

Pluck Your Eye Out (Mat 5_27-30)

by Phil Beach Jr.

The sermon emphasizes the need to address the root of sin in the heart rather than merely its outward manifestations.

Duration: 33:30

Scripture: Matthew 5:27

Topics: "Mortification", "Heart Transformation", "Overcoming Sin"

Description

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the importance of understanding Jesus' teachings in Matthew 5:27-30, particularly regarding lust and sin. He clarifies that Jesus' directive to 'pluck out your eye' is not to be taken literally but rather as a metaphor for addressing the root of sin in our hearts. The sermon highlights the need for believers to acknowledge their sins, admit personal guilt, and seek God's deliverance through prayer and the Word. Beach encourages the congregation to focus on the heart's condition rather than merely external actions, reinforcing that true change comes from a transformed heart. He concludes with practical steps for overcoming sin through reliance on God's love and grace.

Transcript

We're very thankful to God. You can turn your Bibles tonight to Matthew chapter 5. Matthew chapter 5. And like I said, we're just going to briefly minister on a particular subject that has been, well, a lot of people have confused ideas regarding this subject. Some people who, whether they were Christians or not, I don't know, but some have erroneously interpreted these passages that we are about to read literally and therefore have brought upon themselves great reproach and pain, and also have brought a great reproach upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ because they interpreted these passages that I am about to read literally.

Something that we learn about the Bible, we do believe the Bible is literal. We believe that the Bible is verbally inspired and we believe that it should be taken literally. However, when the context suggests that the language is figurative or is a sign, such as the book of Revelation, there's many symbols and signs in the book of Revelation.

John saw a woman clothed with the sun and under her feet was the moon. Well, we don't believe that John saw a literal woman. We don't believe that the Lord intended that to mean a literal woman.

Therefore, that is symbolic language. However, we do not believe that the death of Jesus Christ was symbolic. We believe that it literally happened.

We do not believe that Jesus shed his blood symbolically. We believe that he literally shed his blood. We don't spiritualize anything unless the context of the passage suggests the need to spiritualize something.

Other than that, we take everything literally at face value. We do not believe that the story about Noah and the ark is a fable. We believe it literally happened.

We believe Noah literally built an ark and that God literally sent a flood. We believe God literally opened up the Red Sea. And this is very important because we're living in a day when men and women are trying to water down the Word of God and make it something that it is not.

And we do not want to be guilty of that in the least bit. Matthew 5, verses 27-30. Matthew 25, verses 27-30.

We're going to be discussing this particular portion of Scripture text. And we're going to draw an illustration in order to help us understand this particular portion of Scripture. And like I said, it's going to be brief, but what it will do is it will simply reinforce what we have been taught, what we have been teaching the past several months.

And this is what we like to do. Reinforce what we have heard so that it can become very, very fixed in our mind and in our heart. Jesus in Matthew 5, verse 27, is speaking.

He's speaking now. And this is what is called the Sermon on the Mount. And of course, this entire message from Matthew 5 through the last verse in Matthew 7, we do not believe that this applies to a future kingdom that Christ is going to be setting up.

Although we do believe that Christ will set up a future kingdom wherein dwells righteousness. Peter spoke of it in his epistle. But we believe that Matthew 5 through Matthew 7, the last verse, whatever it may be, are teachings that reflect the spiritual dynamics of the kingdom of God that is now here on the earth.

That is the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. The kingdom of God is not here in observation. It is not here with a central location in a particular city.

But the kingdom of God during the church age is in fact being established within the church. The reign of God is in the church today. And that's where Christ wants to set up His kingdom so that the world can see a great light and see that Jesus is truly alive.

So we believe that Matthew 5-7 are the spiritual dynamic principles of the kingdom of God that are available to the church at this present time. There's marvelous, marvelous truth in Matthew 5-7. Let's begin in verse 27 of the fifth chapter.

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old, Thou shalt not commit adultery. Well, that's one of the commandments, is it not? One of the commandments that Moses received while he was on Mount Sinai was, Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife.

And this is a very, very clear, very firm commandment from the Lord. But I say unto you, now Jesus is doing something here. The Sermon on the Mount is a very profound message, and we see in verse 28 why it is profound.

Jesus takes the various different sins that the law spoke of, particularly the Ten Commandments, and rather than dealing with the actual manifestation of that sin, He takes a different route and goes to the heart problem. He goes to the root of the problem. So basically Jesus is saying in verse 27, listen, Ye have heard of old that it was written you shouldn't commit adultery.

Now Jesus was not condoning adultery by saying it in this way. He was just saying, You heard it was written you shouldn't commit adultery. But let me tell you something.

Verse 28, But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. Now verse 29 and verse 30. Reinforce the profound truth of verse 28.

And if thy right eye offend thee, 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 should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee.

For it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. What we have here in Matthew 5, verses 29 and 30, is an illustration that Jesus used showing the seriousness of sin, but also the solution to sin. Now what I'm going to do here is I'm going to draw another person.

We had some kids this morning that said to their mother, oh, look, he's drawing a snowman. I guess because we had the head and then we made a real round body, I guess. I'm not sure.

But anyway, here we have... We're just going to make a big person here. Alright? And we'll give him feet and toes. And let's just give him two eyes, a nose.

And well, let's make him... We'll make him pretty happy. Look, he's got some tears. We'll give him some tears because after we're done with him, he's going to be crying.

Okay, now Jesus... First of all, Jesus deals with the problem of looking at a woman to lust after her. Now, there is a distinct difference between looking at a woman and looking at a woman to lust after her. It is perfectly possible as a Christian to look at a woman without the intent to lust after her.

Paul admonishes Timothy in his epistles that the younger men are to look at the younger women with all purity as sisters in the Lord. Now, there is a possibility. It is possible as a Christian man to learn how.

And I say you've got to learn how. You've got to be honest with yourself. You've got to be willing to admit and acknowledge that you have a problem with lust, a lust for women or women.

It might be a lust for men. You've got to be honest and you've got to understand the heart problem of the situation and find the provision in Christ. Don't deny it.

Don't try and wrestle with it yourself. Take it to God and be honest. And there is a place that Christian men can come to where they don't have to fear this grievous sin of looking after women to lust after them.

One of these weeks, one of these months, I'm not too sure when, we're going to spend several messages, possibly two or three, on the problem of sexual temptation within the church. We're going to define it. We're going to illustrate what it is.

We're going to illustrate how it begins to operate within a person. And we're going to show the biblical solution to this grievous sin that plagues many, many people. But we're not going to do that tonight.

Jesus deals with the problem of lusting after women. And then He starts talking about, in verse 29, "...if thy right eye offend thee." So what we're going to do is I drew this illustration out earlier. What we're going to do is we're going to circle the right eye.

Alright? And we're going to make a line here and put sin. Okay? Because that's what Jesus said. If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee.

Then He goes on, "...it is more profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee." Okay? Well, here's His right hand, so we'll circle His right hand. We'll draw a line.

And we'll put sin. And then Jesus reiterates what He says in verse 29, "...if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee. For it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." Okay.

Let's discuss this for a moment. Let's discuss this for a moment. And let's try and understand what Jesus was saying.

Now let's be realistic. I'm going to ask a few questions, alright? Let's call this man Sorry Sam. Alright? That's his name.

Sorry Sam. Okay? Nobody here by the name of Sam, so I'm safe. You've got to learn all your instruments when you start to teach and not forget any.

Now we have this. Okay. Now, Sorry Sam.

Now let's say that Sorry Sam is struggling. Oh, we have one more thing, because Jesus didn't mention this, but I'm going to mention it, and you'll understand why. Let's just add another area of problem.

It's not in the Bible. We're not adding to the Word of God. But let's just add another statement.

If thy tongue offend thee. How do you like that joke? If thy tongue offend thee. Alright? Let's hear it.

Now how many have been snared with your tongue, or by your tongue? So that relates to us, alright? I thought I'd add that, because that sort of hits all of us right where we live, doesn't it? So we've got Sorry Sam here, who is just a miserable fella. Sorry Sam, his right eye, that's not his right eye, it's left eye. Is that what everyone was laughing about? Okay, Sorry Sam's eye is giving him some sin problem, alright? Now listen, we're going to think this out.

Listen carefully. Sorry Sam's eye is causing him to be offended, or it's bringing offense. Sorry's hand is bringing him offense.

Somehow his hand is expressing sin. His eye is expressing sin in some way. And let's include Sorry Sam's tongue.

Sorry Sam has a problem. He's a gossip. When he's around the wrong people, and then other times when he loses his temper, he says things he shouldn't say.

Okay, so Sorry Sam is in a sad situation. That was unplanned. Sorry Sam is in a sad situation and surely frustrated.

Okay, now let's think this out. Let's assume that Jesus meant this literally. Okay? Do you think that if Sorry Sam plucked his eye out, cut off his hand, and pulled out his tongue, that... I didn't realize this was going to be intense for the children.

This is just a story, children. Okay, this is just a story. If Sorry Sam pulled his eye out, cut off his hand, and plucked off his tongue, do you think that that would be eradicating the sin? In other words, if Sorry Sam had no eyes, do you think that meant he would no longer lust? Of course not.

If Sorry Sam had no more tongue, do you think he would no longer have within his heart those evil things that the tongue just simply expresses? No. And do you think if he cut off his hands, do you think that he would be free from that evil that the hands were expressing? Absolutely not. So, consequently, what we see Jesus doing here is Jesus is using an illustration in order to teach a spiritual truth.

So, in order to properly understand what Jesus has done, we have to do something. We have to draw a heart on Sorry Sam. And what we have to do is we have to look at the eye problem.

Now, Sorry Sam is lusting. Sorry Sam is getting involved with sin here, some kind of trouble. And here with his tongue, he's getting himself in trouble.

What we have to do is we have to recognize that when our eye causes us to sin, we have to discover the root problem, and that's the heart. When our hand causes us to sin, we have to trace it back to the heart. When our tongue causes us to sin, we have to trace it back to the heart.

And in doing that, we can fulfill and obey what Jesus says to do without literally cutting off our eye or our hand. You see? We can obey Jesus without literally cutting it off. But what we can do is we can indeed pluck out and cut off the root problem that is manifesting itself through the bodily members.

And that's what the Word of God wants us to understand tonight. I would like to invite you, if I could, to turn your Bibles. We've read this before many times.

Turn your Bibles to Hebrews 4, verse 12. What we're going to do is show you that when we are properly relating to God's Word and under the proper influence of the Holy Spirit, we can discover, look at this now, we can discover an axe. We can discover a sword, which in the hands of God is able to come and apply it to our heart and cut off that sin that is expressing itself through our eye or through our tongue and through our hands.

So the way to deal with this sin is not to literally take the eye out, but to literally understand where the source of the problem is in the heart. Take the Word of God, the sword of the Spirit, the life of Christ, and find by the grace of God the Word of God and let it touch the heart, let it affect the heart, and cut off the sin. Hebrews 4, verse 12.

We've read it many times. For the Word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight, but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

There you go, beloved. What about Luke 3, verse 9? John the Baptist spoke about the ministry of Jesus. Luke 3.9. Let's begin in verse 4. And it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord.

Make His paths straight. Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill shall be brought low. And the crooked shall be made straight and the rough ways shall be made smooth and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

Then said He to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of Him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance. And begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father. For I say to you that he is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

Here we go, verse 9. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees. Every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is henned down and cast into the fire. Beloved, though this Scripture oftentimes is interpreted as meaning those who reject Christ and the unbelievers, they will be cut down and cast into eternal fire.

And that is true. Yet there is an application to you and I. And that is every time we discover that there is an area in our life that is yet expressing the desires of sin, we need to bring that area to God's Word. We need to bring it to God's Spirit.

We need to humble ourselves and let the axe of God's Word cut it off so that in Christ we can find victory over that particular sin. And this in fact is what Jesus meant when He said that we are to pluck out, pluck out, and pluck out. The way to pluck out, the way to cut off the problem is get to the heart matter through prayer and through the Word of God and let the grace of God and the power of God's Spirit change your heart.

Let it change your heart. And you will discover then that God is able to deliver you. Now, in closing, I would like to just list three steps that we need to remember.

In closing, three steps that we need to remember as we discover the Lord's dealing in our life and searching in our life, as we discover areas of sin, areas of selfishness, areas where self is expressing itself. Here's what we need to remember when these things occur. First of all, we need to acknowledge.

We need to acknowledge sin. Do not be trapped in denial. Do not repress.

Do not deny. Do not pretend that it's not there. You have to come before God and you have to acknowledge that it is sin.

You have to say it is sin. Don't be caught into interpreting things the way the world does. Well, this is just poor behavior.

No, it's sin. You see? Or, well, this is just a slight difficulty that I have with my tongue. No, it's sin.

Call it sin. There's a liberating power that occurs when a believer begins to acknowledge sin and not play games. It liberates you.

It's good to be able to come to God and say, oh, Lord, this is sin. Your Word says this is sin. Don't be like Adam and cover it.

Just say, this is sin. What's the next step? Once you acknowledge that something is sin, then you have to admit your personal guilt of that sin. Many times, and I've talked to people, many times a person will say, oh, hey, it's wrong to lust after a woman.

Lust is sin. Amen, I agree. See, they've done the first step.

They acknowledge sin. But they've never ever come before God with an honest heart and admitted before Him that they themselves are guilty of that sin. So therefore, a person can acknowledge sin, but never go to the next step.

And that is admit your guilt before God. Thirdly, after you admit your guilt of that sin, you call upon the Lord for deliverance. You call upon the Lord for deliverance.

And this includes two steps, two stages. Once you acknowledge the sin, once you admit and recognize and confess before God that you are personally guilty of that sin, then you call upon the Lord for deliverance. And that includes two things.

Number one, you call upon the Lord for deliverance in order that you may be liberated from desiring that sin. Liberated from desiring that sin. God wants to teach us to hate sin.

He wants to teach us to abhor sin. He wants to teach us to look at sin and have it affect us in a repulsive manner. You know, I don't mean to be vulgar, but how many enjoy going up and looking at the vomit of a dog that has just occurred? I mean, that's gross, isn't it? But you know, we should look and see sin in the same vulgarity.

We should see sin as vulgar and as gross and as disgusting and as nauseating as we would looking at the vomit of a dog or the entrails of some animal. Now see, what to God that He could put such a hatred in our heart for sin. Now see, apart from God, this could never happen because we in our self cannot hate sin.

Now Paul did suggest that there is a possibility within the human heart not to want to be a sinner, but the fact is, the desire not to want to sin is not stronger than sin itself. And that's why Jesus becomes our victory. So the first thing, now remember, here's what a lot of people do.

They struggle with sin. They go through these stages. They acknowledge sin.

They identify the problem as sin. Then they admit their guilt of that sin. Then they call upon the Lord, but they stop there.

They don't understand the process. Unless God begins to show us our need to pray and be liberated from desiring that sin, you see, we can't be free from the desires of sin in us, but we can be free from wanting those desires to express themselves through us. We can't change what we are by nature, but we don't have to yield to what we are by nature.

Now what's the only way that you can learn to hate sin and love God? The only way is that you pray and ask and desire that God pour into your heart the love of God that comes by the Holy Spirit. It is God's love in you that teaches you to hate sin. It is God's love in you that teaches you to say, I want righteousness and holiness and purity.

I want nothing that has to do with sin. So the key to overcoming any sin is an increase and an abundance of God's love filling your heart. Once you pray and ask God to deliver you from the desire of sin, then

here's the next step.

Then you learn to resist sin, Satan, and the flesh, and submit to Christ. Guess why people don't resist sin? They don't want to. It's very simple.

They don't want to. They acknowledge the sin. They admit they're guilty of it.

They call upon the Lord, and then they just stop. And then that's when we get under the idea that it just happens through osmosis, like just someday, it's just going to be different. See? We don't want to accept the fact that the deliverance that is Holy Christ's has to involve an act of our will as a result of the love of God being shed abroad in our heart.

God's love comes. I begin to say, I don't want this sin. It's not brainwashing.

It's really happening. I, me, Phil, Joanne, Norman, I am learning because of grace. I don't want sin.

I can actually say that. It doesn't mean that I am holy apart from Christ, but it means I am learning because of His influence in my life. I can say, I don't want this sin.

I don't desire it anymore. I want holiness more than sin. Then the next thing that happens is we begin to resist that sin.

You see, when the desires of sin start to torment us in our soul, we say no to sin, and we flee to Christ, and we cry out and say, Lord, become my salvation in this moment of crisis. I don't want this sin. I don't want it to express itself through my eye, through my tongue, or through my hand.

I want your provision in Christ. Once God grows us up to the point where we can take the responsibility of acknowledging sin, admitting we're guilty, calling upon the Lord, and then liberating our will from the desire to sin through waiting on God and allowing Him to pour out His love in our life, and then saying no to sin and run to Jesus, He'll do everything. He'll do it all.

See? These things in themselves do not bring victory. But you don't get victory unless you learn to do these things. These things bring you into Christ where then He becomes your victory over all sin and all the devil.

Well, I said we were going to be short tonight, and I went a little longer than I said. Forgive me. But nevertheless, these are the steps.

Ten minutes longer, Norman said. These are the steps. Learn them well.

We read Matthew 5. This particular portion of Scripture that we dealt with. And let the Lord show you that as you cooperate with Him and learn Your lesson, He will always be your Deliverer. He will always be your source of power and strength.

And you'll find victory every single time. The struggle is learning this right here, isn't it? We can admit the sin. We can admit our guilt.

And we can call on the Lord. But this is where we come in, where we have to grow. And this is maturity right here.

And the Lord's very patient to work with us. Any questions?

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