

Why did Jesus say to pluck out our eyes?

Question: Jesus said, "If your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it from you. It is better for you to enter life with one eye, than to have two eyes and be cast into the fiery hell" (Matt. 18:9). Did He literally mean to pluck out our eyes?

Answer: Jesus often used "shock treatments" to shock His listeners by using extreme examples to illustrate a point—such as swallowing a camel or casting a mountain into the sea. He did not mean to literally cut off your hand or to pluck out your eye if they cause you to sin (Matt. 18:9-10). He meant that repentance will take drastic measures to change behavior.

For example, if you are enslaved to lust and want to be free, you must take a drastic measure. Rather than plucking out your eyes, you can cut off the source in another way--stop going to porn sites on the Internet. Quit feeding your lust. For a person who is addicted that is a drastic measure.

Our hands and eyes don't actually cause us to stumble, but our hearts cause us to sin. Jesus said, "I say to you, that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matt. 5:28) Hands and eyes are merely instruments of the heart. Jesus said, "For from within, **out of the heart** of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries . . ." (Mark 7:21).

No one can be set free from pornography without a genuine work of the Holy Spirit in his heart. If you will completely surrender to the Lord, He will change your heart, empower you and set you free. When we get our hearts right, then what we look at and what we do with our hands will also be right.