

Kill or Be Killed



Mark 9:42-50

If you have your bibles, go to Mark chapter 9. One of my favorite little fables or short stories is about a dog and a rabbit. There are several different versions of it I've heard, so I'm going to give you one of my favorite ones. There is a group of dogs and it's a lazy afternoon while they're hanging out on the porch. All of a sudden, this dog sees a rabbit dart in front of him. The dog immediately gets up, sort of stretches a little bit because he's been laying around on the porch, but then immediately starts chasing after the rabbit. The other dogs are on the porch watching their buddy chase this rabbit. They are taking bets of whether he's going to get it or not while this dog is in full sprint after this rabbit. The dog is actually faster than the rabbit, but the thing about the rabbit is it darts back and forth. It can go in more holes and it can jump and twist, so the dog is chasing after it while the rabbit is running as fast as it possibly can. This goes on for some time, but eventually the dog gives up. The dog stops running, and the rabbit goes free into the thicket. The dog goes back to the porch a little bit disappointed and it lays back down. The other dogs begin to ridicule, hound, and laugh at this dog, 'I can't believe you got outrun by a rabbit.' 'I can't believe you couldn't catch the hare.' 'Aren't you a dog?' 'Aren't you faster?' They were taunting and ridiculing the dog, and the punch line of the story is in the dog's answer back to them, 'Just remember this, I ran for a chance at supper; this rabbit ran for dear life.' In that moment, it's the difference in the fight. It's the difference in the

chase. See, the dog was running in sort of a game. It was sort of playing. If he caught it, great, he has supper. If not, he's probably got a dog bone somewhere that he can eat. It wasn't life or death. But for the rabbit, it was a whole different story. If the rabbit didn't make it, the rabbit dies. Which one, the dog or the rabbit, do you think gave the most effort in running? Of course it was the rabbit, because for the rabbit it was life or death.

The reason I shared that little fable is because I want us to think about our relationship with sin because that's what Jesus is going to get to. When it comes to your relationship with sin, your fight against sin, are you more like the dog or are you more like the rabbit? To you, the way you put to death a sin, the way you block out temptation, the way you war against sin, is it like the dog? It doesn't really matter. At the end of the day, it's just supper. There's not an urgency, a necessity. Or, are you fighting sin like the rabbit because you know if you don't kill sin, sin will kill you? It is a life or death struggle, so it is waking up every morning, fighting to put to death the deeds of the flesh because you want to honor Christ and you want to pursue holiness because He is your great Savior. So, how is your relationship with sin? How is your fight against sin? Is it a game? Do you ignore? Do you reward it? Or, is it a fight where you're constantly repenting of sin? Our big takeaway this morning is either kill or be killed, which is what I think Jesus will tell us in Mark 9. We're going to begin in verse 42 as Jesus deals with sin, temptation, and the great lengths we should take at fighting sin and temptation all around us.

Scripture

"Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea. And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, 'where their worm does not die and the fire is not

quenched.' For everyone will be salted with fire. Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, how will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

(Prayer)

Father God, as we just read those words from Jesus, they are shocking. They tell us of the seriousness of sin and the great effort we should take at fighting against sin. I pray that we would be sober minded when it comes to the things that catch our attention, the things that tempt us, and I pray that we would go to war against our sin, understanding that we can either kill or be killed. I pray that you would help us to take great lengths at honoring you with our bodies. We pray this in Jesus good name, amen.

As we hear those words from Jesus, they're a little shocking for some of us. Some of us have heard about Jesus, but we haven't really read the Bible or the words of Jesus, so we think of Him as Mr. Nice Guy, Mr. Do Whatever You Want, just go live your life, just do your thing. Here, Jesus says, here's the deal; it would be better for you to jump off a bridge than cause someone to sin. It would be better for you to cut your hands and feet off than to put yourself in a place to sin. It would be better to gouge your eye out than to sin. That's intense! Do you hear what Jesus just said? This is a very, very intense portion of Scripture, so as we unpack this, I don't want to soften the blows. I want us to feel what this text is really trying to communicate to us.

I see four big truths that come out at the very beginning.

1. Temptation is Strong (causes to sin)

That's the first thing I see as I read this text. Christ says our lives can cause others to sin, our body parts can cause us to sin; temptation has a very strong pull. Temptation is a very, very strong force.

2. Sin is Serious (drown, cut, tear)

Sin is not something to play with. Sin is a serious thing. In fact, Jesus says when it comes to sin you need to take drastic measures like downing, cutting, or tearing when it comes to your relationship with sin.

3. Hell is Forever (unquenchable fire)

Jesus, Himself, talks about the unquenchable flame, a flame that doesn't go out, a flame that is forever.

4. Holiness is Commanded (have salt)

At the end of this text, Jesus says have salt in yourselves. In other words, salt, that thing that preserves, that thing that seasons, the opposite of sin is salt. The conclusion is don't be sin, be salt when it comes to those around you.

As we read this text together, we feel these different things. Temptation is strong, sin is serious, hell is forever, and holiness is commanded. There is a seriousness to this message and it comes from the very words of Jesus. I just want us to walk through three parts that Jesus is going to talk to us about. The first is when we are a temptation to another person, the next is when we are a temptation to ourselves, and the last is the opposite of temptation, which is to be salt, which is to be light, which is to give life rather than steal life. We're going to walk through those three things, and I really want us to gather and takeaway is that when it comes to your relationship with sin, either kill or sin will be killing you and those around you. Sin is a serious thing. We want to go to war on the sin around us.

It is better to die than cause someone to sin.

The first thing we're going to see is in verse 42, and Jesus is going to tell us that it is better to die than cause others to sin. That's a really hard truth. As we read through this text, we see Jesus using a tactic called hyperbole. He's using an exaggeration, so He's not actually telling us to go kill yourself. He's not actually saying cut off your hands and feet, because we know from the Old Testament that it is forbidden to mutilate your body. He's not saying actually do this, He's communicating that you need to take every length possible, you need to go to great lengths to try to not

necessarily mutilate the body, but to mortify the flesh. You need to go to war on your flesh. You need to go to war on these temptations and these sins. In other words, He's saying do whatever it takes.

The first thing we see is our relationship with other people, our relationship with those around us. I want you to see that your actions cause reactions. If your actions are good, they can cause good reactions. It can cause people to follow after the Lord. It can cause people to see the Lord in a more clear way, but your negative actions can actually cause negative reactions. It can cause people to stumble when it comes to their relationship with the Lord. Notice what Jesus says, "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin..." Some of you bibles say to stumble or to fall away. That's the picture. You're falling away from the Lord. You're stumbling. You're committing an act of sin. "...it would be better for him if a great millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea." There are a couple of kinds of millstones. There was one you turned by hand, a little millstone, and then, there was the one that took a donkey to turn. It was a giant millstone. Jesus uses that type of a millstone. It would be better to have a giant millstone, the one that only a donkey can carry to be put around your neck and you be tossed in the sea rather than causes a little one to sin. I think He is referencing a new believer, a babe in the faith, a disciple of Christ. It would be better for you to lose your life than to cause them to stumble, to sin.

We don't think this way. We're Americans. One of the things we prize in America is our individualistic nature. We are individuals. My life is mine. I do what I want. I'm not responsible for you. Your life is your life, and my life is my life. I do my thing and you do your thing, let's not worry about each other. Jesus says that's not the truth in the Kingdom. In the Kingdom of Christ, we are interconnected. We are dependent on one another. The truth is, as the body of believers, as brothers and sister in Christ, your actions cause reactions. Your life is either causing someone to stand, or to stumble. That's a big truth to think about. My life, the things that I do, the words that I say, the places I go, the things I give my attention to, there are eyes that are watching me, brothers and sisters in Christ paying attention to me, and my life can either cause them to stumble, or to stand. Jesus is warning us of the seriousness of causing someone else to stumble,

to cause someone else to sin against the Lord. Usually we don't think about this. We just think about our own stuff and our own lives. Jesus said your life actually affects others. Your life moves others. It moves people away from Jesus or towards Jesus. Your actions cause reactions. He's trying to get us to think about when we post whatever we do on social media, what is the reaction going to be to those around me? When I walk in and I say that word, how are people going to respond? When I lose my temper, what's the ripple effect going to be? Jesus says we need to take our lives seriously. We need to take pursuit of Jesus and our defeating sin seriously because people around us are being affected on whether we are following Jesus, or running from Jesus. This is a serious thing that our actions would cause reactions and that we have the ability to cause people to stand or to stumble.

So in this first passage, He's really talking about us being the temptation. Do you know you can be a temptation for somebody? Notice that Jesus says "to cause." He is saying your life can cause someone else to sin. You can be the cause of someone's temper flaring up. You can be the cause of someone's jealousy. Jesus is saying beware. Rather than causing people to stumble, we want to cause people to stand.

It is better to lose body parts than go to hell.

The second thing that Jesus is going to tell us is that it's better to lose body parts than to go to hell. That's just intense. Notice what He says in verse 33, "And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better to enter life crippled than with two hands and go to hell to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It's better to enter life lame than two feet to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better to enter the kingdom with one eye than with two to be thrown in to hell where the worm does not die and the fire is not quenched." That's a tough saying. I can feel the tension in the congregation. I can feel this tension. Is this really what Jesus is trying to say? Notice the seriousness of sin that Jesus is giving.

Understanding Hell (Gehenna)

We're going to walk through this verse and highlight various words. Notice the words that Jesus lists. They are 'hand,' 'foot,' and 'eye.' Your hands, feet, and eyes are things that are precious to you. Those are things that are very valuable. Those are some of the most important things in the world to us. Notice what Jesus tells us to do. It says to 'cut off,' 'cut off,' and 'tear out.' Why would we want to lose these things (hands, feet, and eyes) that are so valuable to us? It is because there is something that matters more, and the thing that matters more is God. Notice the next highlighted words, 'it's better,' 'it's better,' 'it's better.' There is something better to do than to keep your hands, your eyes, and your feet. There is something better. There is a better at stake when it comes to the teaching of Jesus. What is that better? It's better to enter life crippled than to go to hell forever where there's an unquenchable flame. It is better to enter life lame than to go to hell. It's better to enter the Kingdom of God with one eye than to be thrown into hell where the worm does not die and fire is not quenched. This is a tough teaching. We don't really think about Jesus as saying these kind of things.

So is He really meaning what He says when He speaks about hell? Is He really talking about what we think when it comes to hell? When you take that word, hell, it's used twelve times in the New Testament. Twelve times that word is used, and eleven times, it is from Jesus' lips. Eleven times, Jesus uses the word, hell. James uses it once. Why would Jesus speak about hell so often? Why would He be so clear about hell? It's not because He doesn't love us; it's because He does love us. He knows the seriousness of sin, He knows the holiness of God, and He doesn't want us to be under God's wrath forever. He wants us to repent and believe in the good news of the gospel so we don't spend life separated from Him, but we spend life connected to Him. The word, hell, is Gehenna in the Greek. It's actually a transliteration from the Hebrew of the Valley of Hinnom. If you go back to Jeremiah, Isaiah, and the Kings, the Valley of Hinnom was this valley that the apostate Jews would go to sacrifice their children to false gods. It became this valley where there was death. In Jesus' day, that same valley became a dump in the city where people would bring trash. It was this cursed place where Jews did unspeakable things back in the day, and now

during Jesus' time, it was this huge heap, this pit, this dumpster where a fire was going all of the time. There were worms, maggots with flames and smoke. If you look to Gehenna, there was always fire and smoke rising up continually. Jesus uses that term and uses that place to explain God's final and forever judgement.

That last phrase, 'where the worm does not die and the fire is not quenched,' Jesus actually pulls that from Isaiah 66:24. It says, "And they shall go out and look on the dead bodies and the men who have rebelled against me. For the worms shall not die, their fires shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh." The last words in Isaiah are this. There will be a place of God's forever judgment. Jesus is looking at a dumpster and He's thinking about Isaiah, and He says there is a place coming of full and final judgment. Matthew 25:46, Jesus says, "And these will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life." There is eternal punishment. The fire is not quenched.

You may have noticed there are a few verses missing in some of our modern translations in our bibles, like the NIV or ESV. If you have the old KJV, there are a few more verses in this text because that line, "where the worm does not die and the fire is not quenched," is repeated three different times in the KJV. After every time Jesus teaches about a hand, a foot, or an eye, those verses are repeated. What more than likely happened is that through textual criticism as we see more and more manuscripts that get closer and closer to the original letter, the original gospel that Mark wrote, this repetition is not there. Likely, a scribe saw this line and repeated it twice, but Mark didn't actually write it three times, he only wrote it once. That's where your modern translations don't include those verses and some of the older translations do. If you're curious about that, we have some content and would love to have a conversation on that. So the older manuscripts don't include those verses, it more than likely says they weren't originally from Mark, but added later.

But Jesus says there's a real place called hell. There's a forever place called hell, and Jesus is warning that you need to be serious about sin and God's holiness and the gospel, because there are forever consequences at stake. What does Jesus leverage here? He wants us to get serious about sin. Notice the phrases, 'drown,' 'tear,' and 'cut.' What is He saying? Not

actually doing those things, but He's saying do whatever it takes to kill sin in your body. Wherever temptation is coming, whether from you or through you, you need to take whatever lengths to make sure that you kill temptation and sin. If not, if you're like the dog and it's just a game, just fun, then odds are you don't know Jesus. A Savior saves you from your sins, and if you still love you sin and live in your sin, enjoy your sin and don't fight against your sin, odds are you don't have the Savior because the Savior saves you from your sins. When you come to Jesus, you have a new relationship with sin. Sin is no longer an ally; sin is an enemy. It's no longer a friend; sin is a foe and you will go to war. You'll be like the rabbit, you will run as fast and as far to get away from whatever temptation or sin that is coming your way.

Understanding Temptation

I want to take a moment and go to James. I want to dig a little bit deeper at what exactly temptation is. What is the nature of temptation? Where does it come from? Jesus is talking about temptation and how we can be our own temptation and we can tempt others, but what exactly is the nature of temptation? Notice what we see in James to understand temptation is important to fight temptation. I love how James explains temptation and where it comes from. He says, "Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am being tempted by God,' for God cannot be tempted with evil, and He Himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is allured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death." Where does temptation come from? James says it doesn't come from God. God is not tempting you to sin. God cannot tempt anyone. Now, God can bring a trial in your life that reveals your own sin, but God is not trying to get you to sin. God is not tempting you. He is a good God who loves you, so when you're tempted, don't say why are you tempting me, God? He's not. So then, what is tempting you? James says 'your own desires.' It's your own desires that are causing these temptations.

This is exactly opposite of what our culture believes. In fact, the teaching of Jesus is counter-cultural. Our culture says whatever desire you have is

good, right, and true. Whatever you feel or want, you should celebrate that, enjoy that, and never say no to your feelings because your feelings are who you really are. If you say no to your desires and feelings, then you're not being your authentic self. You're not being fully human if you say no to those desires within you. Jesus comes along, then James comes along, and tells us your body can be your worst enemy. Your own desires can cause you to do things against God. Your own hands, feet, and eyes can lead you astray. Your own desires are often corrupt and do not want the right thing. Look at Adam and Eve. They had a desire, wanting something apart from God. Their desire was not good; it needed to be crucified. We, in our temptations, can't say I have a desire, this must be good, and I must be able to celebrate it, promote it, do it, and enjoy it. No, James is saying temptation comes from your own desires. Here's the truth. We have broken desires. We have perverted desires.

Here's how temptation works. A desire meets an opportunity, and when that opportunity is not fled from or cut off, when it's flirted with, a conception happens. Your desire meets an opportunity and the two get together and you have a good time. Notice what happens. A child is born. It gives birth to a child. That child is sin. Your desire meets opportunity, the two get together, and now there is a child to show for it. There is a sin, an act of sin that you've done against God. What happens now? Unchecked, that sin grows. The baby becomes a toddler, a middle schooler, a high schooler, and then a college student. The child grows and grows, and all of a sudden, this sin that you haven't put to death that you thought was no big deal brings forth death. That's how temptation works. Your desire sees an opportunity, the two get together, and you sin. That sin, if not confessed and repented of, only grows. It grows and grows, and that sin will kill you. That's what James is telling us. That's exactly what Jesus is getting at. We should be serious about our sin because it is a big deal. So how do we stop desire from meeting opportunity? How do we stop the conception from happening? How do we stop the sin from happening? When it does happen, how do we stop the sin from growing? Jesus gives us instructions for how to do that. He goes through these different opportunities that can come by way of sin.

Hands-the things you do

The first one is through your hands. They are the things that you do. Jesus says, "And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire." We're talking about those activities that you participate in. We're talking about the things you touch, the things you go after. Jesus says they can actually be a form of temptation for you. So we need to think about what things we do and things we touch that ultimately lead us to sin. What are those things? Jesus says when you identify an activity, something you do, hold, or touch that always lead you to sin, you should cut it off. I don't know what it is for you. There could be a host of things. Maybe it's just a playful touch with a coworker. It's just a little flirt, a little touch of the arm, a little pat on the back, but it always leaves you feeling like, hmmm, I wonder if there could be more, and this person is not your spouse. This person is not your husband or your wife. What does Jesus say? Cut it off. Stop. It's only going to grow. It's only going to lead to more. Maybe for you it is just checking your bank account because money has become the thing you love more than God. You check it because it's security, looking all the time because it gives you that sense of value. When it goes down, you're devastated, and when it goes up, you're happy. To cut it off, give the password to your spouse and you stop checking it. Put her, or him, in charge of the bank account. Maybe it is the activity of going golfing with your best buddy who you used to love and hang out with. Now, you realize that every time you go golfing with this buddy, it always leads you to sin. It always leads you to coarse joking. It always leads you to filthiness. It always leads you to a place that Jesus does not desire you to be. What do you do? You say I can't golf with you anymore. 'But he's my friend.' Jesus says to cut off your hand if that's what it takes. He says get serious. Maybe it is the trip with the girls. When you go on the trip with the girls, you love it and look forward to it, but it's always just gossip. You always come back with more death than life. It is saying no to some of those activities, those things that you love. It's not repeating our sins; it's repenting of them. It's taking great lengths because it's better to lose that to suffer hell forever.

Feet-the places you go

What about your feet? It is the places you go. Jesus says, "And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It's better to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell." Where are the places your feet take you that you dishonor the Lord with when you get there? Think about it. Where do you go that you often sin, you often dishonor the Lord? Jesus says stop going there. It is like David's balcony. Don't go out on the balcony anymore. Stay in. Don't gaze. Don't look. In Proverbs 7, there's this guy who goes out to the street corner at the wrong time of day, and he goes because he knows a certain girl is going come by, and boom, he's hook, line, and sinker. He's carried off to death. What should he have done? He should never have made the trip. He should have been able to cut his feet off and say I am staying put. Where are the places you go that lead to sin? Maybe your besetting sin is greed and jealousy, so going to the mall is like pouring gasoline on it. What would Jesus say? Stop going to the mall! Don't go ever again. 'Ah, but I've got to have something!' No you don't. You've got to have Jesus. That's what you have to have. Stop going. If gluttony is your besetting sin, don't go to the buffet. What tempts you? Don't go to the place you are going to be tempted. If you know lust has a hold of you, don't stay by yourself alone, go hang out with some people. Don't go in places you know you're going to be tempted. If anger is your sin, stop going to the ballgames because you can't handle it. If you're screaming at high schoolers, that's not good. Just stop going. It's a place that stirs up sin for you. You've got to take some time off before you go back because it's an enjoyment, but for you, it's a sin issue. You can't go and not be filled with anger, malice, or cursing. Maybe for you it's pride. Don't go to the places that make your head swell. Stay away from those places. Jesus is saying whatever it takes, wherever your feet go where you're always likely to sin, stop going there. Don't go there anymore. It's going to hurt. Having a foot gone is going to hurt a little bit, but it's better to suffer a little now than to suffer forever later.

Eyes-the things you look at

Lastly, these are the things we look at. Our eyes are like a window to our soul. The things we look at can often cause us to sin. Think about the screens you look at. Is a screen causing you to sin? For some of us, if we had a conversation with Jesus and told Him our biggest sin, it would be

this phone. I look at it and always go to inappropriate things. I go to social media and get jealous or raged up. I always do things I shouldn't. Jesus would say you need to break your iPhone. 'Ohhh, I couldn't do that!' yeah, that's the point of cutting your hand off. He's not telling you to actually cut your hand off; He's probably telling you to do something worse. That thing you hold that you value more than your hand might be your iPhone. For some of us, that is the thing that always causes us to sin. It's not salt to us; it's sin to us, so He would say get rid of it. They have flip phones that work just fine. If you can't do that, it's because you're not willing to love Jesus more than your sin. Do you see the tension here? There's a fight that's taking place. Maybe it is cable TV. Jesus would say cut the cable. Cut the Ethernet cable. Cut the things coming into your home and coming to your eyes that cause you to sin. Cut them off! Take drastic measures. He says get serious about your sin because if you're not killing it, it is going to be killing you.

The obvious question is does this mean that a sin can cause me to lose my salvation? Does this mean that if I sin, I'm going to lose my salvation with Jesus and go to hell? Is that what Jesus is teaching? I don't think Jesus is teaching that at all. I think He is teaching that if you love your sin more than Jesus and you're not willing to take drastic measure to get rid of the temptation and the conduits that bring sin into your life, if you're not willing to cut, tear, and drown, then the truth is you probably don't really know Jesus. You don't really have salvation. You don't have a Savior because a Savior saves you from your sins, from the power of your sins, from the penalty of your sins, and, one day, from the very presence of your sin. So right now, there is a fight that you should be engaged in, and it is to put to death your sin. You're not just neutral. You're going to war at temptation. You're going to war at all the conduits that bring temptation and sin into your life. You're cutting them out; you're cutting them off because you want to be salt.

Sin to Salt

The last thing that Jesus says is we go from sin to salt. It's a little bit of a confusing text. We don't have time to unpack it, so I just want to read it and give you some highlights. "For everyone will be salted with fire. Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, how will you make it salty again?"

Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.” I love this transition from sin to salt. Sin is the thing that erodes, corrupts, the thing that rots. Salt is the thing that preserves, that seasons, that is good. Jesus is trying to make the transition from don't be sin; be salt. Don't pursue sin; pursue salt. He says everyone will be salted with fire. There's a lot of discussion about this verse. There are a lot of different views on what this verse could mean. I just think He's trying to say unbelievers and believers will be in some type of a testing of a trial. There will be salt and fire. I think for unbelievers, it's final judgment. For believers, it's right here, right now the trials that we go through are seasoning us with salt and fire to bring out the sin that we need to confess, the sin we need to put to death so that we grow in holiness. Why? Because what does the verse want us to do? Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with everyone. That's the goal. Not that you would tempt everyone with your life to stumble, but that you would have salt so that when people see you they wouldn't stumble, but they would stand. Your actions would cause a good reaction, not a negative reaction. And you would be watchful of those things, your eyes, hands, and feet, so that you would participate in things that are salty, not sinful. When you see your hand, or eye, or foot being given to sin rather than salt, you go to war. You chase down what that desire, the conduit, the connection is, and how do you break it so that you pursue holiness. Holiness is a big deal to God. Holiness is part of the gospel. When we come to Christ, He gives us His righteousness, and then every day we walk that out. Every day we grow in godliness, we grow more and more in the image of Christ.

This has been a tough text, a tough text to study, tough to preach, and tough to hear. What is the big message Jesus is trying to say? You need to be killing sin or sin will kill you and those around you. If you're not killing sin, if you're not fighting sin, then you have no security that you're in Christ. If you're in Christ, if you've put your faith and trust in Him, and He's redeemed you and saved you, your new life is a life putting to death the deeds of the flesh, a life pursuing holiness. If you're not doing those things, you might not know the Savior. If you're not willing to give up, then you might find yourself holding the very thing that is going to take you apart from Christ forever because that was more important than God. That reveals your true god. It wasn't Jesus; it was something else. Which one

are you? Are you the dog or the rabbit? Are you the dog running around thinking sin's not that big of a deal? Yeah, I stumble. Yeah, I do these different things, but it's not that big of a deal, because it's just supper. It's just a snack. No, what the rabbit knows is this run, this fight, is not a game. This run and this fight is life or death. Either I kill or I be killed. That's what a believer sees as their relationship with sin. We kill or we be killed. Whatever those things are for you, personally, that are conduits of temptation and sin, Jesus is telling you to give it up. It might hurt. It might be like cutting off your hand or foot. It's going to hurt, but suffering now for the sake of Jesus is better than suffering an eternity apart from Jesus because the fight, the suffer, reveals if you know Jesus or not. If you know Jesus, you'll be passionate about fighting the sin and temptation all around you.