

Body or Soul?; Mathew 5:29-30

²⁹ Now if your right eye is causing you to sin, tear it out and throw it away from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your *body*, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. ³⁰ And if your right hand is causing you to sin, cut it off and throw it away from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your *body*, than for your whole body to go into hell.

Last week, we heard Jesus continue His teaching, this time illustrating how the sin of lust _____ interpersonal relationships. We learned that from Jesus' point of view that once we get to the point of looking with lust, we're already sinning, and it can only get worse from there. Just how _____ does God take this type of sin, and what are we to do about it?

Jesus words speak primarily about 2 things: priorities and mortification.

When they thought about Jesus' words, they would have realized that getting rid of their right eye, first off would mean that they would just be lusting after women with their left eye _____. It would have made them realize that the problem wasn't with their eyes, it was in their _____. It was not a problem outside of themselves, with the things that they were perceiving, but a problem inside with their _____ human nature—and that's the _____ that Jesus is trying to make to them.

Priorities

Jesus affirms that your right eye is valuable—God made it, of course it is. But He is saying that there is something that you have that is more valuable—your _____. He's saying that even as gross as plucking out your own eyeball is, and you would never do that because your eye is so valuable to you, then consider the damage that you are doing to your soul by _____. Jesus affirms that, if you could get rid of the lusts of the eye by plucking out your eye, then it would be a _____ trade. This clearly illustrates the _____ nature of sin. Romans 6:23 that **23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gracious gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.** Plucking out your own eye won't kill you, but sin eventually will. The world will tell you to do whatever you can to get the _____ for yourself, and hold onto it with a death grip until you die. But Jesus stresses the importance of the eternal over the importance of our _____ life here on earth. As 1 John 5:13 says **The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.** God's perspective is an eternal one. Psalm 90:4 tells us **For a thousand years in Your sight Are like yesterday when it passes by, Or like a watch in the night.** We need to get God's perspective, and understand that this life is just a _____, a preparation time for the next life.

Mortification

Our flesh is always going to want to go after wickedness, but we must recognize this deceitful heart that we have and _____ to indulge it's desires. This is what Jesus is getting at when He says it's _____ to pluck out our own eye, so we don't end up in hell. 2 Timothy 2:19 reminds us that **"Everyone who names the name of the Lord is to keep away from wickedness."** And Paul continues his advice to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:21-22 saying **21 Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be an implement for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work. 22 Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.** And how do we do this? How do we cleanse ourselves from wickedness as believers? We _____ the flesh. We refuse to let it carry out it's evil desires. We follow Jesus' command to Jesus Matthew 16:24-26 **24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. 25 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26 "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?**

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The right side is the place of special skill, blessing or honor. When Israel was exiled to Babylon, away from the promised land, away from Israel and Jerusalem, they wept and sang in Psalm 137:5-6 **If I forget you, Jerusalem, May my right hand forget its skill.** Their population worked mostly with their hands, so they depended on their _____ to make a living. And so, Jesus is also urging people not to sin in what they do, after he has emphasized that they should not sin in what they see. Whatever we give away to God, whatever we let Him have of our lives is that we get to _____ eternally. Unless we have our _____ straight, and understand the importance of the eternal and the spiritual over the physical and temporary, we are never going to be able to _____ the flesh.