

Briefing Document: Matthew Lesson 81-Sermon on the Mount

Sunday AM-September 13, 2026

Executive Summary

The source context provides an in-depth examination of Jesus Christ's teachings on holiness, specifically regarding adultery and the intentions of the heart. The central theme is that God's standard of righteousness focuses on internal purity rather than just external behavior. While religious leaders of the past emphasized avoiding the physical act of sin, Jesus introduced a higher authority, teaching that sinful desires and purposeful lust constitute adultery within the heart. The document concludes that human nature is inherently sinful and requires a relationship with Jesus Christ for true heart transformation and deliverance.

The Nature of True Holiness

Holiness is defined not by outward appearances or the avoidance of certain actions, but by the condition of the heart. Many people may appear righteous on the outside—referred to as "posers"—but God is only concerned with the "possessor" of a clean heart.

- **Internal vs. External:** Being a religious person who follows rules does not guarantee salvation. One can avoid "certain things" and do "other things" without being truly saved.
- **The Heart as the Source:** All human behavior, whether good or evil, begins in the heart. As noted in *Proverbs 23:7*, *"For as he thinks in his heart, so is he."*
- **Defilement:** Defilement does not come from what a person takes in, but from what proceeds out of them. Jesus clarifies this in *Matthew 15:18–19*: *"But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies."*

The Deed of Adultery

Adultery is presented as an absolute sin and a serious crime that destroys marriages and families. The source highlights several biblical examples of the consequences of sexual sin:

- **King David:** His family was completely destroyed because of his sexual sin.
- **Job's Perspective:** Job recognized adultery as a fire that consumes to destruction. He stated in *Job 31:11–12*: *"For that would be wickedness; Yes, it would be iniquity deserving of judgment. For that would be a fire that consumes to destruction, And would root out all my increase."*

- **Judgment:** The Bible is clear that sexual sin carries heavy weight. *Hebrews 13:4* states: “*Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.*”

The Case of the Woman Caught in Adultery

In *John 8*, religious leaders used a woman caught in the act of adultery to trap Jesus. While the law of Moses called for stoning, Jesus demonstrated His power to forgive. By telling her to “*Go and sin no more,*” He offered the gift of salvation, washing her “white as snow” and removing the sin for which she was to be judged.

The Desire: Adultery in the Heart

Jesus expanded the definition of adultery to include the “look” of desire. He moved beyond the physical deed to address the “vile heart” that produces the look.

- **The New Authority:** Jesus spoke with a unique authority that shocked His listeners. He acted as the “new sheriff in town,” moving beyond traditional interpretations of the law to the core of God’s intent.
- **Purposeful Lust:** The sin described in *Matthew 5:28* is not an accidental glance or an involuntary temptation. It refers to a continuous, purposeful action.
- **The Continuous Look:** In the original Greek context, the phrase implies a person who is in the process of “continuing to look” for the purpose of lusting. This purposeful look is the evidence that adultery has already been committed in the heart.

“I say to you that whoever continues looking on a woman for the purpose of lusting gives evidence of already committing adultery in his heart.”

Deliverance and Transformation

The source concludes that man is powerless to change his own heart because it is naturally corrupt. According to *Jeremiah 17:9*: “*The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?*”

The Path to Change

- **Recognition of Sin:** One must acknowledge that sin is deep in the heart and nature of man.
- **Relationship with Christ:** True heart transformation only happens through a relationship with Jesus.
- **Repentance and Purity:** When a believer fails, they must confess and repent to remain pure. God looks upon the believer through the purity of His Son.
- **The Outcome:** Salvation makes a person a “new creature in Christ,” replacing a vile heart with one that is right with the Lord.

Greek Terminology Guide

Word	Phonetic Pronunciation	Brief Definition
Proto [^1]	pro-toh	An infinitive form indicating a purposeful act; looking with the specific intent to lust.

[^1]: Used in the context of *Matthew 5:28* to describe the intentional nature of a lustful look.