

## DECISIVELY CUT OFF & CAST OUT

Mark 9:43-48 (NASB)

43 “And **if your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off**; it is better for you to enter life crippled, than having your two hands, to go into hell, into the unquenchable fire,

44 [where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.]

45 “And **if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off**; it is better for you to enter life lame, than having your two feet, to be cast into hell,

46 [where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.]

47 “And **if your eye causes you to stumble, cast it out**; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes, to be cast into hell,

48 where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.

Clearly, the issue in view here is eternal hellfire and how to avoid it. Christ was not teaching “salvation by amputation”. To really effectively stop sin, one would have to be decapitated. That would take care of it! Earlier in Mark 7:20-23, Jesus clearly taught that the real problem of sin is from within. It is a heart problem. Merely amputating outward limbs is not going to solve an internal heart problem. So, what is Jesus saying here in Mark 9?

In view is the NATURE of true REPENTANCE which is involved in a genuine saving faith which involves the will. Jesus in a hyperbolic and figurative way is illustrating the nature of true repentance. **Christ is talking about a radical response to sin.** Without such repentance, the consequence is “*to go into hell, into the unquenchable fire*”.

Repentance is a radical change of mind with regard to sin. It is the attitude that says, “I am so radically turning from sin that I would be willing to cut off a limb to prevent sin”. It is a disposition of the heart that completely renounces sin. That in effect is what Jesus is saying. Within ourselves this is impossible. This is a result of the Spirit’s work. It is the goodness of God that leads one to repentance (cf. Rom. 2:4).

“Does this passage teach that true believers can finally be lost and spend eternity in hell? Taken by itself it might suggest that. But taken with the consistent teaching of the NT, we must conclude that anyone who goes to hell was never a genuine Christian at all. A person might profess to be born again and appear to go on well for some time. **But if that person consistently indulges the flesh, it is clear he was never saved.**” – William MacDonald, Believer’s Bible Commentary, p. 1345

“You know nothing of true repentance and therefore of true and saving faith. Oh, you occasionally have a little whimper in the closet when your conscience gets so active that you can’t live with it and you whimper and cry and ask God for a little help, and then you go right back with your hand and your eyeball firmly attached. Oh yes, once in a while you will take a dull paring knife and scratch your hand and occasionally you scratch around your eyeballs, but you haven’t begun to CUT OFF AND PLUCK OUT!

...The cross does not give us a minor shift or two with regard to a few of our ethical and moral and religious values. The cross radically disrupts the very center and citadel of your life from self, to Christ. ... What are the focal points of the reign of your self? If you’ve gone to the cross in union with Christ it’s been **SHATTERED!!!** ...You learned enough, and you learned what to say properly enough to be accepted for what you professed yourself to be on earth, but now the Day of Judgment has come, and the TRUTH is now to be known.”

– **Pastor Al Martin** in a message entitled “Truth”.

**Luke 13:5 (NKJV)**

**5** ....unless you repent you will all likewise perish.”