

What are We Drawn To

by Walter Brubacker

This sermon delves into the complexities of obedience, idolatry, and the heart's condition, emphasizing the need for both inward transformation and outward actions. It explores the importance of cutting off sinful influences and the distinction between sinful actions and a sinful heart. The discussion touches on the significance of submitting to God despite the inclinations of a sinful heart, highlighting the value of obedience and devotion to Jesus.

Scripture: Matthew 5:29, Colossians 2:20, Deuteronomy 30:6, Matthew 15:19, 1 Corinthians 7:19, Matthew 16:24, Galatians 5:24, Philippians 2:12, 1 Peter 2:24, Revelation 2:4

Topics: "Obedience", "Heart Transformation"

Description

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Transcript

I greet you all, brothers and sisters, children, friends, in the name of Jesus. It's a blessing to be here, a blessing to have fellowship, a blessing that we can meet in peace. We're not being hunted.

These are all great blessings. And I appreciate the many thoughts were shared and it's encouraging and helpful. Different ideas of the choices we have and in the.

Yeah, just many, many thoughts that were. We're good. Before we continue, we stand to pray.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for this day that you have given us and the blessings. All that we have is from you. We thank you for being a God that is trustworthy and holy and almighty.

Long suffering, all these things. Father, we thank you. And you have allowed us to live in this time and the time we're in, the days we're in.

We pray for discernment and wisdom to guide ourselves and others through this time. We want to be faithful to you. We want to be worthy to you.

We want to be your servants. And we thank you for Jesus. You sent him and he was willing to lay down his life for us.

We want to lay down our life for you and for one another. Be with us today and help us to have wisdom, words, and all these things that are worthwhile for you. We pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen. It was on my heart to share about all the different choices that we can make.

I was thinking how and what we're drawn to. And then in reading Deuteronomy, I'm not sure how I came across this, but it ends up being a little lengthy maybe. I'm not sure, but maybe not that long, but I feel maybe it's necessary.

This is not a new thing that we have to make choices. This has been around ever since Adam and Eve. God said, don't eat of this tree.

The serpent, he came and said to Eve, as God said, putting doubt in her mind. You can't eat of this tree? Yeah, we can't eat of that tree. We can't even touch it.

I don't know what this means, but it seems like maybe Adam added that. I kind of think that. Don't even touch it.

Stay away from it. God had only told Adam not to eat of it. I don't know what that means for sure.

I wonder sometimes when we add things, we try to emphasize things, whether that actually depletes the truth somehow. That's a thought I've had already. Over emphasizing actually causes less truth to be.

Maybe sometimes we have to emphasize some things to get a point across, but something to think about. So choices have been around and we have not yet escaped from them. And what draws us? What are we drawn to? In Deuteronomy 27, I'm just going to be reading a few chapters.

Then Moses and the elders of Israel charged all the people as follows. Keep the entire commandment that I am commanding you today. This was a time when they were about to go into Canaan.

I'm not sure what all was happening at that time, but it was right around that time. Keep the entire commandment that I am commanding you today. Deuteronomy 27.

Chapter 27. On the day that you cross over Jordan into the land that the Lord your God is giving you, you shall set up large stones and cover them with plaster. You shall write on them all the words of this law when you have crossed over.

I had known they had built a pillar, but I had not known they had written all the law from that pillar. When you have crossed over to enter the land that the Lord your God is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey, as the Lord God of your ancestors promised you. So, when you have crossed over the Jordan, you shall set up these stones about which I am commanding you today on Mount Ebel, and you shall cover them with plaster, and you shall build an altar there to the Lord your God with altars of stone on which you have not used an iron tool.

One place I remember them saying they picked up round stones, I don't know if they built it from that, but they were not supposed to shape them. Just pick them up, build the altar. Don't change it.

Unhewn stones. Then offer your burnt offering on it to the Lord your God. And I felt like I had seen a real clear picture of our lives in these next chapters.

I'll try and bring that out as I go on. But even here, don't alter God's word. Do as I say.

Make sacrifices of well-being and eat them there. Rejoicing before the Lord your God, you shall write on the stones all the words of this law very clearly. Then Moses and the Levitical priests spoke to all Israel, saying, Keep silent, and hear, O Israel.

This very day you have become the people of the Lord your God. Therefore, obey the Lord your God, observing His commandments and His statutes that I am commanding you today. Verse 11.

The same day Moses charged the people as follows. When you have crossed over Jordan, there shall stand on Mount Gerizim for the blessing of the people Simon, Judah, Levi, Issachar, Joseph, Benjamin. And these shall stand on Mount Ebel for the curse.

And these shall stand on Mount Ebel for the curse. Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali. Then the Levites shall declare in a loud voice to all the Israelites.

And these things, I think, just apply to us today. Even though they were literally making idols, we can make idols in our own hearts and hide them, just like it says here. Verse 12.

Cursed be anyone who makes an idol, or casts an image, anything abhorrent to the Lord, and works on it as an artisan, and sets it up in secret. Cursed be a person that does this. All the people shall respond saying, Amen.

Cursed be anyone who dishonors father and mother. All the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be anyone who moves a neighbor's boundary marker.

All the people shall say, Amen. Oh, and the very next verse is something I thought of. We try to cheat people.

Move a boundary marker? Cursed be anyone who misleads a blind person on the road. All the people shall say, Amen. These things are bad things to do.

Like a blind person's walking along, and you set something in their path, and they trip over it. You mislead them. You take them where they don't want to go.

Cursed is anybody who does these things. Cursed be anyone who deprives the alien, which that would be maybe like a visitor or a stranger, and the orphan, and the widow of justice. Cursed be a man that deprives the alien, their orphans, and the widow of justice.

All the people shall say, Amen. When I read it this morning, I thought it was saying the people were saying Amen, but I'm not sure if this happened then. I'm not quite sure, but it's saying that they shall say.

Cursed be anyone who lies with his father's wife because he has violated his father's rights. All the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be anyone who lies with any animal.

All the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be anyone who lies with his sister, whether the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother. All the people shall say, Amen.

Cursed be anyone who lies with his mother-in-law. All the people shall say, Amen. This thing kind of happened in the New Testament, and Paul said, God put such a person out for the destruction of his flesh.

Or he was supposed to be taken care of. God is saying, he's cursed. Cursed be anyone who strikes down a neighbor in secret.

We might not do it with a weapon, but what about with our mouth, our tongue? Do we strike people? In secret? Places? We hide it from people? Cursed be anyone who takes a bribe to shed innocent blood. All the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be anyone who does not uphold the words of this law without serving them.

All the people shall say, Amen. This is part of what's being written on this plaster. I'm assuming when they plastered it was like flat.

A flat square pillar perhaps. And on this flat plaster they were to write all this on there. If you will only obey, this is chapter 28.

If you will only obey the Lord your God, by diligently observing all his commandments that I am commanding you today, the Lord your God will set you high upon the nations of the earth, and all these blessings will come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the Lord your God. Here's these words that I kind of thought. Like, shall come upon you, all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you.

Maybe I mentioned it lately, I'm not sure. But I've been thinking about this. When you do what Jesus tells us, there's the things that happen.

There's things that grow. There's things that are real. By doing what Jesus told us, it will overtake you.

It will come upon you. If we do what Jesus taught us. This was the same for them.

But they were a nation. They were not the people, they were the people of God. They were not this kingdom of Jesus.

There's a kingdom on this earth. The kingdom of Israel. Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the field.

Blessed shall be the fruit of your womb, and the fruit of your ground, and the fruit of your livestock, both the increase of your cattle and the issue of your flocks. Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. Supposedly years ago they had this wooden trough where they kneaded the bread.

And enough yeast and stuff stayed on that bread somehow that they could always keep going with that particular pan they had, a wooden pan. I'm not sure if this is what it is, but I've read that somewhere. Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.

The Lord will cause your enemies to rise against you to be defeated before you. They shall come against you in one way and flee before you seven ways. The Lord will command the blessing upon you in your barns and all that you undertake.

He will bless you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. The Lord will establish you as His holy people, as He has sworn to you. If you keep the commandments of the Lord your God and walk in His ways, all the people of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the Lord.

They shall be afraid of you. The Lord will make you abound in prosperity and the fruit of your womb, and the fruit of your livestock, and in the fruit of your ground in the land that the Lord swore to your ancestors to give you. He swore that to Abraham, but Abraham never saw it, I guess.

And then it went all through the time in Egypt, and then they got out of Egypt, and now they were just about to go into Canaan. So that, I think, is why he's making this point. The Lord will open for you His rich storehouse, and the heavens to give the reign of your land in its season, and to bless all your undertakings.

You will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow. The Lord will make you the head and not the tail. You shall be only at top and not at the bottom.

If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I am commanding you today, be diligently observant of them. He's really not making reference back to the Ten Commandments at this point, I don't think. It may be included, but he's not making reference to it.

It almost seems like he's making an effort to say what I'm giving you today. And there's many blessings and curses here. Okay, but diligently observing them, and if you do not turn aside from any of the words that I am commanding you today, either to the right or the left, following other gods to serve them.

So we keep our zeal, our goal, our vision for Christ. We don't look to the left, we don't look to the right. We don't start making idols.

We don't start going after whatever thing we want. And we keep course. We stay on track.

And then these blessings will be ours. They will... I just like these words. And all these blessings will come upon you and overtake you.

Do we want to be overtaken by God? Or would we rather not have Him? This is some of the things I intend to bring out some thoughts on that. I'm going to stop reading there. There is a whole list of curses.

Some are very severe. Some are abhorring. Accepting one, it says, You shall have your sons and daughters, but they will not remain yours, for they will go into captivity.

I think there is something we can take from that. If we are disobedient to God, we are disobedient to Jesus, we will have sons and daughters, but they will not remain ours. They will be in captivity.

I guess it just seems like a warning to me. To be this, have my zeal on Christ and not be averted. Not look to the left.

Not start making these idols. Not having these secret things. And just be on track.

And it's quite lengthy. So I'm not going to read the rest of that chapter. In chapter 29.

Chapter 29. These are the words of the covenant that the Lord commanded Moses to make with the Israelites in the land of Moab, in addition to the covenant that he had made with them at Herod. Moses summoned all Israel and said to them, You have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land.

The great trials that your eyes saw and signs, the signs and those great wonders, but to this day the Lord has not given you a mind to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear. I have led you 40 years in the wilderness. The clothes on your back have not worn out and the sandals on your feet have not worn out.

You have not eaten bread and you have not drunk wine or strong drink, so that you may know that I am the Lord your God. When you come to this place, King Solomon of Hespon, the King Oak of Bashan has come out against you for battle, but we defeated them. We took their land and gave it as inheritance to the Reubenites and the Gittites.

And the half-tribe of Manasseh, a little history on that, these tribes wanted that land and God allowed them or Moses allowed them. The families and everybody stayed there. They said they have to go along and war against the people in Canaan.

So all the men left, all the valiant men left and went to the land of Canaan and fought the Canaanites. And then they came back later. But all those people stayed in that land, if I'm not mixed up on that.

Therefore, diligently observe the words of this covenant in order that you may succeed in everything you do. Now, are we wanting to succeed in being precedent or something? Or do we want to succeed in being what Jesus taught us to be? In that day, it meant they would have what's been described, I guess. And maybe I should just read on and it will make itself clear.

I'll just read on. You stand assembled today, all of you, because, before the Lord your God, the leaders of your tribes, your elders and your officials, all the men of Israel, your children, your women, and the aliens who are in your camp, both those who cut your wood and those who drew your water, to enter into the covenant of the Lord your God, sworn by an oath which the Lord your God is making with you today, in order that he may establish you today as his people, that he may be your God, as he promised you and as he swore to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. I am making this covenant, sworn by an oath, not only with you who stand here, but with our Lord today, before the Lord our God, but also with those who are not here with us today, that you know how to live in the land of, that you know how to live in the land of Egypt, and how we came through the midst of the nations, through which you passed.

You have seen their detestable things. Okay, here's something I want to bring out especially. You have seen their detestable things, the filthy idols of wood, stone, and silver, and gold, that were among them.

It may be that there is among you a man or woman, or a family or a tribe, whose heart is turning away from the Lord, our God, to serve the gods of this nation. It may be that there is among you a root sprouting poisonous and bitter growth. So, I think this is a warning of not turning back.

You have seen these things. People buying down to this post here. No difference.

This thing brought me out of Egypt. This is detestable before God. It makes him angry.

They, of course, use silver, rubies, gold. And now, there may be somebody turning away, and seeking after some frivolous thing that we have here on earth. This is terrible.

It may be that there is among you a root sprouting poisonous and bitter growth. Verse 19. All who hear the words of this oath and bless themselves, thinking in their hearts, we are safe, even though we go on in our own stubborn ways.

Thus bringing disaster on moist and dry alike. The Lord will be unwilling to pardon them, for the Lord's anger and passion will smoke against them. All the curses written in this book will descend on them, as it came out from under heaven.

The Lord will single them out from all the tribes of Israel for calamity, in accordance with all the curses and the covenant written in this book of the law. This was a real thing for them back then. This was reality.

Our reality is not in this covenant of keeping the law. But Jesus came and brought us another reality, a new covenant. But this thing is going to happen to us in some way and form similar.

Let's not seek after the things of the world, but seek those things that are above. We have this choice to make. Today is our day.

Not tomorrow, not yesterday, but today. Just like they have that choice to make. And we know that with most of them, God was not pleased.

At this time, most of these people he was talking to, their fathers and mothers had all been killed out in the desert. Time after time he would kill people, kill people. But I guess, and some maybe even died from old age, I don't know.

Thousands got killed at different times. Until they were all gone from the age of 20 on down. If I have that right.

20 on up. Over. So these were all men at the maximum of 60 years old.

These 20 years would have remembered of Egypt, but they were not held accountable for the disobedience they did. This is who they were talking to. The next generation, your children will rise up after you as well as the foreigners who come from a distant country.

We'll see the devastation of that land and affliction with which the Lord has afflicted it. All its soil burnt out by sulfur and salt. Nothing planted, nothing sprouting.

Unable to support any vegetation like the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Abba and Zebulun, whom the Lord destroyed in his fierce anger. I was thinking about this when Robert talked about the mercy and the severity of God. This is the severity of God.

If we do these things, we should not expect anything other than a bad expectation. In his fierce anger, they and indeed all the nations will wonder, why has the Lord done this to this land? What caused this great display of anger? They will conclude it is because they abandoned the covenant of the Lord, the God of their ancestors, which he made with them when he brought them out of the land of Egypt. These people, whoever they are, will conclude they got destroyed because they abandoned the covenant of the Lord.

This is what happens to us. There is no difference. They turned and served other gods, worshipping them, gods whom they had not known, whom they had not allotted to them.

So the anger of the Lord is kindled against that land and bringing on its every curse written in this book. The Lord uprooted them from their land in anger, fury, and great wrath and cast them into another land as is now the case. Sometimes I'm not sure if he's talking about the Canaanites or if he's talking about the Israelites.

But we know that when Israel was supposed to take Canaan, they, when they took Canaan, I think God said something like this, that if you follow after these gods that they have, in that same way that you destroyed them, you will be destroyed again. And at any rate, it passes on that way. People that do godly, God will help and bless.

People that put away with God and don't want to do his commandments, don't want to be in his covenant, and then there's a curse. And then it says this thing, The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but reveal the things belonging to us and to our children forever to observe all the words of this law. So I think the covenant that he gave them right then, this is something that that God revealed to them and their children forever.

They could, they could grasp it. The big things in God's picture is saying belong to the Lord our God. We can speculate about so many things and search out so many things.

I think there in Syracuse, another place, maybe we're brought out that searching things out that are too great for us. Doesn't mean we shouldn't do what we can, but the secret things belong to the Lord our God. And the things revealed, but the revealed things belong to us and to our children forever to observe all the words of this law.

When all these things have happened to you, the blessings and the cursings that I have set before you, if you call them to mind among all the nations where the Lord your God has driven you and return to the Lord your God and you and your children obey him with all your heart and with all your soul just as I am commanding you today, it's almost like he's prophesying that this is going to happen. But when you return out of that land that you've been scattered into, we know that we have all that history of that coming back again. Then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you gathering you again from all the peoples among whom the Lord your God has scattered you.

Even if you are exiled from the ends of the world, from there the Lord your God will gather you and from there he will bring you back. The Lord your God will bring you into the land that your ancestors possessed and you will possess it. He will make you more prosperous and numerous than your ancestors.

Moreover the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants so that you will love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul in order that you may live. This almost seems like a New Testament teaching when he talks about God loves the circumcision of the heart and not of the flesh. I think Paul writes about that.

So this is what God wants. He wants our whole heart, our whole soul in order that you may live. This is the consequence of giving our whole heart to God.

Letting nothing get in the way of life and truth. The Lord your God will put all these curses on your enemies and all the adversaries who took advantage of you. Then you shall again obey the Lord observing all the commandments that I have commanded you today and the Lord your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all your undertakings in the fruit of your body in the fruit of your livestock and the fruit of your soil.

And it goes through in verse 10 when you obey the Lord your God by observing his commandments and decrees that are written in this book of the law because you turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. By doing these commandments that God was giving them that day these blessings

will come upon them and they would they would just be a part of them. It would be something that like I'm not sure how to liken it to in the natural but we plant a seed we don't we cannot make that seed grow of ourselves.

We can if I gave you a piece of dirt and said can I make a seed and plant it see if it grows make it as perfect as you can go to all the scientists of the world you take a piece of rock and you make a seed out of that. To this day to my knowledge there's no man that has made life. I half way think they never will even though they're coming closer than I ever thought they would but I don't believe yet that they have taken a piece of dirt sterilized and made any life from it.

But you take a seed and it looks like it's dead it's been frozen for ten years and you put it in the ground give it what it needs and there's life there and it will grow not because of anything we do. So when we allow God to come to us he makes things grow that we have no part of. And to try to discern all that and separate it all and put it together I'm not I don't think we should even I'm not capable of doing that.

But if we do the commandments of Jesus these fruits will be ours and eternal life in the end not eternal death. Verse 11 Surely this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you nor is it too far away. It is not in heaven that you should say who will go up to heaven for us and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it? Neither is it beyond the sea that you should say who will cross the other side of the sea for us and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it? No.

The word is very near to you it is in the very mouth and your heart for you to observe. Just give me this encouragement we don't have to go over lands and seas to find these things they're right here in our hearts in our mouth. God has spoken to us many times I'm not talking about today many times God has spoken to us See I have set before you life and prosperity and death and adversity if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God I am commanding you today by loving the Lord your God walking in His ways and observing His commandments decrees and ordinances then you shall live and become numerous and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess but if your hearts turn away and you do not hear but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them I declare to you today that you will perish and you will not live long in the land that you are crossing you will not live long in the land that you are crossing the children to enter and possess I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death blessings and cursings choose life so that you so that you and your descendants may live choose life what does it mean to choose life to keep what God has taught us obeying Him holding fast to Him for that means life to you and length of days so that you may live in the land that the Lord swore to give to your ancestors to Abraham Isaac and Jacob when Moses had finished speaking all these words to all to all Israel he said to them I am not 120 years old I no longer able to get about and the Lord said to me you shall not cross over this children the Lord your God Himself will cross over before you He will destroy these nations before you you shall you shall dispose dispose dispossess them I don't understand that word dispossess them thank you just got to get that right accent Joshua will cross over before you now Joshua wasn't much younger than Moses but he was still strong I never realized all the rest of the translators say that I can't I'm no longer able to get about I just never realized I thought Moses was strong but here it says he's old and he couldn't hardly get around but Joshua and Caleb were I'm not sure I think they were younger but they would have been up there in age 2 I think I had to figure it out one day but I can't remember it doesn't matter but Caleb he took those giants he wasn't he wasn't afraid of those those things that were up there so like 40 years before he had been over there and looked at those giants that made them look like grasshoppers and he said we can take them we can tear them up like bread devour them I think he says he wasn't afraid but 40 years later

he was still on fire to take those men and he took some strong hill countries I think that might have been stronger than other places I'm not sure about that for some reason I'm thinking there were some strong people there that he took I'll have to look at that history again so he's now saying Joshua will be well Joshua will also cast over before you as the Lord promised the Lord would do to them as he did to Zion and Oak and the kings of Amorites and to their land when he destroyed them the Lord will give them over to you and you shall deal with them in full accord with the commandment that I have given you be strong be bold have no fear and dread of them because it is the Lord your God who goes with you he will not fail you or forsake you this is such encouragement that we need today we need to be bold we need to be courageous we need to press on then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the side of all Israel be strong and be bold for you are the one who will go with his people into the land that the Lord has sworn to their ancestors to give them and you will put them and you will put them in possession of it it is the Lord who goes before you he will be with you he will not fail you nor forsake you do not fear or be dismayed so what are the things we are drawn to what draws us away if we want these blessings and not cursings we have to we have to have we have to be able to discern what God wants us to do in in that we we do not become disobedient to him but rather that we are doing the things we do like games cell phones there's games on cell phones what entices us with a cell phone the camera what are we seeking after and what draws us is it to serve God more the things that we have on the phone the different the different social things we may have on the phone some have more and less why do we why do we have these what are we what is our zeal what is drawing us is it drawing us to God is it drawing us toward the world and clothing are we wearing clothing to be noticed or to be these are choices we can make either we dress like the harlots or we dress in improper ways or we dress because we want to be pleasing to God everything we do needs to be pleasing to God if we want to not have a curse and so all the things lands houses we need to consider why we do what we do if we if we have any love of God at all I believe we want to be pure and holy before him in the outward and inward all around us that we have this testimony that God is God is with us we forsake all for him and education is another one of those things we can have education because we want some honor we want some power we want to understand things or we may want education just for honor because we love it or we can educate what we need to serve God the best I think that's the correct kind of education we need to be seeking and we can discern that out in whatever way we need to go if we need education to like for driving a car we need to be educated we need to be there's an education involved in that somebody that never drove a car you put them in the car they probably have a wreck especially if you put them out in the city somewhere where people would be driving all around blowing their horns at them the best they'd probably end up having a wreck maybe they'd be humble and careful maybe not but the point is it takes education so if you're going to drive a car you might as well drive it well you might as well take some training take some teaching and you humble yourself to that because just getting out on the road is almost too dangerous the government doesn't want that they want somebody driving with you they know and understand that if you try to drive a car without any they'll make you take your tests visual tests and see if you have any understanding of what you're supposed to do but then the real test is learning how to do that so it takes education and so all education all such things should be for we should have in mind that we want to do this for God if we do that I think anything we might would take a hold of and we figure out is this is this pleasing to God or is it not there have been many other examples I'm not sure I can think of any right now but we can prepare food in ways that that we just want good food rather than thinking is this pleasing to God there's just many things we can do and this is kind of a natural thing but as in the Old Testament they were given commandments and they kept those commandments if they didn't they would be chased out of the land God forsook them and even caused people to get them not only did he forsake them but he caused bad things to happen to them and

when God is against you you have no chance I we have no chance so we want to walk carefully in these things and we can choose what are we drawn to what makes us this is kind of like maybe a way we can tell who our master is if we're using tobacco I hope none of us are but some of us have we're drawn to it it makes us their master we become its slave I have yet to almost to find a smoker that says he wishes he could stop he doesn't like it but he continues this is very bad this can happen to us in other areas of life we can get captivated by the things these little gadgets and pictures all these things that God provides all the things the world provides for us and it distracts us some of these things are maybe not bad in themselves but we also have to be careful with all the different choices that were set before us like never before in history and I think we do well to think about these things because they will distract us to the point where they can destroy us and we don't need distractions we need to draw toward the things that pertain to godliness and the holiness and purity and kindness and gentleness and Jesus' own words are blessed are the meek for they will inherit the earth blessed are the poor and spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven is this the kind of thing we're drawn to are we drawn to something great do we want to humble ourselves or do we want to be raised up and then again blessed are those who mourn for they will be comforted so we can mourn about many things I guess but it's the sadness that happens there's people being some people get killed some people are falling away from the truth some are hurting some are we mourn and we can mourn for that and those people can be comforted perhaps and we can be comforted perhaps for they will be comforted some people have spent 20 or 30 years in prison and died in it they will be comforted if they stood fast they will be comforted why do we think we need to have everything pretty and nice and easy we need to think God has given us a brain to think he has given us a spirit of good discernment if we want it they will inherit the earth again this same I think somehow I get this idea it's the same thing pride Jesus talking against pride the devil likes to raise up in pride and we like to raise up in pride this is what I if I take somebody for a drive in their car and they act like they know what they are doing and they don't take instructions and I start wondering what's going on I think it's pride what should I do here? What should I do there? How can I learn here? What did I do wrong there? That's pride.

It's not humility. It's not this, it's not this porn spirit. It's not this mourning.

It's not being meek. But on the other hand, blessed are those who are hunger and thirst for righteousness for they will be filled. So if we seek impurity and holiness, we will be filled.

Maybe if they, God in his grace gives us what we need. He's all sufficient in that. I don't have to give any promises.

Accepting, he says we will be filled. Blessed are the merciful for they will receive mercy. Is that opposite of pride again? I think so.

We're merciful. We care about others. We long that others could prosper in whatever weakness there might be.

And we're merciful. We exercise patience with others and not become unmerciful. When we get hard on people and we just lay it on them, this is not, this is not so far from me.

This is not something I haven't battled with and battled with, have battled with. I want to be rid of that. I want to be pure of that.

I want to be merciful. I want to learn that. I want to walk in purity of that.

It's very easy as life, as we go through life, we become unmerciful. Especially to the people around us for some reason. This is why marriages break up.

This is why children leave their homes. Unmercifulness. Hardness of heart.

It's not merciful. Merciful spirit is so nice. It's beautiful.

Blessed are the peacemakers. This all kind of goes together, I think. It's just different wordings.

Being a peacemaker doesn't mean we just allow sin to go rampant and we just don't care. Oh yeah, let's get together. Let's be nice to each other.

No. Being a peacemaker does not mean that we are peaceful with sin. Being a peacemaker would be opposite of that.

We'd be against sin. But merciful? To every person that has sin, we need to be merciful. And then the chapter or verse that Robert talked about.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake. For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you in people who revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

So if we are this peaceful, helpful, merciful person, meek person, and there's people that revile us for that. Because they revile Jesus. They're going to revile us.

If we are like Jesus, they're going to revile us as well. And then we can do like Robert. Rejoice and be exceedingly great.

And I guess in his account it says to chomp. And here it just says be glad. For your reward in heaven is great.

For in the same way they persecute the prophets who were before you. I think Jesus brought out that something to the fact that the prophets in the past were persecuted like the disciples or the apostles were or people after that. Jeremiah, he's trying to teach, tell the people to repent and change, but it didn't happen.

People have been persecuted long before us. I think Abel's mentioned. He was persecuted.

He was killed because I think somebody stood for what was right. We don't know the whole picture, but that's going to happen for us. So let's rejoice and be glad.

For your reward is great in heaven and in the same way they persecute the prophets who were before you. That's all I have. May God bless us and be with us.

Feel free to share. Thank you, Brother Walter. And I thought you were going to jump.

You're getting so enthusiastic. One, the brothers, people may not know, but he knows and you know and I know. I didn't say it, but Brother Dijon spent five years in prison because he was a soldier and he would not carry a rifle.

He said, I will not shoot a person made in the image of God and they gave him five years. The Lord be magnified. I appreciate what you shared, Walter.

He kind of went all over a subject that I often puzzle about and I agree with everything you said, but sometimes I wonder, like, maybe I should just take a bunch of time to think about this subject and then share my thoughts, but like obedience and you touched about like in Deuteronomy where it talks about obedience and this is what follows. Disobedience and this is what follows. And okay, not all these thoughts that I have are thought out in very great detail right now, but like idolatry and you read about some of what it talks about idols and the people set them up in their hearts and they hide them away and yet what God never, okay, and that we do that, maybe not with a stone image, but there's stuff that we set up in our hearts and we hide them away and we, in short, we worship them, give our homage to them, our time, our everything.

Okay, in the Old Testament, God almost always, what he wants them to do is not just change their heart, but he wants them, he tells them like, destroy the idols, to cut down the groves, tear down the high places, like get rid of it, like there's something, there's something so connected between the earthly and the spiritual or the heart that in some sense it's inseparable. Like, okay, and then so here's how it goes in our day. I feel like we're a little too easily, a little too easily, we can say idolatry is like, could be like your smartphone or money or whatever and whatever we set our heart on, and so I think sometimes it's a little too easy for us to just say, oh, well then we just need to change our heart.

We don't need to, we don't need to do anything physically or earthly or carnally or like, we don't need to change anything except just change our heart. And yet, and yet, like you can't, you can't separate money from covetousness. You can't separate drugs from the abuse of it.

You can't separate idols from idolatry. And so sometimes I think along that line and I think, you know, I just think we have to be more literal about it. If a smartphone is, or social media or whatever is an idol, we just, we need to get rid of it.

We need to cut down this high place. After all, didn't Jesus say, cut out the eye if it offends thee, cut off the hand if it harms thee. And then I think about that a while and I think, well, nothing about taking that approach assures me that, that that'll take care of the problem.

Who can cut, who can cut eyes out and be sure that they won't lust again? Like in Sodom and Gomorrah, they cut, God smote those men with blindness and it didn't change their heart one little bit. They kept, they kept searching all night long for the door of these men because, because they wanted them. And yet they were blind, they couldn't see.

Or, or I, or if, if we go back to the, to what you mentioned earlier there, and the first part, Walter, about Adam and that it, that it's possible. I never thought of this and I didn't look into it or, or, or decide whether I think that's the case. But if, if it's so that Adam, Adam added the don't even touch it.

God said, don't eat of the tree. And Adam says, okay, we won't even touch it. And on one hand you could say, oh, well, that was, that was a good measure, like taking, taking an extra step away from it.

And at the same time, it didn't keep him from doing it. Right? And, and that's what we would read in Colossians when, when Paul says, like, what good is it for you to say, to make all, be subject to all these rules, like touch not, taste not, handle not. If, if it does very little, like it has an, it has an appearance of, of

afflicting yourself and an appearance of godliness, but it's of very little value to, to true, to true worship of God or, or, or to true, seems like there's a phrase it uses there in Colossians 2 that I can't quite get.

Indulgence against the flesh. Okay? It, it doesn't solve that problem. Anyway, I, those are things I puzzle about.

I sometimes, I sometimes think it one way and start leaning one way and then I think it another way and I start leaning the other way about, about what the, what the solutions are. But I, I think it's a completeness. I think it's a completeness of realizing that there's a, there's a heart and a spiritual realm and a will that, that if they're not surrendered, like no, no amount of fleshly action will keep us from sin.

And then there's, and then there's, then there's our, our, our flesh and our earthly, earthly substances that are so, so tightly bound into the fabric of our lives that, that to, to think that we can have those first ones right, and, and not the second ones, and not take measure on those second ones, we're, we're equally deceived. And anyway, with all that, I want to say it, like, like I even feel like you touched, maybe not, not just greatly expounded on it, but like, here's what it says of Joshua and Caleb. It says, they were of a different spirit.

They had a different heart. Um, they saw the same things the other ones did, but, but they had a different spirit. And, and it worked out different.

If, I think you were, I think you're right, that like Caleb, if I remember right, like Caleb was 40 years old when he was a spy. And 40 years later, he was 80 years old, and he said something to Moses like, look, I was 40 back in those days when I went up and saw that mountainous land, and I saw those strong, this is, this is me paraphrasing, but saw those, those cities, and now I'm 80, and I'm still as strong as I ever was. And, and just give me this mountain.

Um, he, he was not, he was not now old, and, and thinking, oh, I'll take, I'll take a piece of the plains, or, you know, I've, I've, I've went through this wilderness for 40 years. Let me have something a little easier. No, he, he was still, he was still, um, as confident in God, and had as much faith as he did, and he was just, because he had a, he was of a different spirit.

Um, anyway, those are some of the thoughts I've been having as you were touching those different aspects, and I, I think, I think these two things just go hand in hand so much, like, that the prompt obedience, and, uh, and, and, and the heart and will to serve him, like the two are, the two are, two are pretty inseparable, um, and for sure if, if one of them lacks, like, the other one in, in and of itself will not carry us through. Anyway, thanks for the messages of the day, and, and God help us. I know I'm talking a lot today.

Amen, Brother Duane. It's a comment on yours, and then maybe someone want to comment on mine, on, on your comment, Duane. It made me think that when Jesus said, uh, in the Sermon on the Mount, uh, thou shalt not hate, he said, no, don't be angry, thou shalt not, uh, commit adultery, no, don't lust, thou shalt not, uh, whatever it was, and you get to the heart issue.

I wonder if that's what it was when the religious leaders sent their people to, to, to capture him and bring him, and, and they said, never has a man spoken like this before, just those certain things in the Sermon on the Mount, you know, don't be angry, forget hating, and, and don't, uh, don't, uh, lust rather than commit adultery. When you get to the heart of it, I wonder if anyone ever heard those things, because

when they come back, the priest says, where is he? Well, never has anyone spoken like this. The Lord be magnified.

Yeah, Duane, I can relate to the, the, the complexity of those two seemingly opposing ideas that you're talking about. I can, I mean, I relate to that, but, um, and I don't have it all figured out, but, uh, I mean, one, one element or one clue, I think, or one thing that, that is often, um, considered in a wrong way that I think makes a big difference is, um, I, I mean, I, I think we can get from that, from that teaching of Jesus about cutting off your hand or plucking out your eye, that, um, I mean, it's, it's not like he doesn't know that the heart, the heart is still capable of covetousness, um, even without eyes or, or hands, but I, I'd say he is plainly teaching there's a, a big difference between, uh, a heart that fails and hands and eyes that, uh, hands and eyes that fail. Um, there's a big difference between, um, wrestling with wanting something that's not yours and, uh, putting your hand to taking it.

Um, and, um, he, he says if, you know, if you look on a woman, you, you commit this sin in your heart, and some would interpret that as, like, it's the same as committing the sin, and that is just not true. Um, that there is a sin that has been committed, and he's, he's teaching that his, um, you're, you're not just all good and all okay just because you keep your hands from things and don't actually commit sin. If your heart is wrong, he's saying, I care about that, I'm concerned about that, um, and it's a big deal.

But I, I think there's a big difference between him teaching, like, there's still more to work on, there's, it's still important what your heart is saying, recognize, recognize if these things are still in your heart, even if you aren't, even if somehow you have self-control to keep yourself from committing sin if you're, if it's in your heart, like, don't think you're okay, don't, um, don't think that I don't care, but, but anyway, so I think the error is, and I, I hear it, you didn't say this, but I, um, I think it often just gets assumed that a sinful heart is the same as sinful actions, and I, and I just, I just don't think that that could possibly be true, like, um, you know, and I think that that teaching there, you know, it's kind of proof, he's saying, keep, put forth efforts, so here's, here you have somebody that obviously has a bad heart, a sinful heart, and he's saying, put forth effort to prevent yourself from sinning. I mean, this is the teaching, put forth, put things in place in your life, so that, to prevent you from committing sin, and then if somebody, he answers the question that could be asked, well, how far should I go? Should I lose my job? Should I get rid of my phone? Should I, like, how far should I go? He says, lose your hand, lose your eyes, um, and really, I, I think, um, I, I still think it's as true as ever that, um, the uncircumcised have no hope of entering in, um, and, but that would be the uncircumcised of heart, and so here, here it says, plug out your eye and cast it from you, cut off your hand and cast it from you, and circumcision is something getting cut off and cast from you, and that, but it's, and it's the heart that that thing needs to be, that that needs to be done, where that needs to be done, and obviously that he's not referring to the, the organ that pumps our blood, um, anyway, I'd be glad to hear more about that. I, just that one distinction, I, I think, um, and this is that thing, that thing again, uh, depending, depending what somebody is talking about, like, I wouldn't, I wouldn't, I wouldn't want to give consolation to anyone who has a sinful heart and say, oh, well, at least you're not committing sin, or, or, I would want, wouldn't want anyone to console themselves and say, that has a sinful heart and say, well, at least I'm not committing sin.

I mean, that, all that teaching there is Jesus saying, just because you're not committing sin, if you have anger, if you have these other things in your heart, like, there's a problem, that's, that's an important problem, and, and then yet I would want to say, you know, I, I think in another context, it would be important to, to recognize, um, that there, that there is a, a big difference. I'll just say, um, one of the big differences, and, and maybe the most important one, is that, though there would be some part of us that

would still be inclined to some kind of selfish sin, there is a great, um, there's great value in submitting to God. And so, one person, uh, submits what, so, both of these people, these imaginary people we're talking about, have a sinful heart, well, one person submits to the desires of their sinful heart, and one person who has a sinful heart, um, does not submit to those things, but rather submits to the Lord, and His will, and wrestles against His sinful heart, which is, which is the whole point of the, of Jesus' teachings, He's trying to get people who, He's trying to tell people who have already, who already submit themselves in, in not committing sin, and telling them that they need to further work on, on, on their sinful heart.

But, that, wouldn't, they're just, anyway, so that was the thing, the following through, but the, the great value in not committing sin is if it's, if it's in submission to God, even if it goes against whatever you'd say, our flesh or selfish heart. In all the bodies of sin I resign, My gracious Redeemer, my Savior, I bow, Forever I love Thee, my Jesus is now, I love Thee because Thou hast first loved me, And purchased my garden of Calvary's tree, I love Thee for wearing the thorns on Thy brow, Forever I love Thee, my Jesus is now, I love Thee, and I, I will love Thee in death, And praise Thee as long as I'll endlessly pray, And say when the candle lights fall on my brow, Forever I love Thee, my Jesus is now, In mansions of glory and endless delight, However I adore Thee in heavens so bright, I'll sing with Thy legendary crown on my brow, Forever I love Thee, my Jesus is now. As Jesus bared the cross alone, And all the world broke free, Now there's a cross for everyone, And there's a cross for me, It's all the earth did reach, And there, Jesus, it's all some way, But now in heav'n on crown He wears, And reigns in heaven's day, The consecrated cross shall bear, Till found the cross set free, And then go home, my crown to wear, For there's a cross for me.

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