

Matthew 18:8-9

If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire.

I remember when I first became a Christian and I read these verses. I thought that they were literal and that you actually had to cut your hand or foot off if you couldn't keep from doing a particular sin. I remember grilling the pastor at the time wanting him to tell me that there would be cases that you actually had to cut your hand or foot off or even pluck out your eye. I know it sounds crazy, but I was a young 19 year old who was exploring his new Christianity.

But let's say that you had a problem with stealing and you couldn't stop it, so you would cut your hand off to stop from stealing. But even if you did, still you would find some other way of stealing.

Or say you had a problem with pornography, so you would pluck your eye out, or even both of them to stop from viewing it. Still you could always fantasize the same thing in your mind even without your eyes.

No, we don't have to physically cut our feet or hands off, or pluck out our eyes, because in our sinful nature we would still find other ways to commit that particular sin.

But for some there may be things that you need to cut out of your life, and even going as far as cutting particular relationships out of your life, because they are harming you spiritually and affecting your walk with the Lord.

So what are those things? Do I really have to tell you what particular things or people in your life that are hindering your walk with the Lord? I don't think so, because you already know what those things or people are that are in your life. Maybe it's something you have known about for a while now, yet you struggle with letting them go, because that person or thing has been a part of your life for so long now. Remember Jesus said:

† **Matthew 16:26 (NLT)** *And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? Is anything worth more than your soul?*

You struggle with a relationship with a certain person, who is causing you to live in sin, and you know it's bad, but Jesus is asking you right now, is it **worth more than your soul?**

Is that person worth dying and going to hell for?

Or maybe it's a particular thing like alcohol, or drugs, or a job or a habit. Once again the question is, is it **worth more than your soul?**

We can even take the Lord's question and have it speak directly about this thing or person and ask, ***And what do you benefit if you keep it or him or her but lose your own soul?***

To have Jesus as Lord of your life is to say that He is more important than anything or anybody.

† **Luke 14:26** ***If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.***

Jesus is not speaking of a literal hatred towards your parents, spouse or family, but rather it is speaking of putting Jesus before your family, even your spouse, and Jesus takes it further to say ***and his own life also.***

Yet there are things we need to cut out of our lives, because by holding on to them we are putting our lives and wants before Jesus.

† **Matthew 7:21** ***Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.***

What has the Lord been saying to you lately that you need to get rid of that's in your life that is hindering your walk with Him? ***But he who does the will of My Father in heaven.***