

SAY WHAT?

Discussion Notes

PLUCK IT OUT

Matthew 5:27-30

Matt said that our view of God is sometimes more influenced by Santa than Scripture. Faith is just about trying to avoid being on the 'naughty list' and getting on to the 'nice list'.

- Have you thought this way in the past?

Matt explained that the word 'Hell' that Jesus uses in this passage is actually 'Gehenna' which was a literal place. It was where rubbish would be piled up and would often catch fire from the heat. From this we can see there is a literal side to what Jesus taught about hell - it is man made, it's close and it's very real.

- How does knowing this change the way we think about our actions and the consequences of our sin?

However, 'Gehenna' was also a metaphor. The people in Jesus' time would've known Gehenna as a place outside of Jerusalem. Matt said that if Jerusalem represents the place where God's love is, hell is really the ultimate FOMO.

- Do you find this a helpful way to think about heaven and hell?

Matt pointed out that as Christians we don't have to worry about hell for ourselves as the Bible is clear that Jesus took that off the table for us.

- Do you agree with Matt? Do you struggle to believe this sometimes?

In Matthew 5, Jesus raises the standard for our behaviour from not just avoiding the physical act of adultery, but lust in all forms. He sets the bar much higher than the bare minimum. Sin is toxic and self-destructive whether it's acted out or just harboured in our hearts.

- Do you think as Christians today we more often lower the bar for godly behaviour? Do we have a high tolerance for sin and brokenness in our own lives?
- How can we set the bar high for ourselves in our own morality? And what's our motivation?
- How can we avoid feeling guilty or full of shame when we don't hit this high bar?

Finally, Jesus says that we should take tough, practical measures so that it's harder for us to fall into temptation .

- Do you have examples in your own life of where you have 'gouged your eye out' and tried to take action to avoid sin? What worked? What makes this difficult?
- What areas of behaviour do you struggle with most - lust, alcohol, anger, language, gambling etc?
- Matt gave a few examples of actions that we can take - using internet blockers, making sure we're accountable to someone, having a set of rules for behaviour worked out in advance. What practical things like these do you think you could adopt?

Take time to pray with one another and ask for God's forgiveness, cleansing and inner renewal. You might also want to think about Mentoring if you're not doing that already.

Check out woodlandsmetro.church/mentoring for more information.