

“You have heard the commandment that says, ‘You must not commit adultery.’ But I say, anyone who even looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

Matthew 5:27-28 NLT

lectio // Matthew 5:27-32

Wow! I remember reading this as a young teenager, dripping with testosterone that was surging through every neural network of my brain-on-fire. My first thought was I'm not gouging my eye out to get into heaven. Second thought was to start a eye patch company, making millions selling to every christian young man. Now I know better and this conversation still makes me uncomfortable. And, I now know that Jesus was very sexist to only address lust as a male only issue. It is not a male only issue. Whether it is physical or emotional lust is at work in men and women, we are both culpable! This makes us all adulterers at this point. Give me an eye (or part of your brain) and I'll give you a patch. One: we are, as humans, attracted to other humans. Two: we are physically attracted to other humans. Three: Where, when and why does it turn into lust? Where does lust start, in the eyes, brain or heart? It can't be the eyes, they're just lenses sending signals to the brain. Yes, I know Job made a pact (covenant) with his eyes, but that just blocks the signal. Can a blind person lust? Yes, because we're human! But it can't come solely from the brain either. It has a lot to do with our heart, and even more specifically, with our desires. Maybe lust has a lot more to do with de-humanizing, control or manipulation to one's own selfishness. Now, that sounds evil, right. Taking a person and mentally stripping them of their humanity, reducing them, objectifying them until you get what you want, no matter what they want, no matter how they feel, no matter if it's wrong or they are in a committed, physical relationship with another - YUK. Now we sound like a sociopath! Who does this in reality? OR, who does this psychopathic exercise in their heart and mind? That's right - extremely broken people do this physically, and if we're honest very unhealthy people if we do this in our heart. If it's just in our mind, what's wrong with that? The motivation and mental capacity to go around socio-selfishly dehumanizing someone for our own "pleasure" or "fun" or self-medicating? We think that's okay? That's right? Yeah, that's what Jesus is getting at! Which is worse, "lusting" like that or thinking it's okay to do just because it's in our own mind? If we think that's "natural" or "normal" or some Darwinistic nonsense like that, we've got more than an eye-lust problem going on - we're sick! Evolution didn't make us stupid over a billions of years, we were broken from something far more personal, more traumatic - we are born with it!

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Dad,
 This whole discussion about lust and the maddening, self-driven desire to destroy relationships, really makes me hate my own humanity. I take a good, long look at myself and I am not pure, innocent or incapable of just about anything. To even think for a second that I can somehow escape that nature or that I am too good to do something so wicked or justify anything by finding people that are "worse" than me (like that somehow improves me), is just further proof of how jacked up I really am. And, it does not comfort me to think that all humans are in the same bankrupted boat - it just makes me realize how much we've strayed from you. And we are just "smart" enough to excuse or hide our behavior, thinking it just can't be true. It is true and I desperately need your forgiveness, your grace.

contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root