

Honoring God in Our Thoughts

February Theme: "Salt and Light in a Dark World"

Matthew 5:27-30

CENTRAL IDEA: God is not satisfied with outward obedience alone; He calls His people to honor Him by cultivating pure, disciplined, and God-centered hearts that guide every thought and action.

INTRODUCTION

- Jesus moves beyond surface-level righteousness and addresses the heart of the matter—literally.
- The scribes and Pharisees focused on external compliance, but Jesus teaches that true faith is revealed by what we allow to dwell in our hearts.
- He confronts the issue of lust to show a broader principle: honoring God begins internally. If we are serious about pleasing God, we must be willing to examine, guard, and discipline our hearts.

I. GOD SEES AND JUDGES THE HEART, NOT JUST THE ACTION

Matthew 5:27–28 ESV

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

- The spark of sin begins long before it becomes an outward act.
- Lustful looking is not harmless—it reflects a heart that has drifted from God’s holiness.

James 1:13–15 ESV

Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

Proverbs 4:23 ESV

Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.

Practical Application:

- We must be honest about what we allow our eyes and minds to dwell on—media choices, online content, and entertainment habits all shape the heart.
- This includes guarding against mental fantasies, inappropriate flirting, or unchecked desires we excuse because no one else sees them.

Application Question:

Am I more concerned with appearing faithful to others, or being faithful before God who sees my heart?

II. HONORING GOD REQUIRES DECISIVE, BOLD ACTION AGAINST SIN**Matthew 5:29–30** *ESV*

If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.

- Jesus uses strong, figurative, hyperbolic language to emphasize the seriousness of sin. He is not calling for physical harm, but radical spiritual discipline.

Romans 13:14 *ESV*

But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Colossians 3:4–5 *ESV*

When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

Practical Application:

- Sometimes honoring God means removing influences, relationships, or habits that lead us into temptation—even if it feels inconvenient or uncomfortable.
- This might involve installing accountability software, changing routines, setting boundaries at work, or stepping away from certain friendships or activities.

Application Question:

What am I tolerating in my life that is quietly pulling my heart away from God?

III. ETERNAL PRIORITIES MUST OUTWEIGH TEMPORARY PLEASURE

- Jesus contrasts momentary pleasure with eternal consequences.
- A heart that honors God values eternity more than immediate gratification.

2 Corinthians 4:18 NKJV

while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen *are* temporary, but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.

Practical Application:

- The world promotes instant satisfaction, but discipleship requires long-term vision.
- Choosing purity, self-control, and faithfulness today protects marriages, strengthens families, and preserves our influence for the gospel tomorrow.

Application Question:

Am I making decisions based on what feels good now—or what honors God forever?

CONCLUSION

- Honoring God in our hearts is not about perfection, but devotion.
- Jesus calls us to examine our inner lives, confront sin seriously, and live with eternity in view.
- When our hearts are surrendered to God, our actions will follow.

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“The churches of Christ greet you”
Rom. 16:16

Hebrews 4:12

THE HOLY BIBLE

2 Tim. 2:15, 3:16-17

HEAR
Rom. 10:17

BELIEVE
Jn. 3:16

REPENT
Lk. 13:3

CONFESS
Rom. 10:9

IMMERSED/ADDED
Acts 2:36-47, 22:16
FORGIVEN/SAVED

Rev. 2:10
Remain Saved
Till the end
Phil. 2:12

“See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be immersed?”
Acts 8:36
“water immersion now saves us by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” 1 Pt. 3:21

How Jesus commands us to be forgiven of sins and added to His kingdom.