

All That Jesus Taught Bible Study - Part 18

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen emphasizes the necessity of adhering to Jesus' teachings on inner purity, the role of the Holy Spirit, and the seriousness of sin in relationships.

Duration: 25:57

Scripture: Isaiah 66:2, Malachi 2:16, Matthew 5:20-32, Romans 8:2, Philippians 2:3, James 3:8

Topics: "Spiritual Transformation", "Overcoming Sin"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of adhering to all that Jesus taught, particularly focusing on the deeper spiritual implications behind commands such as avoiding adultery. It delves into the necessity of overcoming lustful thoughts and radical actions to combat sin, highlighting the need for genuine fullness of the Holy Spirit for true transformation and victory over sins like anger and lust. The message stresses the seriousness of adultery, both in the context of lusting after women and divorce, urging believers to tremble at God's word and pursue a righteousness that surpasses external observance of commandments.

Transcript

Our theme for these studies is all that Jesus taught. This is very important because Jesus told us in Matthew 28:20 to teach disciples in every nation every single thing that he has commanded and until we have done that our job is not complete in fulfilling the great commission. So we've been looking at the things that Jesus spoke and taught and commanded beginning in Matthew 4 and we've been we've reached up to Matthew chapter 5 now and we were looking at anger and sexually lustful thinking.

Let's look at Matthew 5 verse 27 today. You have heard that it was said you shall not commit adultery. That was the standard under the Old Testament law but I say to you Jesus was explaining what was behind that command.

It was not just a question of physically avoiding adultery but inwardly not even lusting after a woman. Now God has put a strong sexual desire in all men and we know all men know this desire arises up in our hearts in our early teenage years and it becomes strong and lasts for many many decades in our life. Why has God allowed such a strong desire within man? A woman doesn't have such a strong desire for sex as a man.

God could have kept the sexual desire low in a man just like in a woman but in his great wisdom he's made it much stronger in a man and there is a reason for it. God wants us to be overcomers and here is

an area where we should overcome before we get married. God could have made man in such a way that he didn't get this desire till he was 25 or 26 and he could get married straight away and be free from it but yet he has allowed this desire to come up in our heart when we are 12 or 13 years old and from that time we are to battle it and God wants us to overcome this in our thought life before we are married.

That's the reason why he gives us 13-14 years to fight and struggle and overcome it before we get married. It doesn't have to take that long if you're faithful it can be much quicker than that but we have to have a radical attitude if we are to overcome it and we got to be honest and acknowledge that it's impossible in our human power to overcome it. Even the great apostle Paul was a very upright man according to the law acknowledged as we saw in our last study that he could not overcome this desire until he was filled with the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of God set him free.

It's like Jesus opening the blind men's eyes which they couldn't open by themselves. So it's only through the power of the Holy Spirit that this is possible. In fact everything in the Sermon on the Mount we live up to this standard only if we are filled with the Holy Spirit and I'm not talking about the cheap counterfeits that are going around today under the name of fullness of the Spirit.

If all that the fullness of the Spirit that you claim to have experienced has made you shake and roll on the ground and laugh and speak in tongues then you and you are defeated by these sins like anger and sexual lust. If you still raise your voice at your wife or your husband you have not been filled with the Holy Spirit. Don't let anybody deceive you.

Many people are deceived by that. The Holy Spirit gives us a new tongue not just speaking in unknown tongues but even in our mother tongue. It's no use speaking in unknown tongues on Sunday morning in a church and shouting at your wife in your mother tongue on Sunday afternoon.

That's not the fullness of the Holy Spirit. The fullness of the Holy Spirit gives us control over our tongues. The fruit of the Spirit is self-control.

Gives us control over our tongues 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If it's not that let me tell you what you should do. Ask God to give you a genuine fullness of the Holy Spirit.

Thank God for the gifts of the Spirit but ask God for the genuine fullness of the Spirit which is beyond just having the gifts of the Holy Spirit. It's the only way to overcome. There is no other way.

James says every animal has been tamed by man. James chapter 3 but the tongue no man can control but the Holy Spirit can. And if you are filled with the Holy Spirit He will give you control over your tongue and over your eyes.

These are the two parts of the human body that Jesus spoke of in relation to sin in Matthew 5 verse 21 to 32. Sinning with the tongue, sinning with the eyes, very very important. And don't ever be satisfied with any cheap counterfeit of the fullness of the Holy Spirit if it does not give you control over your tongue and control over your eyes.

Go before God and say Lord I've got a cheap counterfeit. I want to be honest with you. I'm just convincing people that I'm filled with the Holy Spirit.

It's worth nothing. I don't want to miss out on the genuine fullness of the Holy Spirit. I'm telling you from my own experience.

When I was a young Christian I was defeated in these areas, tongue and eyes. I sought for the fullness of the Holy Spirit and people sent me to some different assemblies to seek for it and I was so disappointed with what I saw there. I heard a lot of noise and I said Lord this is not what I'm looking for.

I'm looking for power to overcome sin and I said Lord if it takes 10 years I want the real thing. I want what Peter James and John got on the day of Pentecost, not the cheap counterfeit that's going around the world today. The devil wants people to be satisfied with some counterfeit.

How careful we are. If you're going to buy gold or diamonds how careful you would be to ensure that you don't get a counterfeit. Even currency notes.

If you know there's a lot of counterfeit currency going around you'll be careful to look at the 500 rupee notes you pick up. How much more careful we need to be about something that concerns our eternal destiny. The genuine fullness of the Holy Spirit.

I want to encourage you my dear friends don't be satisfied with a counterfeit. If you're not satisfied with counterfeit gold and diamonds and currency notes how much more you should not be satisfied with counterfeit in the area of the fullness of the Spirit. This is the test.

Has the Spirit of God set you free from the law of sin and death? Romans 8 that's the test. So coming now to Matthew chapter 5. Jesus says everyone who looks on a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in the heart. And we need to go to God for deliverance from this.

And the one way the first step is to be honest. In anger be honest. Go to the person you're wrong and say brother I'm sorry.

Sister I'm sorry. To your wife and say I'm sorry for what the way I spoke. And if you sin 10 times a day in anger go 10 times to that person and say you're sorry.

I tell you when God sees your honesty and your humility he will give you power to be free from it. But if you cover up and excuse and say it was justified why I got angry etc etc you will never be free. The only time you're justified in anger is when it concerns the glory of God and not when it concerns yourself.

When it comes to lusting after women you are never justified. You can look at your wife and admire her but not any other woman. That's not God's will.

And he says you've got to be radical here. First of all you've got to be honest and say Lord I committed adultery. Don't ever say I admired a beautiful face.

No I committed adultery. If you're honest God will deliver you. The other thing is is you must be radical.

The Bible says flee from immorality. If you're at the computer and you're tempted either run away from it or switch the channel or turn it off and say Lord I don't care what but I don't want to fall here. It's possible to overcome and if your right eye makes you to stumble tear it out.

He's not telling us to physically pull out our right eye. It's obvious because you could still lust with your left eye. Well the meaning is that you take a radical attitude towards sin.

Radical attitude towards your tongue and your eyes. It's like be like a blind man at that time. When you're tempted to angry be like a dumb man at that time.

Can a dumb man raise his voice and shout at someone? No. Can a blind man lust? No. Be like a blind man and say Lord you didn't give me eyes to lust after women.

You gave me eyes to see your glory. Because it says if you don't do that you can preserve the parts of your body and be thrown into hell. It's better you lose one part of your body and and go into God's kingdom.

In the same way if you sin sexually with your right hand verse 30 and that makes you to stumble cut it off. That means imagine that you have an amputated hand and you can't sin with your right hand or your left hand. It's better that than your whole body going to hell.

Jesus was very very down to earth and practical. What a lot of sexual sins people commit with their eyes in their hands and Jesus says act as if you're blind as if you're amputated because it is very very serious. And if we take that radical attitude I believe God will help us to be completely free and you'll have a better marriage as well.

Don't think marriage will solve the problem of lust. There are lots of married people who fall into adultery of their thoughts all the time every day. There are a lot of married people who watch internet pornography.

Marriage doesn't solve that problem because it's an inner desire. If you don't battle it in the power of the Holy Spirit you'll be defeated and delude yourself all your life that you're a spiritual Christian when you're not. Is this some postgraduate thing that Jesus is speaking about? No.

He's just talking about how to escape hell. Escaping hell is not some postgraduate Christian stuff. It's basic elementary stuff.

He says it's better for your body part to perish than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. He's talking about salvation from hell bare minimum and this is what he wants us to teach every disciple in every nation. How much is it being taught? Hardly at all and that's why I personally have been commissioned by the Lord personally in my own ministry to keep emphasizing it.

Then he goes on to say about another type of adultery in Matthew chapter 5 verse 31. He says in the Old Testament standard was if you send your wife away give her a certificate of divorce. It was not that God was telling people to divorce their wives.

He was not even permitting divorce like the Pharisees said. God never wanted man to divorce his wife not from the time he created Adam and Eve. God did not make two women for Adam and say choose which one you want.

If you get fed up with one choose the other. He made only one woman for Adam and he's made one woman to be your wife. That's Jesus said that very clearly in Matthew 19.

But Satan has led man astray and it's a fact that people divorce and so the law which is mentioned here in verse 31 which is a quotation from Deuteronomy 24. If you read Deuteronomy 24 it doesn't say God permitted divorce. God said if you do divorce your wife out of your own choice at least give her a certificate of divorce that she can go away decently.

That's what he was saying whoever sends his wife away let him give her a certificate of divorce which is different from permitting divorce. But he says I say to you I'm raising the standard you can't just get away

with giving a certificate of divorce. I say to you that if you divorce your wife except for the cause of unchastity you are making her commit adultery.

And if you marry a divorced woman you are committing adultery. Now you cannot lower that standard. It's being lowered all over in Christendom particularly in western Christianity today.

But you cannot change God's word. Let God be true and every man a liar. It doesn't matter if 90% of Christendom accepts divorce it is still against the word of God.

We have the tragic situation today of Christians well-known Christian leaders and preachers disobeying the word which says whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery. There are great preachers I know who married divorced women and justified it by saying that God led me to do it. Imagine using the name of God to justify one's own desire and lust.

And there are many pastors and preachers today who are divorced themselves and who are marrying divorced women completely ignoring scripture. This is a day when reverence for God and his word has disappeared completely. And there's a great need to come back to what Jesus said go into every nation make disciples and teach them to do every single thing I've commanded you.

Will you have a large church as a result? No. Many people will get offended and leave your church because this way to life is very narrow and few there be that find it. Is the Lord interested in a large church? Far from it.

He's interested in a pure church and it is pure and large praise the Lord. But if it's a choice between large and pure the Lord says pure that's what I want. What about your position? Is that your position too? The vast majority of pastors and preachers do not preach the whole truth because they're afraid some people will leave their congregations.

Your congregation will become a better congregation when those people leave. Don't you pull the weeds out of your garden to keep your garden fresh and proper? Well that's what needs to be done in a church too. So here's the standard.

God hates divorce. He said that in Malachi. I hate divorce.

Even in the Old Testament he hated it. And Jesus makes it very clear that anyone who divorces is committing adultery. Verse 32.

So there are two adultery spoken of here. One is to lust after a woman. He said that is equal to committing adultery.

Verse 28. The other is divorce. That's also equal to adultery.

So here's adultery number one and adultery number two. Now I've heard many people ask me this question. What is the stand of your church on divorce? A lot of people send me emails on that.

But I've never till today had anybody asked me this question. What's your stand in your church on lusting after women? Why is that? Why is there so much emphasis on adultery number two and ignoring adultery number one? There are churches that take a very strong stand against divorce. Praise the Lord for that.

They even put people out. What about taking an equally strong stand on adultery number one which is lusting after women? We can be very hard on divorced people but not hard on people who are lusting with their eyes. Is there a difference? Both are adultery in God's eyes and we need to take them both seriously.

Some of you may say well I'm not divorcing my wife. I'm pretty holy person. You lust with your eyes.

That's equal to adultery too. Why is it that so many Christians who would never dream of divorcing their wife lust with their eyes even although they're married? Because they have not seen that both are equally adultery. They have not taken God's word exactly as it is.

Let me show you a word that you must always remember when you read scripture. It's in Isaiah and chapter 66. I believe this has reference to building the church.

My own burden in the last 35 years has been to make disciples. To fulfill that part of the great commission which has been neglected. Matthew 28 verse 18 to 20.

All authority is given to the Lord Jesus in heaven and earth and that authority can be communicated to me to make disciples. To baptize them in the name of the triune God and to teach them to do every single thing that Jesus commanded. Not to leave anything out.

When Jesus made a table he wouldn't leave one bit out of that table. That table would be perfect as a carpenter and that's the type of church he's building. That's the type of Christian he's making.

Isaiah 66 the Lord says by the way the latter half of Isaiah beginning at chapter 40 is got some fantastic promises for Christians. Let me mention this in passing that there are two parts in Isaiah. The first 39 chapters somewhat similar to the first 39 books of the Old Testament and the next 27 chapters corresponding to the 27 books in the New Testament.

The last 27 chapters of Isaiah are essentially new covenant prophecies. A lot of them referring to Christ and a lot of them referring to us to follow in Jesus' footsteps. There were so there are some fantastic promises in Isaiah chapters 40 to 66 would essentially relate to us in the new covenant.

Isaiah 66 is one of them verses 1 and 2. Let's look at this as a picture of building the church of Jesus Christ against which the gates of hell will never prevail. The true church. Heaven is my throne the Lord says Isaiah 66 verse 1 and the earth is my footstool.

Where is the house that you're going to build for me? Where is the church that you human beings you people who call themselves born-again Christians where is this church that you're going to build for me? The Lord says when heaven is my throne even the earth is only the place where I keep my feet. My hand has made all these things but the Lord says I will look at this person. In other words this is the person who can build my church.

That means this is the person I will look upon with favor to build my church against which the gates of hell will not prevail. A church against which Satan which Satan cannot infiltrate with anger and lust and adultery and lying and stealing all these wretched things that are found in the race of Adam. I will look at the one who is humble and contrite of spirit.

Number one quality humility and contrition or brokenness of spirit. God looks at people who have a low opinion of themselves not low self-esteem. Jesus did not have low self-esteem.

He was the son of God. He told his disciples I am your Lord and master you call me that and so I am. He had no doubt who he was.

He knew he was the son of God. He didn't have any low self-esteem but he had such tremendous humility that he considered others as people whom he should serve. He would wash their feet.

Do you know that he even washed the feet of Judas Iscariot? That is humility. Washing the feet of one who's going to betray you in a few hours. He had no low self-esteem but he took a low position in terms of himself.

He had low thoughts about himself in that relation to others like it says in Philippians 2:3. Consider others as more important than yourself. That's the number one quality. Brokenness of spirit.

A brokenness in sorrow because we're not like Christ. God looks at that type of person. And the second person the second quality in the person God looks at Isaiah 66:2 is one who trembles at my word.

This is so important and that was the point I was referring to in relation to what we were studying in Matthew chapter 5. When you read words like this do you tremble at God's word? Do you tremble at the word which says in Matthew 5 that if you get angry and you speak out in that anger to a person you're guilty enough to go to hell? Do you tremble at a word which says that if you don't take a radical attitude to cut off bodily members that cause you to lust with your eyes after and commit sexual sin your eyes or your hands you must take a radical attitude towards that otherwise you'll go to hell? Do you tremble at that word? I find to tell you honestly I find very few Christians who tremble at that word even those who have heard me preach on this for years. I'm sorry to say that even in some of the churches I have responsibility for a people who heard me preach against this for 25 years and they still do not tremble at this word. That is the condition of a lot of Christians.

They've got that knowledge but they take it lightly. How can you take sin lightly when you see the price that Christ paid on the cross to deliver us from sin? There's a hymn which I often sing to myself which says ever when tempted make me see. Lord help me to see my God alone outstretched and bruised and bleeding on the earth he made and make me feel it was my sin as though no other sins were there that was to him who bears the world a load that he could scarcely bear.

I sing that many a time to myself to show me how my Lord who could bear the load of this universe on his shoulder couldn't bear the load of my sin. It crushed him on Calvary and that's what's helped me to have a very a tremendous hatred for sin to make me tremble at God's word and this is what makes me have a burden to educate Christians to see that to help them to know that sin lusting with your eyes is worse than getting AIDS is worse than getting cancer. I wish you would understand that.

The day you understand that you would take it radically. You wouldn't play the fool with syringes that people who have AIDS have been injecting themselves with and or drugs. You wouldn't ever use that syringe to inject yourself with anything.

You would know that that could hurt you. You could get AIDS just from a needle. Why are you so careful about that and not careful about something far worse than AIDS? I'll tell you why.

Because you don't believe that sin is worse than AIDS and cancer. You don't tremble at God's word. I have learned to believe that and that's why I'm extremely careful with these sins.

Anger to me adult lusting after women is equal to divorcing my wife. Both are called adultery. I find very few Christians who take it that seriously.

Very few preachers who preach it that seriously and so I believe that in the Sermon on the Mount the fundamental requirement that we need to have as we read this is what Jesus said unless your righteousness surpasses Matthew 5 20 the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. I want to say to you my friends that I believe that with all my heart that the Lord is expecting from Christians a quality of righteousness which is way above way above the ten commandments in every one of those commandments way above idolatry is not bowing down before idols of wood and stone it's giving God something other than God a place in my heart that's idolatry sabbath is not just not doing work on the sabbath day it's an inner life of rest adultery is not just physical adultery but lusting with the eyes murder is not just murder it's anger and like that with all the commandments as we look at later on but let's learn to tremble at God's word so that God can use us to build his church what we saw in Isaiah 66 1 and 2 is saying this is the type of person whom I will look and bless and use to build my house may God help you and me let's pray heavenly father help us to be men and women after your own heart whom you can use in a day of compromise and worldliness and backsliding and declension in Babylonian Christendom help us to be like Daniel those who will not defile ourselves and keep ourselves true for you we humbly ask in Jesus name amen

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