righteousness and judgment, or clearing of us, much is said in this chapter about the fate of the wicked. By contrast, their desires do not turn out very well. *Even in this chapter of Psalm 37*, the desires of the wicked do not turn out very well. So, the desires of the righteous must be kept in context with all these other things that are in the text.

So let's bear down on this idea in **Matthew 5**. Looking on a woman with an intention of “**lust**” or “**desire**” is one motive for looking. Remember, ‘look’ is more than a glance. It is a sustained ‘look’. Practically, a man cannot avoid looking ... seeing women. They're everywhere!

Recently, I was in a room with a young woman, a professional, for a private meeting. She sat across from me, no table between us; she had a straight short dress on that hiked up considerably when she sat down. Of course I noticed (or I couldn't relate it now to you unless I had noticed) and I had to make a conscious decision in my mind “not to let my eyes go there and stay there, of course.” Lingering there would have been noticed by the woman and would have been embarrassing to me. It would have created a very awkward situation so I made “eye contact” with her and I stayed with our business. “**Lust**” did not happen; but as I said, I did notice. So, what's the difference? The difference is I didn't linger there. I didn't “go” there. I didn't let my eyes stay there. But it is different going to a website.

Locating a woman in little or no clothing and staring to the point of arousal ... this is most definitely “**lust**”. The problem for most men is the occasions between these two examples. I want you to think ... there is a big difference between that meeting of a woman that you have to make sure you keep your eyes in the right spot, and situations where you are intentionally going and looking for things. But most people live “in between” those two extremes. There is a lot of area between *noticing* a beautiful and attractive woman who may be revealing a little too much; and *seeking out* images to watch.

Perhaps this is why **Psalm 37** says one of the gifts God gives to those whose desire is for the Lord is judgment. That is *a gift that He gives us ... discernment*. *Religions like Gnosticism which operate on duality, the loss of connection between physical acts and spiritual consequences, are destroyed in light of Jesus' teaching here*. Gnostics believe that there are two parts of man. There is the spiritual part of man and then there is the physical part of man. And *what happens in the physical realm doesn't affect the spiritual realm*. But Jesus is saying ‘no, that's not true.’

Jesus integrates the various parts of man's existence ... body, soul and spirit. Actions and thoughts are integrated. *Desire is integrated with thoughts and actions*. They all work together in concert to make up the whole man. Jesus came to integrate all the parts of a man with Him as the hub, and when one part disconnects, or misfires, or shorts out, or is interrupted by “excessive desire” or “**lust**” for something out of bounds, a weakness is created in man at that point! This weakness can be exploited and made vulnerable. Under the right conditions, integration breaks down and the person succumbs to the desire. The stressor leading to the breakdown may be known and understood, or perhaps it's not understood, but the outcome will be the same. By giving in repeatedly, something happens in the heart of the man. He breaks down and allows himself to settle into a “new normal”.

This resignation creates an altered integration, crippled and mutated. If this is perceived to be the case, the new normal may not be perceived as subnormal itself. Then great attention and zeal for ‘refocus’ needs to occur, to fight for returning to homeostasis defined by God Himself. (Homeostasis is the idea of being ‘okay’). Just as the heart patient at the first sign of distress reaches for his nitroglycerin tablets, or an asthma patient for his inhaler, so the person who feels the first twinge of anxiety which leads to temptation needs to reach for that which will return him to peace and contentment and focus.

God’s medicine chest is filled with medications with *no harmful side effects* ... *prayer, the Word of God, good deeds, nature, exercise, confession*, and so many more. Maintenance of proper relationships also reduces anxiety, and therefore reduces the force of the temptation.

Now I know that what I’ve just said here and what I’ve just written here is very complicated but to break it down and summarize, we are an integrated being; body, soul and spirit; and when something happens in any one of those areas, where we give in to temptation, or something brings us down in one of those areas, it can create a **new normal** for us. And that **new normal**, after a while becomes very normal for us, and we don’t realize that it’s “subnormal” ... that it’s really an aberration. It’s particularly in this area of “**lust**” that we fall into patterns, and after a while we rationalize these patterns, we begin to think, “Oh, it’s not so bad”, “it’s normal, it’s natural”, and really it’s a **disintegration** of the **integration** of body, soul and spirit causing all kinds of trouble inside of man.

Much of what Jesus teaches us is about the heart ... what goes on ‘inside’. Earlier in my notes I wrote about this; the correlation between the inside and the outside. This is a major theme of the master of “agreement of inside with outside”. In other words, Jesus wants there to be total agreement between “inside with outside”. A clear reflection of reality in our lives is very important so we understand kind of where we are in this agreement between inside and outside. So, what are the possibilities? Well, I have **five possibilities here**. It could be:

Number one is *inside there is evil*

There could be “evil” going on in the inside ... *that we’re not genuine on the inside*. **But on the outside**, we could *appear* to be righteous. So there is a duplicity that is going on.

Number two is there could be *total integration* where we are *pure on the inside and we are also pure on the outside*. **That’s the harmony** that we’re looking for.

Number three though; there could be on the inside a struggle – a *major struggle with purity* however, on the outside, we may not **appear** to be struggling with purity. And again, that just shows that what is on the inside doesn’t always get manifested on the outside.

Number four – there could be a *struggle with purity* on the inside, and on the outside people may be able to *see the struggle* that we’re having with that purity. It may ‘become’ evident to other people.

Number five – on the *inside there are struggles* but *there are victories!* Yes, there is struggle going on but there are many victories going on the inside and outside there may be a projection of struggles and victories as well. Particularly if we’re in a community where we can be honest about the struggles we have and also the victories that God can give us.

The key ★ is “being real”, to being genuine, to being authentic. **Number five** probably applies to most of us.

Then we add the element of the *strength in the struggle*. How strong is the struggle? And sometimes we are not very good at ‘assessing’ how strong the struggle is in these areas.

The word for “**heart**” is *cardia*. This is the first time Jesus uses this word in the Sermon on the Mount. Adultery, He says, is “**in the heart**”. Adultery in the heart is strong. Again, as I wrote yesterday, ‘there is not some *duplicitous break* here’. We are integrated. I believe the progression of “**lust**” in most areas, including a man “**lusting**” for a woman goes from a *casual notice* to an *ever-increasing struggle* to a *fixation with intent* to *willingly consider an encounter which is played out in the heart and it may manifest itself* physically. In **James 1:14-15** it has a similar progression, “¹⁴ But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. ¹⁵ Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it has run its course, brings forth death.” He talks about temptation or desire turning into sin; then sin turning into death. There is usually a progression of things that occur.

Rather than the word ‘**adultery**’ being too strong, and it is strong, is that “is it appropriate”? It is an appropriate word to use. For a man to *fixate* with lustful desire (... that’s a redundant phrase) on a woman is a “*pollution of legitimate relationships*”. “Marriage is pure” the Bible says. Friendships are pure. Familial relationships are pure. To move away from those to a different place is a perversion of feelings and thoughts that must be kept in proper bounds. When we *do so*, we experience in *purity*, the life God intended, but when we *violate* these relationships, we are risking our own homeostasis or our own “okayness”.

So a “knotty” question over the years regarding this is, “Is this the relationship between ‘actual physical adultery, the sexual act’; or ‘adultery of the heart’”? This sometimes comes up regarding divorce and remarriage. Is **heart adultery** “*grounds for Scriptural divorce*”? “Or how, in this immediate context is the “**commits adultery**” in **Matthew 5:28** “*but I say to you that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart*” related to the “commit adultery” in **Matthew 5:32**, “*but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the reason of unchastity, makes her commit adultery*”. That’s the same phrase, but how do we relate those two?

We already have so much divorce ... do we add another “*difficult to document*” or “*prove*” reason to the list? i.e. ‘heart adultery’? In other words, Jesus has given us a reason for a divorce, and that is ‘committing of adultery’. Do we want to add to that ‘adultery of the heart’ as another reason for divorce, particularly when it is very difficult to document or prove that, as opposed to physical adultery? These are very “thorny” or “knotty” questions.

At face value, in verse 28 the very act or occasion for a lustful look constitutes actual adultery. Or, is “heart adultery” **one of the final steps** to “physical adultery”? I’m just asking the question. If both are equal, some people reason that “**If I am guilty of ‘heart adultery’, and it is the same as ‘physical adultery’, then I might as well go all the way**. Of course, this is deceitful reasoning. So some might say, “Well, if I’m already in trouble for lusting after a woman, I might as well go all the way and sleep with her”!

Well, that's crazy reasoning. Whatever raises the alarm should cause us to *run from the fire*; not **deeper** into the fire! Jesus calls this 'lustful look' to be a "stumble". The Greek word is "skandalizo" (σκανδαλιζω) meaning to scandalize, to entrap, to trip up, to entice to sin, apostasy or displeasure, to offend. In **Matthew 17:27** Jesus avoided "giving offense" to the tax collector so He paid the tax. In **John 6:61** Jesus recognized that His "**hard sayings**" were *causing people to stumble* which could not and should not be avoided because he was merely telling them the truth. In **1 Corinthians 8:13** Paul indicates his willingness to become a vegetarian if *eating meat will cause his brother to stumble*.

So the two extremes are established. One is necessary and not removable and the other is dispensable. In other words, some things we *must* do even if it causes someone to stumble. Other things we *must not do*, if it causes someone to stumble. In **Matthew 11:6** Jesus recognized that many would stumble over Him; "the stumbling stone" He is called, "the rock that causes offense"; but blessed is the one who does not stumble because of Him. In **Matthew 13:57**, those in Jesus' hometown *took offense* at Jesus. A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household. In **Matthew 15:12** the disciples noticed the Pharisees were *offended* when they heard Jesus' teaching on defilement. Even the disciples would fall away because of Jesus in **Matthew 26:31** though this was a temporary fall. Peter bragged that he would **never** fall away; he would **never** stumble or be offended. Of course, Jesus made it clear that he *would* do so three times before the rooster crowed in **Matthew 26:33**. It is in the causative sense, in **Matthew 18:6, 8-9** where it talks about 'little ones who believe in Jesus to stumble' carries with it a dire alternative ... that is a millstone being hung around one's neck and they be thrown into the sea.

Compare this with the radical alternative in our text, plucking out eyes and cutting off hands. Jesus goes into some discussion here about stumbling blocks. They are, He says, inevitable; they're unavoidable. **Luke 21:23** talks about the destruction of Jerusalem. There will be 'great distress' upon this city and wrath to this people. Paul speaks of the present distress in **1 Corinthians 7:26** which was persecution. Paul said he was content with these distresses, according to **2 Corinthians 12:10**, for Christ's sake because when I am weak, that is when I am strong. In **1 Thessalonians 3:7** Paul received comfort in all his distresses. These are things that cause us to *stumble*. This word contains the idea of force or necessity.

1. We cannot order our lives to avoid these distresses. We, therefore, must decide how we are to respond. In other words, there are some times that we *cannot* avoid stumbling over something, but we *can* decide what we are going to do with it. The exercise of resistance to these *distresses*, having an 'emergency plan' gives us strength just as giving in on *stumbling* may make us weak.
2. Another point here is 'the person who facilitates the *stumbling block* is one who is under a curse. The Bible says, "Woe to him who causes one of these little ones to *stumble*." We have to give great thought to the experience of our influence for good or for bad. We are held accountable for the things that we do that might affect the lives of other people.
3. Jesus provides an illustration of contrast. Which is better; to be crippled and blind as we enter life, or to go into the eternal fire whole? In this case, the offending agency is the hand, and the eye; *not the object of our sight*.

So, what is the offense? What is causing us to *stumble*? In Jesus' words, it's the 'eye'; it's the 'hand' that causes the offense; **not** what we're looking at. It's interesting that in this context, the emphasis is **not** the woman a man looks at, *regardless of how provocative she may be*. That's another matter. Jesus is not condoning provocative dress, but it is the man's 'eye' that causes him to *stumble*, it says. So just as with *anger*, God holds the angry person responsible for his *anger* and for the *solution*. So it is with lust. The one who looks is held *responsible* for his *action*.

To give you an illustration, Bathsheba was taking a bath on her roof. Was she responsible for the sin that followed; the lust that followed in David's mind? No. No she wasn't. David was held responsible for that. Now, we could 'argue' that she should have found a better place to take a bath, or she may have had a curtain around her. We could say all kinds of things, but ultimately *David was the one who looked*, and kept looking and kept looking until it reached a point where he actually committed adultery with her.

Jesus is not into giving people reasons to have excuses. **Romans 1:18** talks of those who suppress the truth in unrighteousness. The phrase indicates that the *evil is often connected with enough truth to make it appear even noble*. So the idea of looking to lust does equate to committing adultery. Jesus will not have us "playing games" as if we are little children or slick attorneys who look for loopholes.

But another question is raised by Jesus when He talks of body parts being thrown into Hell, and the word is Gehenna. How are we to understand this? It raises some difficult questions actually.

1. Is it, in any way, *meant to be literal*? Are we talking about a literal, fleshly, blood, bones, *body actually being thrown into Hell; a place not of this world*? Is this *literally Hell* in the afterlife, or merely the 'dump' outside of Jerusalem?
2. Does Jesus *literally* mean to cut off *hands* and pluck out *eyes*? Is self-mutilation even a solution to a spiritual problem, or was Jesus just using this for effect or hyperbole?
3. Is there any indication of the nature of Hell in Jesus' words? What do we learn about hell and Jesus' words? One part of the body will be destroyed to preserve the rest of the body. If we literally did this, would we have blind men or one-armed men in heaven?

Well, all these questions seek to understand the relationship between this world and the next. One thing is clear and that is that the destruction of the body in Hell raises the issue of whether the resurrected body of the wicked will be the same as that of the righteous. 1 Corinthians 15 is the definitive chapter on this.

What it says in **1 Corinthians 15:52** is that the dead will be raised imperishable and we shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye, is he speaking of the church or is he speaking of all men? The change is the imperishable ... immortality which equals the fact of "death being swallowed up in victory"; a victory which is in Jesus. The promise of the wicked is that they will *perish* and eternal life is the gift to the saved.

But this also raises the question of “falling from grace”. The ‘sinner’ or ‘unchosen’ is destined for Hell and *no part of him will be saved* simply because he cuts off his hand. But the one in Christ, who is so repentant that they would sacrifice a limb **can** avoid hell showing the regenerate can be lost and can do something to avoid it.

But back to Jesus’ true intent for this teaching ... the connection between inside and out. *Technical or legalistic righteousness will not pass inspection with Jesus.* He looks deeper and He sees how we handle **the true intent of our heart.** Our desires must be subordinated to the desires of God, and filtered through Him, purified and redirected to godly ends.

The only path I can see to control the lust which wars against our souls is to **cultivate a burning desire for fellowship with God Himself.** “One thing I do. This is what I seek. That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD”, (as opposed to looking lustfully at a woman) and to seek Him or inquire of Him in His temple.” **Psalm 27:4**

If this is **truly** the *one thing*, then *this* will be my “default”, my “home page”, my “base”, my “safe place”, my “parental control”, my “salvation” from other desires which will tug at my soul.

Well, I think we need to think deeply about the role of lust within our life. Not just simply in this case, a man looking lustfully at a woman, *but how lust plays into all those things in our lives that would ‘pull us away’ from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.*

Well, thank you for joining us. If you want to find past recordings about The Mind of Christ, you may go to <https://www.centraisarasota.org/>, our website, and you’ll be able to find how to link to all the materials that we have recorded thus far.

Until next time, thank you for joining us and have a great day.