



World Christian Fellowship

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Caring like the children in the Kingdom

Matthew 18:5-9

Matthew 16 Jesus said I will build My Church.

Matthew 18 Jesus shows how to live in that Church as a Kingdom.

Matthew 28 Jesus tells the What the Church should do.

Matthew 18 becomes the cornerstone for the church.

Jesus is building His church, but we need to know how to live in that Church Christ is building.

Matthew 18:1-5, Entering the Church.

Matthew 18:6-9, Caring in the Church.

Matthew 18:10-14, Protecting in the Church.

Matthew 18:15-20, Discipling in the Church.

Matthew 18:21-35, Forgiving in the Church.

Before the Church should do its purpose it should know how to conduct itself.

Matthew 18:5-9, *Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me.* ⁶ *“But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.* ⁷ *Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes!* ⁸ *“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.* ⁹ *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.*

The disciples, children of God, who belong to Jesus Christ, are provoking one another to sin.

By arguing and hassling and debating about who is the greatest in the kingdom, they are provoking each other to bitterness, to rivalry, to ambition, to pride, to envy, to jealousy, to self-seeking.

They are mutually causing each other to sin.

Our Lord takes on this matter by instructing them as to the importance of not causing one another to sin.

How you treat God's people has always been a great concern to God.

Psalm 105:5-10, *Remember His marvelous works which He has done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth,* ⁶ *O seed of Abraham His servant, You children of Jacob, His chosen ones!* ⁷ *He is the Lord our God; His judgments are in all the earth.* ⁸ *He remembers His covenant forever, The word which He commanded, for a thousand generations,* ⁹ *The covenant which He made with Abraham, And His oath to Isaac,* ¹⁰ *And confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, To Israel as an everlasting covenant,*

A reminder of God as the covenant-keeping God, the faithful God.

V 12 says that God remembered the covenant even when there were but a few men in number and sojourners when they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people.

God remembered the covenant not only in the times they were in the land but the times they were scattered and, in the times, they were drifters and the times they were sojourners God was still faithful.

Psalms 105:14-15, *He permitted no one to do them wrong; Yes, He rebuked kings for their sakes,* ¹⁵ *Saying, "Do not touch My anointed ones, And do My prophets no harm."*

The Psalmist saying that God has always been zealous for the protection of his people.

He has always been concerned that his people be cared for and that anyone who wounds his people, anyone who brings either physical or spiritual harm against his people is touching God's anointed.

That brings God into the picture in terms of a holy reaction.

This all started in Genesis chapter 12.

When God first set out to call a nation from the loins of Abraham.

Genesis 12:3, *I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

From the very beginning, how one treats God's children is a determiner as to the blessing or cursing of God on that life.

How you treat God's people is a determiner of blessing or of cursing.

Genesis 27:29, *Let peoples serve you, And nations bow down to you. Be master over your brethren, And let your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you, And blessed be those who bless you!"*

Again, how we treat God's people is a determiner of blessing or cursing.

God has always desired the positive influence on his people. When God laid out the law by which Israel was to live, he wanted that law not only to be held up so that each man could be holy but so that each man would not be causing other men to sin.

Not only are we as they were responsible for our own sinfulness but for the sinfulness of those around us.

Deuteronomy 24:4, *then her former husband who divorced her must not take her back to be his wife after she has been defiled; for that is an abomination before the Lord, and you shall not bring sin on the land which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance.*

Not only are you not to sin, but you are not to cause someone to sin.

This passage is in reference to an illegitimate divorce.

When you put away your wife without grounds, you make her an adulterous.

You make whoever marries her an adulterer.

You become an adulterer when you remarry and you make an adulterous out of the woman that you marry, so don't do that.

Don't put away your wife without cause. God is very concerned that we not cause his people to sin.

Matthew 18.

Jesus brings up this whole matter of our responsibility in regard to each other.

Most people that call themselves Christians have some concern for their own holiness.

But I wonder if we ever stop to think about the holiness of the lives of other people.

Maybe we are content with ourselves, and we don't worry about how we affect anyone else.

That's quite contrary to what God is saying and what Christ is teaching in this passage.

We must not only do no evil in our own lives but we must never cause another Christian to sin. That is the specific message of this passage.

A. Principle.

V 5, *Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me.*

It is impossible to separate God from His people.

It is impossible to separate the Lord from His people.

Zechariah 2:8, *For thus says the Lord of hosts: "He sent Me after glory, to the nations which plunder you; for he who touches you touches the apple of His eye.*

God says when you touch Israel, you put your finger in My eye.
Irritates Me.

The most vulnerable part of the exposed anatomy.
The most sensitive thing to be wounded or injured.
You are poking God in the most sensitive area when you touch His people.

Why?

Because when you receive His people, you are receiving Him according to **V 5**.

The implication is that all the people of God bound up with Him as one.

The concept of the believer's unity to Jesus is the heart and soul of Christianity.

- We are not people who believe in a system.
- We are united with God!

We are one with Jesus Christ.

We don't just follow His teachings but one with Him.

Our Lord taught this principle repeatedly.

Matthew 10:40, *“He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.”*

Luke 10:16, *He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me.”*

John 13:20, *Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.”*

John 14:20, *At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.*

Apostle Paul is indicted on the Damascus Road and dropped to his knees before the Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts 9:4, *Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?”*

Very familiar biblical truth that God's life is bound up with His people. When you touch His people, you are touching Him.

Very important foundational principle.

Now we could dive deeply into this truth.
It is literally all over the New Testament.

1 John 2:24, *Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father.*

1 John 3:24, *Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.*

1 John 4:13, *By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.*

We are in Christ.

We are invisibly linked with the very person who is our Lord and Saviour.

- ✓ He is the vine; we are the branches.
- ✓ He is the head; we are the body.
- ✓ He is the foundation; we are the building.
- ✓ He is the husband; we are the wife.

You can't separate yourself from Christ.

You are in Him.

The believer is one with Christ, for the positive affirmation.

The realization of the negative features of dragging Him into your evil.

He is unstained by it as the sunlight is unstained, though it shines on the grossest sin. But nonetheless, you abuse His holiness in such activity.

Paul argues against sex sin by the union of the believer to Christ.

V 5, *Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me.*

How you treat Christians is exactly how you treat Jesus Christ.

Anybody.

To receive as a guest, to welcome, to treat with kindness and love therefore.

To embrace someone, to take them in, to receive them in My name, because they belong to Me, because they represent Me.

When you embrace one who belongs to Jesus Christ, when you welcome them as a guest, when you treat them with care and protection and kindness and with love, you are doing that to Jesus Christ.

“One little child.”

The child that Jesus has in His arms while He was teaching this chapter is an analogy.

The child is a demonstration, a symbol, an illustration.

The same child Jesus used in **V 1-4**.

No matter how humble,

No matter how lacking in sophistication,

No matter how lacking in power or in fame or in grandeur,

No matter if it is an ignoble,

That little one who belongs to Jesus Christ, even one such one is to be received as if you were receiving Jesus Christ himself.

So how you treat Christians is how you treat him.

Matthew 25:34-46, *Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: ³⁵for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; ³⁶I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’*

³⁷“Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? ³⁸When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? ³⁹Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ ⁴⁰And the King will answer

and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'
⁴¹ *"Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: ⁴²for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.'*
⁴⁴ *"Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?'* ⁴⁵ *Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.'* ⁴⁶ *And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."*

How you treat God's people is how you treat Jesus Christ.

This is the positive side of the principle.

B. Pitfall/ Danger.

The negative.

V 6, *"But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.*

“Whosoever,”
in or out of the church,
saved or unsaved,
Christian or non-Christian.

How do you offend a Christian?

By causing them to sin.

To catch them in a trap, a death trap, a sin trap, to make them stumble into evil.

Very opposite of verse 5 where you protect, care, and receive them as belongs to Jesus Christ.

If Christ were to give you a life and say, “This belongs to Me, would you protect that for Me?”

How it is with every Christian?

When you care for every Christian as one who belongs intimately personally to Jesus Christ who is one with Him in spiritual union, that is the way you ought to receive God's people.

But on the other hand, if you cause one of these little ones who believe in Me, and there we find that he can't be talking about physical children.

Micron, little, tiny infants can't believe in Him.

He is talking about those believers who are classified in this whole chapter as infants or childlike.

When you cause them to sin, it would be profit you instead of that, that a millstone were hanged about your neck and you were drowned in the depths of the sea.

You had been better off dead than alive offending a Christian, making him sin.

God is not only concerned that we not sin but that we not make other people sin.

Better you should be dead, beneficial you should be dead, profitable that you should be dead rather than do that, preferable. Now the language here is really vivid.

In those days they crushed corn to make flour, to make bread. They would have in the home a little stone and it would be sort of bowled out. Another stone and they would just go around until they crushed the corn. That is not the stone that is referred to here. This is the millstone.

This is the one that was pulled by the mule, the one that Samson was tied up to when he was grinding grain in his blindness. A beast had to pull it.

A massive, huge stone, weighing tons, would come into their minds when they heard. It would be better if you took a stone like that, tied it around your neck drowned far out in the open sea.

Jews didn't drown people for any kind of crime. It was to them a horrible, unimaginable punishment. To be drowned all alone with a millstone around your neck in some far-off region of the ocean was terrifying.

The Romans did that.
The Jews didn't.

That is what Jesus says would be better for you, a lonely, terrorizing, shocking, painful end to your life.

You would be better off dead with the worst kind of death imaginable than to offend a Christian, to cause that Christian to sin.

Oh, what a lesson. I can imagine there were a few gulps in the room because the disciples had been around there for a while making each other jealous, envious, bitter, resentful, hateful, proud, self-seeking, causing each other to sin. So the thought is marvelous.

Those who come into God's kingdom are small infant.

They are children.
They are the weak.
They are the lowly.
Their own resources are limited.

They need care.
They need protection.
They need guarding.
They don't need exposure to danger.

God expects that with His family, and we must never cause His children to sin. It is an enormous crime.

Think of it, father, and mother, think of it in relation to your own children.

Do you cause them to sin?

To ruin the beautiful character of a saint,
To mar the lovely beauty of God's child,
To scar the image of Jesus Christ in a believer by seducing him
or her to evil is a heinous crime.

You would be better to be drowned in the middle of a sea with
a millstone.

How do we make people sin and how can we avoid it?

1. Directly leading people to sin

The **first way** we make people sin is by directly tempting them.

- Satan can use us,
- The world can use us,
- The flesh can use us,

To be the direct source of temptation.

Better you should be dead than seduce young people.

Eve was the classic illustration.

She sinned and then she just caused Adam to sin. He wasn't even deceived.

Aaron who caused the whole nation of Israel to sin in the golden calf.

Jeroboam in **1 Kings 12-18, 21&22 chapters**.

In all biblical history of somebody who makes somebody else to sin. He led the whole nation into idolatry, and Jeroboam sinned and made Israel to sin.

All throughout **1 and 2 Kings** as it chronicles all the kings, it says of many of them, *"And he did like Jeroboam who made Israel to sin."*

Jeroboam not only was a vile, wretched, ungodly sinner himself, but he led the whole nation into sin. He is written down for history.

You just read **1 and 2 Kings** and you will see his name repeatedly.

That is a terrifying indictment.

Matthew 5:32, *But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.*

You make your wives into adulteresses.

The Pharisees making their women into adulteresses because they divorced them without right grounds and when they remarried, they become adulteresses.

Whoever marries them is an adulterer. They remarry, they are adulterers, and the ones they remarry are adulteresses.

Revelation 2:14, *But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.*

What is the doctrine of Balaam?

Who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit fornication.

The doctrine of Balaam is teaching God's people to sin.

When you teach God's people to sin, you permit the doctrine of Balaam to sin.

Revelation 2:20, *Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.*

She teaches false religion and false living.

Jezebel is condemned because she seduced people into sin.

Balaam was condemned because he seduced Israel into sin.

Jeroboam was condemned because he seduced Israel into sin.

God does not look favorably on those who make his people sin.

Now it is not to say that they are not responsible on their own, but it is to say that when the judgment is passed out, not only the one who did the sin will be held culpable but the one who led that one into sin.

So different is God from this that confidently can we pray, and the disciples' prayer lead us not into Temptation.

Knowing full well that God will never do that.

James 1:13, *Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.*

God would never do that to His people.

God leads them away from that.

If you are living on His terms, then you are going to be doing the same thing.

The illustration of Peter.

Luke 22:31-32, *And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. ³² But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren."*

The Lord doesn't lead His people into it.

He leads them away from it.

If we want to be Christlike, we must have that same perspective.

So, the first way that we can lead people into sin is by direct temptation, by running a business where we do something wrong and make Christian people a part of it.

Where we lead our children into evil for our own gratification or by our own stupidity.

By doing like Jezebel, by teaching doctrine that isn't biblical. You commit the most heinous of all crimes.

That is why the Bible speaks so forcefully against false teachers, because they lead God's people into the worse kind of sin, and that is a misrepresentation of who God is. False teachers are the ultimate who are guilty in this regard.

2. Indirectly leading them to sin.

The second way in which we can lead people into sin is indirectly.

This usually comes by provoking people.

Ephesians 6:4, *And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.*

You can do that by overprotection.

You hover over them so much they never begin to feel any liberty. They never develop their own personality. They feel held in and they get resentful, bitter, angry, and rebellious.

You can do it by favoritism.

Favoring one child over another so the other one becomes envious and jealous.

You can do it by being overambitious.

You can do it by pushing them to achieve levels that are impossible for them, and they have absolutely no sense of accomplishment. No sense of affirmation.

No sense satisfaction.

They get resentful and bitter toward those who push them without ever encouraging them.

You can do it without sacrifice.

You can do the same to your children by failing to sacrifice for them, by making sure they never get in your way, they never intrude on your life. They always feel like a burden. They always feel like a problem. They begin to look at themselves as a pain to everybody around them. Then they become bitter and resentful.

You can do it by expecting perfection.

You can do it to them by failing to allow them to make some mistakes now and then, by expecting some kind of perfection.

You can do it by neglect.

You can do it by bitter, angry words that cut them down and cause them to feel angry and bitter toward you.

You can do it by physical punishment that's abusive.

You can do shades of those things not only in a parent-child relationship but in a husband-wife relationship.

In any relationship, you can drive a person to sinning by your lack of sensitivity, by your lack of care, your lack of concern.

You can cause Christians to sin directly or indirectly by being a seducer on the one hand or by just being an exasperator on the other hand.

3. Being a sinful example.

By setting a sinful example.

If we set a sinful example, we will lead other people into sin, perhaps people in our own family, people that know us and follow our life.

A little boy who one night stole out of the house in the midst of the snow in the dead of the winter, and his father was going to the bar.

He was an alcoholic, and he was just taking one step after another. He heard something behind him, and he noticed his little five-year-old was hopping from one footstep to the next and he said, "Where are you going?" He said, "I am just following your footsteps, daddy."

That was the last time the man ever took a drink.

Somebody's following in your footsteps too!

If you just have an example that isn't what it ought to be, you are leading other people into sinning.

If you are not faithful as a person ought to be faithful to the things of God, to the people of God, to the Word of God, to the throne of God in prayer.

If you are not faithful to live an uncompromising life, you are setting a pattern that will lead other people into sin. Because it will say to them, "You don't have to do these things, they are optional."

People are watching us, and we must be careful.

We want to be careful of our example because people are following us, and so we don't want to lead them into sin by overt acts of sin.

1 Timothy 4:12, *Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*

Paul said Timothy should be an example to the believer in all things. Otherwise, you will lead them into sin.

The assumption is they are following you.

1 Corinthians 11:1, *Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.*

Very important.

Another thing in example idea.

Not only that we set a bad example when we lead people right into sin, but we set a bad example also when we abuse our liberty.

We are not talking about necessarily the right and the wrong things but the things that are in the middle, that gray area.

When we get the feeling that we are so free in Christ that we can just do whatever we want no matter how it affects anybody else, we will lead people into sin.

Romans 14 is based on a premise.

Some people see things differently than other people.

There are Gentiles who are saved out of paganism.

They have been delivered from gross occultic idol worship paganism and immorality. They come to Christ. They go over to somebody's house who's a Christian and been a long time, they are going to have dinner.

The Christian lays out the dinner and they say that was the best meat I have had in a long time.

Where did you get that?

We bought that at the temple of Diana.

Suddenly gag.

You ask them what's wrong with the meat at the temple of Diana?

The price is probably very good, but do you know where it came from?

People came to make their offering to Diana. There were only so many priests. The priests could not consume all the meats.

What did they do?

From the temple of Dian.

Is there anything wrong?

Paul says there is nothing wrong with that because an idol isn't anything anyway, so eat up and enjoy.

However, if it's going to gag somebody who just came out of idolatry, then don't eat it.

In other words, you have got to be a little bit sensitive to the conscience of somebody else.

Until they move along in their freedom.

Romans 14:13-15, *Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother's way. ¹⁴I know and am convinced by the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean of itself; but to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. ¹⁵Yet if your brother is grieved because of your food, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died.*

Why would you want to destroy the person?

Why would you want to lead him into sin?

What would his sin be?

- He would condemn you.
- He would judge you.
- He would be angry at you.
- He would feel guilty.
- He would push himself deeper into legalism.
- He would misinterpret his freedom.

Romans 14:21, *It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak.*

In our society drinking wine is still a stumbling block to some people that's why I don't do that.

A perfectly good liberty to give up for the sake of those would be offended.

1 Corinthians 8:9-11, *But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak. ¹⁰ For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols? ¹¹ And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?*

They had a little snack bar at the temple, and you went down to the temple, you saw it was a good price.

You are sitting there eating and somebody comes along and says that I am free to eat there too.

Only he goes in, and he eats, only his conscience can't handle that and he feels guilty. He feels intimidated by that, and he goes out and begins to resent you and he begins to crawl back further from his liberty and deeper into his legalism.

He loses the growth that he would have in the Lord. He hasn't gained anything. You have caused him to sin, so don't do that.

The example arena, two things come to mind.

We cannot lead people into sin by the direct example of sinning.
We cannot lead people into sin by the abuse of our liberty.

The point is to raise our consciousness to the fact that we not only are to deal with sin in our own life but in the life of those around us.

4. Leading them to unrighteousness.

Failing to lead them to righteousness.

You may say that I don't go around seducing people into sin. I don't go around provoking people into sin directly. I certainly don't want to abuse my liberty. I don't give an example of sinfulness. I just basically do my own thing, mind my own business. I am trying my best.

Maybe that's the biggest sin of all!

You are not stimulating somebody else to righteousness.
Repeatedly the New Testament talks about provoking people to righteousness.

It talks about encouraging them to be righteous.
It talks about building them up.

Hebrews 10:24, *And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works,*

Stimulating them to love and good works.

We are to be out there stimulating one another to righteousness.

The condemnation of the prophets in **Jeremiah 23** was that they did not lead God's people into holiness. They did not lead God's people into righteousness.

God has given you spiritual gifts, talents, and ministry opportunity.

Unless you are using that to the fullest of your ability and God's giftedness, you are not feeding into the body of Christ what is an element of necessity for them to grow.

So, you can't just sit back and say that I am not doing any of the things I shouldn't be doing. You got to get out there and be doing the one thing you should be doing.

I don't want to be guilty of anything to anybody, so I am going to buy a cabin in the desert. I don't want this millstone thing.

No, the idea is you got to stay in the community of the people of God and stimulate them to love and God's works. Lead them to righteousness and set a positive example for them.

Be a leader positively into that which is right and be a provoker into that which is right.

- Instead of seducing people to sin, lead them to righteousness.
- Instead of causing them to be provoked and exasperated, cause them to be joyous and full of praise.
- Instead of setting an example to sin, set an example to holiness.
- Instead of misusing your liberty, use your liberty rightly so that they grow and are nurtured.

Just be the positive influence.

Our life is a signpost, and if it isn't pointing the right way, then I wonder how many people are going the wrong direction.

It would be better for you than to do that if you were dead, drowned.

**Are you influencing them for God? or
Are you causing them to sin?**

C. Prevention

How can you prevent it?

V 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. ⁹ 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.*

It is a principle our Lord gave in the sermon on the mount to the unbelievers.

Matthew 5:29-30, *If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. ³⁰ And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.*

Better to live your life maimed than to go to hell forever. Jesus is not literally telling them to chop off all their limbs, but he is saying take drastic measures with sin or you will go to hell.

That principle was given to unbelievers.

But here our Lord just pulls that same principle up, and here it can relate to unbelievers because unbelievers can be in view in verse 7.

- You unbelievers, you better deal drastically with your sin, because sin damns.
- To believers, if sin is that serious which damns and should be dealt with drastically, then we better deal drastically with it also.

So, what is the prevention then?

It isn't to concentrate on what you are doing with others, it's to concentrate on what you are doing with yourself.

Deal drastically with your own sin.

Put a watch over your eyes.

Guard your hands and your feet, where they go and what they do.

Be careful what you see.

Take drastic measures, because you will never be able to keep from causing someone else to sin unless you are not sinning yourself.

Because if you are in sin, the pattern is there being demonstrated to others.

Take drastic action when getting rid of whatever causes you to sin.

Take drastic action; don't flirt with it. Get rid of it.

1 Corinthians 9:27, *But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.*

Jesus isn't dealing with some kind of wooden literalism, or all the disciples would be stumps at this point, and so would all of us.

Jesus is simply in a metaphorical way saying, "Deal dramatically and drastically with your sin."

Nothing is so precious that it should be maintained if it leads us to sin.

Just as sin leads men to hell, it can lead the believer to the depths of chastening and lead another Christian into sin.

Principle: Every Christian is one with Christ, and when you receive a Christian, you receive Christ.

Pitfall: If you offend a Christian by causing them to sin through your indirect provocation, through your example of evil,

through your misused liberty, or through your failure to give righteous direction to that life.

If you cause them to sin, it would be better for you to be drowned immediately than to do that because the price for doing that is so high.

Prevention: Instead of doing that, take drastic measures to deal with your own sin.

Why would a Christian want to assist Satan in his work of tempting God's children to do evil?