



GET USED TO
DIFFERENT:
A NEW WAY TO LIVE



Touching Lives
with James Merritt

The Look That Kills

Get Used To Different | Week 13 | Matthew 5:27-30

INTRODUCTION

From today’s key passage of Scripture, we’re going to see how adultery is not only a sin in the bed, but it is a sin in the head. Adultery can be both physical and mental. It can be both on the inside and the outside. In a day and age where sexual immorality is running rampant, not only are marriages being ruined, but even the very concept of a biblical marriage is being tainted. Thankfully, Jesus gives us three principles to remember so we can guard against this terrible sin of adultery and avoid the look that kills.

KEY POINTS

1. There Is A Law That Condemns Adultery

Even though society still as a whole condemns adulterous sexual activity, it is commonly accepted and is almost always called “an affair.” Polyandry or the willingness to be open to having multiple sexual partners even within marriage is also something that people practice. Our culture is deviating so far from God’s design for marriage. But God’s needle has never moved – “You shall not commit adultery.”

2. There Is A Look That Commits Adultery

Before Jesus made His statement in today’s key passage, no one had ever truly taken adultery or sexual sin from the physical to the mental and emotional.

The belief was you can look – just don’t touch. But Jesus goes further than that. Jesus says, “There is a look that kills.” Here Jesus gets to the heart of the problem of adultery because the problem of adultery begins in the heart.

The word for “look” in this verse is in the present tense. What He is talking about here is not just a glance, but a gaze. It is that continuous look. It goes just beyond admiring an attractive woman or a handsome man. To use movie terms, it would be from going from a G-rated look to an X-rated look. Jesus said the problem with lust is not the sight of a beautiful woman or a good-looking man; it is the stare.

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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Why do you think our culture is moving so far away from God's design for marriage?
2. In your own words, how would you define the difference between and look and a gaze when it comes to today's content?
3. Is there anything you need to remove from your life that's been causing you to stumble?

What God Joins Together

Get Used To Different | Week 14 | Matthew 5:31-32

INTRODUCTION

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In Jesus' day, divorce was more commonplace than you would have imagined and there was a great debate about when divorce was even allowed. It wasn't incidental that Jesus had just finished talking about lust when He started to talk about divorce. Lust causes adultery and now shockingly, He is going to say that divorce and remarriage can do the exact same thing. Jesus is going to remind us that God's ideal is one man and one wife for one life. It should be "til death do us part." There are two things that Jesus asks us to do when it comes to the topic of divorce. Let's dive into those together.

KEY POINTS

1. Consider The Problem of Divorce

The problem with divorce when this passage was written was that there could be little to no reason for the divorce to happen, but as long as you signed on the dotted line, the marriage was over. Often, we see the same thing happen today. People have "irreconcilable differences" or they say, "We're just not in love like we used to be," so they sign on the dotted line and the marriage is over.

This is a heartbreaking problem because this was never God's intention for marriage. He designed this covenant relationship to last forever. But with the way divorce was so widely accepted then and is widely accepted now, our culture has clearly wandered so far from what God had in mind for marriage.

2. Confirm The Permanence of Marriage

In Matthew 19:6, Jesus says, "*...Therefore what God has joined together let no one separate.*" The reason why we struggle with this statement is because we have become totally focused on divorce where Jesus was preoccupied with marriage. Too often when trouble comes in a marriage we start asking, "How can we get out of it?" But Jesus says the question you ought to be asking is, "How can we stay in it?" What we should be concerned with is not our view of divorce, but God's view of marriage.

What God Joins Together

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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. How has your life been impacted by divorce?
2. Why do you think Jesus was so focused on talking about marriage rather than talking about divorce?
3. What are some ways you can get help or godly advice if you're struggling in your marriage?

Take My Word For It

Get Used To Different | Week 15 | Matthew 5:33-37

INTRODUCTION

In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus takes on the matter of honesty, and we desperately need it. As we look at this passage in Matthew 5, here is the key thought that Jesus is giving us. Let the words “you” and “true” always go together. To help us make sure that happens, Jesus tells us three things to remember not just on telling the truth, but how to do it.

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KEY POINTS

1. Be Honorable In Whatever You Say

If you always tell the truth, you don't have to invoke God's name or any other name to prove you are telling the truth. Your own word should be enough. You should be able to say, “Take my word for it,” and people should believe you. To prove yourself to other people to be a person of honesty, consistency, and integrity you don't need to swear to anything.

If you think about it, you don't mind the truth being exposed. What we try to hide are lies. And if you make a habit of lying, your lying will eventually catch up to your habit. Jesus is telling us to be honorable in whatever we say.

2. Be Honorable In However You Say It

The Pharisees at this time in history had taught the people that you could divide oaths into two classes: those you had to keep and those you didn't. If you invoked the name of God in a promise or an oath you made, you had to keep it, but if you didn't, you didn't have to. If you didn't invoke God's name in the oath you didn't have to mean what you said.

But Jesus challenged them on this type of behavior. We need to be honorable not in just what we say, but in how we say it. So if you take an oath, or you make a promise, you are to keep your word no matter what. Jesus did not encourage us to create loopholes with our words to get out of telling the truth.

Take My Word For It

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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. When was the last time you lied?
2. Do you often feel the need to swear by something or someone in order for people to believe what you're saying? Why or why not?
3. What are some ways you can practice being honest this week?

Touching Lives with Dr. James Merritt

Over And Above

Get Used To Different | Week 16 | Matthew 5:38-42

INTRODUCTION

If you're going to follow Jesus, you're going to have to live a second-mile life. I will tell you right now it's not a popular mile. If you walk this mile, you'll be in the minority. If you walk this mile, it will tax you and test you and try you like no other mile you'll ever walk. But if you do walk this mile, which is over and above what everybody else walks, it will lead you to the greatest joy, the most fulfilling achievements, the finest rewards, and the approval of your Heavenly Father. It's a higher road. It is a tougher road, but it is the better road.

KEY POINTS

1. Go Farther Than You Are Required To Go

Why did Jesus emphasize the second mile? What is so important about it? Here is the difference. The first mile is the duty-fulfilling mile. The second mile is the difference-making mile. The first mile is where the burden is. The second mile is where the blessing is. The first mile is where the requirement is met. The second mile is where the reward is received. People don't notice when you walk that first mile, because everybody does that. It is when you go that second mile that you get people's attention.

2. Give More Than It Is Reasonable To Give

If a person is truly in need, what Jesus is saying is don't loan them something, but give them something. The first-miler will give to those who will give it back. A first-miler one will help those who can help them. A second-miler says, "What's mine is yours and if you need it you can have it and I won't loan it to you."

Now please understand Jesus was not saying to be a doormat. He was not saying you ought to let people just run all over you, because the same Jesus that is teaching this was also the Jesus that took a whip and drove people out of the temple. It's the same Jesus that defended the poor, the orphans, and the defenseless. He was simply telling us that there are going to be many situations where if you're going to go over and above, you're going to have to give more than is reasonable to give.

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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. When was a time you noticed someone walk the second mile? What did you think about that person in the moment?
2. Why do you think walking the second mile is so unpopular and uncommon?
3. What is one way you can walk the second mile this week?
