

# LUST IN THE HEART

*Andrew M. Connally*

Jesus said:

**Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, that everyone that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not thy whole body be cast into hell. And if thy right hand causeth thee to stumble, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not thy whole body go into hell (Mat. 5:27-30).**

When Jesus uttered these words, He highlighted the fact of adultery in the lives of mankind. If there is one transgression that strikes at the heart of man universally, it is the sin of lust, that lust after a woman.

Many Christian men, like the Pharisees, like to relish the fact of their innocence as far as physical adultery is concerned, but when some men read these words it makes them hang their heads in shame. Shame because they know how often they have violated this prohibition by looking and lusting.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. Jesus said, **“Everyone that looketh on a woman to lust after her”**; hence there is a type of looking that leads to forbidden lust. Undoubtedly this is the **“lust of the eye”** (1 John 2:16), a lust that desires to appropriate through the senses of seeing. David warned of this in Psalms 101:3, **“I will set no wicked thing before my eyes.”**

2. This word *lust* is simply strong desire, but a desire which is forbidden. Notice a passage or two where the same word is used: **“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof”** (Rom. 6:12). **“Among whom we also all once lived in the lusts of our flesh doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest”** (Eph. 2:3). **“Put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness which is idolatry”** (Col. 3:5). So these are sensual, sexual, earthly desires which war against our souls. **“Beloved, I beseech you as sojourners and pilgrims, to abstain from fleshly lust, which war against the soul”** (1 Pet. 2:11).

3. Such strong desire is mental adultery. It is adultery in the heart, an adultery which requires no physical contact or expression. It transpires in the heart, the mind. This is one reason why this sin is so dangerous. Like all sins committed in the heart, hatred, jealousy, envy, anger, etc., it can satisfy baser emotions and never be acted out in life. The satisfaction takes place in the heart and mind of man and no one knows or sees but God.

There are three kinds of adultery spoken of in the Bible: physical adultery, mental adultery, and spiritual adultery (as one who becomes a friend of the world).

**Ye adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God (Jam. 4:4).**

### **THE SPIRITUAL REQUIREMENTS OF A HOLY GOD**

1. God looks upon the heart.

**But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart (1 Sam. 16:7).**

Man is preoccupied with outward appearances. Note:

**Woe unto you, scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites I for ye cleanse the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full from extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first the inside of the cup and of the platter, that the outside thereof may become clean also (Mat. 23:25-26).**

The world is concerned with outward appearances and expressions, but the Judge of us all goes to the inner core of man's being, his heart. **"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life"** (Pro. 4:23). Therefore, only the pure in heart shall ever see and commune with God eternally. **"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God"** (Mat. 5:8).

2. God has always required man's heart be pure, but man in seeking to justify his own basic desires was carried away by a literal interpretation of the seventh commandment and chose to ignore the greater responsibility. Note: **"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me"** (Psa. 66:18).

God's standard is one of perfection, holiness and purity. Notice: **"Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect"** (Mat. 5:48). **"But as he who called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living"** (1 Pet. 1:5). **"And every one that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself, even as he is pure"** (1 John 3:4). This is a reflection of the very nature of God Himself; therefore, God cannot change it and men dare not change it!

### **THE LUST OF THE HEART**

1. The scriptures record evidences of those who violated these great principles. First there was Potiphar's wife. **"And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me"** (Gen. 39:7). This was the beginning of Joseph's problem. Her looking caused her to lust and to seek to seduce him, which resulted in a two-year prison sentence for Joseph. All because of a look that resulted in lust!

2. Consider David:

**And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof**

**he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon (2 Sam. 11:2).**

We are all familiar with the story of David and Bathsheba. He looked, he lusted, he committed adultery, and then murdered to cover his sins—all because he looked and lusted in his heart.

(1). The man David was a man after God's own heart.

**But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee (1 Sam. 13:14).**

(2). He was anointed by Samuel and the spirit of the Lord was upon him.

**Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of the brethren: and the spirit of the Lord. came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up and went to Ramah (1 Sam. 16:13).**

(3). David had a perfect heart.

**For it came to pass when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father (1 Kin. 11:4).**

Such was this great man and a glorious king, yet sin beguiled him and he fell! A spiritual giant brought low by his own passion and lust.

### **CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO DAVID'S SIN**

1. As always, lust entices us. Notice:

**But each man is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lust and enticed. Then the lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin: and the sin, when it is fullgrown, bringeth forth death (Jam. 1:14-15).**

2. From 2 Samuel 11:2, we learn that the rest of David's army was away doing battle while David **"tarried still at Jerusalem."** Idleness wrought its power on David's life. Idleness often leads to sin. We need to have our work and stay busy. Idleness is a curse and destroys talents, initiative, and wastes opportunity.

3. David did not flee temptation. He nourished and cherished it. We must not dally with sin. We must only flee and flight. Sins of the heart often strike at our weakest moment. We must not "yield to temptation but fight manfully onward."

4. Bathsheba's nakedness was also a contributing factor to David and Bathsheba's sin. Instead of being inside, away from prying eyes, she bathed where she could be seen by King David. Many a woman, by her dress or undress, has caused a godly man to sin. The temptress is as guilty as the tempted. Bathsheba's sin not only led David into sin, but herself as well. She not only committed adultery, but as a result of their adultery her husband was murdered! She shared in that responsibility as well. One sin so often leads to another.

How many women share in the guilt their dress or undress promotes in some man's heart. Pornography, television, and mixed swimming are three of the greatest offenders in our society today. Notice: **"Abstain from every form of evil"** (1 The. 5:22).

### **HOW TO GUARD AGAINST THE LUST OF THE HEART**

1. **"Keep thy heart with all diligence"** (Pro. 4:23). The Christian must perpetually be on guard to keep his heart. Notice:

**For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh [for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, hut mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high. thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:3-5).**

2. We must reprove the works of darkness. Notice:

**Be not ye therefore partakers with them; for ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord: walk as children of light [for the fruit of the light is in all goodness and righteousness and truth] proving what is well-pleasing unto the Lord; and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them; for the things which are done by them in secret it is a shame even to speak of (Eph. 5:7-12).**

3. **"Abhor that which is evil"** (Rom. 12:9). This means "shrink with shuddering from, to regard with horror," all evil.

### **CONCLUSION**

God will deal with adulterers. Notice:

**Or know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate nor abusers of themselves with men, nor thieves, not covetous nor drunkards nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9-10).**

Also, **"Let marriage be had in honor among all, and let. the bed be undefiled: for fornicators and adulterers God will judge"** (Heb. 12:4).

Let us remember the perils of privilege for it contributed to David's downfall. Let us guard our objects of viewing—what we see and refuse to allow evil to be meditated upon in our hearts. Otherwise, we too shall be lost. Let us remember,

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things (Phi. 4:8).~

*Deceased*