

**Sovereign Grace Church**  
**“Adultery of the Heart” outline**  
July 1, 2018

**Matthew 5: 27-30**

*This morning we will continue to reflect on Jesus' instructions as to how we may live fully and passionately in His Kingdom of Righteousness. In contrast, the Pharisees had developed a view of righteousness that was consumed with outward behavior but had neglected the far more important matters of the will and the heart. They seemed to have thought that at best we can only control our behavior. We can know that certain things and behaviors are wrong but we cannot change our strong desires and dispositions to have them! This would mean changing who we ARE! But we are who we are and the best we can do is to control our illicit desires by a sheer force of will. We cannot change ourselves because we ARE ourselves. Only God could possibly change who we are!*

*This observation is surely correct...only GOD can change who we ARE. But if God cannot change who we are NOW....what makes us think He will be able to when we DIE. As a matter of fact, the Holy Spirit has come into our lives to do just that.....to re-make us after the image of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is indeed impossible to re-make ourselves by ourselves except into our own image, which image is the very thing we are trying to transform. But God has NOT left us by ourselves...He has sent His Spirit into our hearts to enable us and to redeem us so that we might begin this joint effort of re-making our entire beings into the likeness and joy of our risen Savior.*

*As we have seen this played out with anger, so today we will see it played out with lust.*

**Introductory Scripture: II Cor. 3: 6; Phil. 2:5; Col. 3:1-3**

**1. The Law as Moses as the Pharisees understood it v. 27**  
Lev. 20:10; Deut 24: 1-4; Lk 7: 36-50; Jn 8:41

**2. The Law as Jesus enlightens them v.28**

- “Looking at a woman to lust for her” II Pet. 2:14
  
  
- **Heart Adultery**

- **What is a Person?**

- **Law or Disposition?**

### **3. Body parts and righteousness vv.29-30**

- **Body Parts as Obstacles to Righteousness**  
Mk. 7: 18-22
- **Body Parts as a *Reductio ad Absurdum***

#### **Questions for conversation and reflection:**

- 1. How have you previously understood this passage? Have you regarded it as a challenge to greater righteousness? Or as an indication of the hopelessness of your condition? How might people be drawn to one or the other of these understandings? Would it be possible to be drawn to both? How?**
- 2. How have you previously understood verses 29-30. How should these verses be understood if they are referring to our body parts as obstacles to righteousness? How should they be understood if they are a reductio ad absurdum to the Pharisees and their overly external and negative approach to righteousness? Which view do you think better indicates Jesus' interest?**
- 3. How have you attempted to control your problem with lust? Do you focus on your behavior or your inner disposition? In what sort of condition does focusing on our behavior apart from our disposition leave us? How might such a state be understood in contrast to the “abundant life” promised by Jesus? (Jn 10:10)**
- 4. How does our view of God affect our pursuit of inward holiness and righteousness? Does it make a difference to our efforts if we view God as someone who is waiting to judge us vs. one who longs to see us delivered from a life which will necessarily end in bitterness and death? Do you believe that God loves you? Do you believe he hates you? Upon what is your belief based?**