

.: lust control

“I can give no adequate description of the Horror Camp in which my men and myself were to spend the next month of our lives. It was just a barren wilderness ... Corpses lay everywhere, some in huge piles, sometimes they lay singly or in pairs where they had fallen. It took a little time to get used to seeing men, women and children collapse as you walked by them . . . One knew that five hundred a day were dying and that five hundred a day were going on dying for weeks before anything we could do would have the slightest effect ...

women drowning in their own vomit because they were too weak to turn over, men eating worms as they clutched a half loaf of bread purely because they had to eat worms to live and now could scarcely tell the difference. Piles of corpses, naked and obscene, with a woman too weak to stand propping herself against them as she cooked the food we had given her over an open fire; men and women crouching down just anywhere in the open relieving themselves . . . [a] dysentery tank in which the remains of a child floated.”

- How does hearing about the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp make you feel?
- What makes this account so horrifying?

“A concentration camp is designed to strip people of their humanity. It’s anti-

human. And in the Scriptures, anything that’s anti-human is anti-God. Genesis begins with God creating the world and then creating people “in his own image.” Genesis makes it clear that in all of creation there is something different about humans. They aren’t God, and they aren’t going to become God, but in some distinct, intentional way, something of God has been placed in them. We reflect what God is like and who God is. A divine spark resides in every single human being.”

- I used the phrase “divine spark,” what would you call it?
- When have you seen it?
- How would you describe it?

“Picture a group of high school boys standing by their lockers when a girl walks by. One of the boys asks, “How do you rate that?” They then take turns assigning numerical values to the various parts of her anatomy, discussing in great detail how they evaluate her physical attributes.”

- Does this sound familiar?
- Does this stop after high school?
- Have you ever been that girl? Or that boy? Or that crowd?

Read Matthew 5:27-29

Sounds a bit violent. Not to mention painful. And if taken literally, renders half of the human race blind in a matter of moments. Jesus connects our eyes and our intentions and our thoughts with the state of our hearts.

Read Matthew 5:30

How did we get from lust, which is so common and doesn’t seem like that big of a deal, to having your body thrown

How we treat the creation reveals what we think about the creator.

The Bergen Belsen concentration camp or deciding whether she’s ‘hot or not’ - both treat people as less than human.



into hell? And to avoid this fate you should cut off your hand? Poke out your eye? That would be better? It seems like He's stretching it a bit, doesn't it?

- Or did we miss something?
- What is Jesus really saying here?

Read Psalms 103:19

"To the Jewish mind, heaven is not a fixed, unchanging geographical location somewhere other than this world. Heaven is the realm where things are as God intends them to be. The place where things are under the rule and reign of God. And that place can be anywhere, anytime, with anybody."

Read Psalms 103:19

"So there is this realm, heaven, where things are as God wants them, under the rule and reign of God. But the earth is different. God has allowed for the temporary existence of other kingdoms. Other realms of authority. The earth "he has given to humankind." Which means we can do whatever we want. We can live however we want. We can choose to live under the rule and reign of God, or we can choose to rebel against God and live some other way.

Now if there's a realm where things are as God wants them to be, then there must be a realm where things are not as God wants them to be. Where things aren't according to God's will. Where people aren't treated as fully human. It's called hell."

- What do you think about this concept of heaven and hell?

When Jesus talks about heaven and hell, they are first and foremost present realities that have serious implications for the future. Either can be invited to earth, right now, through our actions. It's possible for heaven to invade earth. And it's possible for hell to invade earth.

- How do our choices invite heaven or hell to earth?
- How can we change to recognize the divine spark in others?

Notes: