

Memory Verse:

“And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.” - Matthew 5:30

Big Idea:

Jesus is calling us to jettison the junk. He is emphatically urging us to remove anything from our lives that competes with Him and causes us to sin. Jesus loves us and wants us to be free from the grip of sin and to live forever in His arms of love. What does Jesus mean by these radical statements? Is He advocating self-mutilation? Let me quickly say no. Remember, Jesus is concerned with our hearts. He knows that cutting off a hand won't truly make you pure. However, He is using shock and awe in order to make a serious point. He is waking us up and calling us to get rid of the things that cause us to sin.

In Matthew 5:29-30, Jesus is telling us that we have a role to play. We are called to take action and to take the necessary steps to remove those things from our lives that cause us to fall into sin. We must remember that God's grace OPERATES powerfully in our lives and His grace also calls us to CO-OPERATE with His work in our lives.

We live in a culture where people love their sin. They are so comfortable with sin that they fill their minds and ultimately their hearts with it on a regular basis as they watch TV, go to movies, or surf the internet. We lie to ourselves and say we can handle it, but we can't. What we put in us affects us and either builds us up or tears us down. It either brings us life or brings us death. It either glorifies God or it offends Him. What we look at matters. What we listen to matters. Where we go matters. Who we hang out with matters. It either builds us up and promotes holiness or it tears us down and breeds sin. We need more of the stuff that promotes holiness and lifts up the name of Jesus. And we need to remove those things from our lives that breed sin, that draw us away from God and into sin, that entice us to commit spiritual adultery and forget our first love – Jesus Christ. We have all we need in Christ Jesus to jettison the junk and live for God.

Scripture and Discussion Questions: *Read the Bible passage(s) and discuss the questions.*

1. **Matthew 5:29-30** – How serious is Jesus about removing the things from our lives that cause us to sin? Who is supposed to throw away the things that lead to sin? What kind of things can cause us to fall into sin?
2. **Colossians 3:1-10** – Why are we able to jettison the junk that leads to sin? Have you experienced how God's grace empowers you to say no to temptation? Share them and write them down.
3. **Philippians 4:8** – How do you feel after filling yourself with these kinds of things? Make a list of things that you can add to your life or increase in your life that lead to God instead of to sin.

Kids Corner:

Talk to your children about the need to stay away from things that cause them to sin. Have your child get a handful of dirt and then have them bring it into the house and run around. What happens to the dirt? It gets all over the house and makes things dirty. (Sorry parents, maybe you will just want to talk them through this one.) Talk with them about how bringing dirt inside can often make things dirty and even ruin things. However, keeping the dirt outside keeps things clean. Now explain to them how this relates to other things in their lives. Explain how what they look at and what they listen to can have this kind of effect on their lives. God tells us to stay away from the dirty things in the world that can mess up our lives.

Prayer Time:

Have a discussion with God about what you have just studied. Ask God to expose those things in your life that pull you away from Him and breed sinfulness. Ask for forgiveness and ask God to help you jettison the junk. God has promised that His grace gives us all we need to say no to sin and yes to Him. God's grace is more powerful than temptation and sin. If you have given your life to Christ, His grace is in you. Live in His powerful grace and let it free you.