Good morning, Pine Ridge Family!

*“For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 5:20 “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you…” Matthew 5:27 & 28a*

We are all *still* in trouble. Yesterday, we learned that hating someone was sufficient reason for God’s eternal condemnation. God is never satisfied with just outward conformity to any standard, even His own. If the heart is not right, if we do not love just as He loves us and every sinner, then it is all just a show. We are merely posing as His children.

Now comes the Adultery/Lust problem. Again, what goes on inside the mind is known to God, and it offends Him because it is still sin.

Here is where we often get the question usually from young people because older people have learned to not ask everything that pops into their minds, “Why then don’t we just go ahead and do it! Be adulterous!” That question may trip you up, especially if you are engaged in a Bible Study, which tend to look at short sections of Scripture and not stay in the context of the whole message. The answer to that question is, “Would you go ahead and apply that same logic to the previous statement of Jesus?” Hate – Murder. Do we just kill people because we think badly of them?

Although God sees both as sin, He does not see them as equal. Any sin will condemn you, but all sin does not have the same consequences in our world of time and space. If I hate you in my heart, it may have some consequences for you in my actions towards you. The person most affected by this hate will be me. If I kill you, then I bring into the equation all of your friends and family, all of my friends and family, the ruling authority over us, and I affect any influence on this world that you are prevented from having by my removing you from it. This ripple effect flows down through all of time.

Back to adultery. All sin has this ripple effect. It doesn’t just involve you. Even if you are not caught on earth, it will have an effect on others and will have an effect on your relationship with God. So bad is this effect that Jesus says that it would be better for you to rip out your eye or cut off your hand.

Christ’s purpose in these revelations is that no one can claim that they are without sin. Particularly, He wants you to know that you cannot claim that you are not in sin continually. There is an old saying among evangelists that you often have to get someone lost before you can get them saved. If someone believes that they are "alright" with God, they never see a reason to come to Him. What they have is good enough. Jesus is putting everyone on notice that no one is “alright with God.” Not until they choose the narrow path and build their house upon the Rock. Then you are far more than merely “alright,” you are saved and adopted into the family. But that cannot happen until you realize that you are *not* a part of His family.

In Christ, our Lord…

Pastor EA