

Matthew 15:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders,
adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

Analysis

Jesus lists sins originating from the heart: evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. This catalog reveals total depravity—the heart's natural state produces evil continually (Genesis 6:5). Reformed theology emphasizes that sin's root is internal corruption, not external influence. Ethical reformation without heart regeneration fails because the problem is ontological, not merely behavioral. Only the Holy Spirit's regenerating work can produce the new heart (Ezekiel 36:26) that pleases God.

Historical Context

Jesus' list reflects the Ten Commandments' second table (duties to neighbor), showing how heart corruption manifests in specific sins. His teaching corrects Pharisaic externalism that focused on ritual purity while ignoring moral corruption. First-century Judaism emphasized external conformity; Jesus exposes internal depravity.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What evil thoughts does your heart naturally produce?
2. How does recognizing your heart's corruption drive you to Christ?
3. What strategies address symptoms versus the root of sin?

Interlinear Text

ἐκ	γὰρ	τῆς	καρδίας	ἐξέρχονται	διαλογισμοὶ	πονηροί
out of	For	G3588	the heart	proceed	thoughts	evil
G1537	G1063		G2588	G1831	G1261	G4190
φόνοι	μοιχεῖαι	πορνεῖαι	κλοπαί	ψευδομαρτυρίαι		
murders	adulteries	fornications	thefts	false witness		
G5408	G3430	G4202	G2829	G5577		
βλασφημίαι						
blasphemies						
G988						

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 17:9 (Evil): The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

Proverbs 4:23 (Parallel theme): Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

Isaiah 55:7 (Evil): Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

Isaiah 59:7 (Evil): Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths.

Acts 8:22 (Evil): Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.

Psalms 119:113 (Parallel theme): I hate vain thoughts: but thy law do I love.

Genesis 6:5 (Evil): And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Jeremiah 4:14 (Evil): O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?

Proverbs 6:14 (Parallel theme): Frowardness is in his heart, he deviseth mischief continually; he soweth discord.

Romans 7:18 (Parallel theme): For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.