

Feb 5/23 – Small Groups - Matthew 5:27-30

1. At the beginning of the sermon Tim compared the purity culture sex ethic that was promoted in the church and the contemporary sex ethic. The church said – “Sex is bad – squelch your passions”, the culture said “Sex is just a natural human appetite, indulge your passions”. Tim reflected a bit on the harm each of these movements had on those who adopted them. Have you seen any evidence of the harm arising from each of these perspectives?
2. Ahead of looking at the passage itself Tim gave two preliminary observations. 1. The whole counsel of scripture affirms the gift and goodness of sexual desire. 2. Love is the fulfilling of the law, what the law is really after is love. So Jesus speaks this way because he loves us. Why do you think these observations are important leading into any conversation about navigating our sexual relationships and appetites?

Read Matthew 5:27-30, Genesis 2:18-25, Matthew 19:1-6

3. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Adultery was defined as sex outside of covenant. From the Genesis and Matthew passages what might you conclude is the purpose of sex?
4. (28) How does Jesus fill out what the law was really after?
5. Jesus uses the word epithumeo, which means an over and above desire. It was a word most often used of idolatry, false worship. It is taking something good and putting it central to our lives, looking to it to give us something that only God can give. How does seeing the word this way help us to understand Jesus’ words? How do we look to sex and romance to give us what only God can give?
6. (29-30) Jesus uses a Hebrew idiom to communicate that if we use sex in ways it wasn’t intended or ask it to give us something only God can give, it will unravel us. Have you seen evidence of this truth?
7. ...gouge it out, cut it off...The idiom invites us to deal with things quickly and deliberately. What are some of the wholistic ways we might do that? How does the good news of Jesus help us in that work?