

**The second antithesis (Mt. 5:27-30) answers the 7<sup>th</sup> Commandment, "You shall not commit adultery." (Ex.20:14; Dt.5:18)** The Decalogue's command prohibiting adultery is deepened by Jesus' dramatic antithesis. Indeed he requires a "Greater Righteousness"- surpassing that of the Pharisees and teachers of the law.

**"But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart." (28)** Jesus declares a deeper understanding of God's will with regard to sexual relations and purity. As previously regarding murder, Jesus reveals a truth more profound than external physical prohibition – just as murder begins with anger, so adultery begins with lust.

**Adultery Defined:** In the time of Jesus, as in the Law of Moses, adultery was sexual relations with someone other than one's spouse and particularly with someone else's spouse. Therefore, one could claim fidelity to one's spouse if one had sexual relations only with one's spouse.

**The Patriarchal Double Standard:** In 1<sup>st</sup> Testament times and continuing into the time of Jesus patriarchal, chauvinistic practices prevailed. Women were property, first of fathers then of husbands, brothers or uncles. Societal rules could accuse, condemn and punish them and they had little recourse. By contrast men were constrained only in so far as their sexual behavior with women impacted other men (a woman's husband, father or brother).

**Adultery Redefined by Jesus:** Moses' law was insufficient. Jesus says sexual relations and purity begin internally – it's a matter of one's heart (inner desires). What's more, in his own context, Jesus puts the responsibility squarely on the male – his gaze and his desires.

**Hyperbole of Eyes and Hands:** Vulnerability comes in various forms and often things seen and handled lead us astray. Jesus endorses "desperate measures" ("right eye; right hand" 1Sam.11:2f; Zech.11:17)

**Temptation Chain:** "When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; <sup>14</sup> but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. <sup>15</sup> Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death." (James 1:13-15)

**Biblical Sexual Relations:** Throughout the Bible there are two purposes for human sexual relations: 1) human reproduction, 2) human pleasure. These are the product of our Creator's design for us and blessed within covenant marriage relationship. God's design for humans is one man – one woman monogamous, lifetime relationship. (Matt.19:4-6; Gen.2:24)

**Covenant Marriage / Spiritual Covenant:** Human marriage is God's design for the physical and spiritual union of marriage partners. It serves also as a type of the spiritual union God desires with believers – God was Israel's husband (Isa.54:5-8) the Church is Christ's bride (Eph.5:25-27).

**1<sup>st</sup> Testament Illustrative Texts:**

A call for unfaithful Israel and Judah to return to the Lord (Jer.3).  
An individual example is King David (2Sam.11&12; Psa. 32&51)

Psalm 32

<sup>1</sup> Blessed is the one  
whose transgressions are forgiven,  
whose sins are covered.

<sup>2</sup> Blessed is the one  
whose sin the LORD does not count against  
them  
and in whose spirit is no deceit.

**KINGDOM PEOPLE ARE RADICALLY RIGHTEOUS!**