

BIBLE READING DAY 21, SATURDAY: MARCH 19

Jesus Again Foretells His Death, Mark 9:30–32

They went on from there and passed through Galilee. But Jesus did not want anyone to know of his presence, for he was teaching his disciples. And he said to them, “The Son of Man will be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him; and after he is killed, he will rise again after three days.”

But they did not understand the saying and feared to ask him about it.

Jesus Pays the Temple Tax, Matthew 17:24–27

When they arrived at Capernaum, those who collected the half-shekel came to Peter and said, “Doesn’t your teacher pay the half-shekel?”

“Yes, indeed,” replied Peter.

And when Peter came into the house, Jesus spoke first, saying “What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth collect toll or tribute—from their sons, or from others?”

“From others,” replied Peter.

“Then the sons are free,” said Jesus. “However, lest we offend them, go to the sea and cast a hook and take the first fish that comes up. When you open its mouth, you will find a shekel. Take that and give it to them for me, and for you.”

Ministry of Reconciliation, Matthew 18:1–35; Mark 9:33-50; Luke 9:46-50

At that time the disciples came to Jesus, asking, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

Then Jesus called a little child to him and set him in the midst of them and said, “I tell you truly, unless you are completely changed in attitude and become as little children, you will not even enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself as this little child, he is ‘the greatest’ in the kingdom of heaven.

“Whoever receives one such little child in my name receives me,” said Jesus, “but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone hung about his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

“Woe to the world because of the temptations to sin! It is inevitable that temptations will come, but woe to the man by whom the temptation comes! Therefore, if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life maimed or crippled than, having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the eternal fire. 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 than, having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire.

“See that you do not regard one of these little ones as unimportant; for I tell you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father in heaven. What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go seek the one that went astray? And if he finds it, I tell you truly, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray. Even so, it is not the will of my Father in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.”

“If your brother wrongs you,” said Jesus, “go and tell him his fault privately. If he will listen to you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not listen, take one or two others with you, that every word may be confirmed by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. If he refuses to listen to the church, let him be regarded as a pagan and a tax collector. I tell you truly, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

“Again, I say to you that if two of you shall agree on earth concerning anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”

Then Peter came to Jesus and said, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Until seven times?”

“I say to you, not seven times,” replied Jesus, “but seventy times seven. For the kingdom of heaven is like a king who decided to settle accounts with his servants. When he began the settlement, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. And as he was unable to pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, and his wife and children and everything he had, and payment to be made. Then the servant fell before him and cried, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ Then the lord of that servant was moved with pity, and he released him and forgave him the debt.

“But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. And he seized him by the throat and began to choke him, saying, ‘Pay me what you owe!’ Then his fellow servant fell and began to beg him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ But he refused and had him arrested and thrown into prison till he should pay the debt.

“When his fellow servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord called him to appear before him, and said, ‘You wicked servant! Because you implored me, I forgave you all that debt. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow servant, even as I had mercy on you?’ And his lord was angry and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all his debt.

“And that is exactly what my heavenly Father will do to you, if you do not each forgive his brother with all your heart.”

Jesus Leaves Galilee, Matthew 8:18-22; Luke 9:57–62

Now as they were journeying along the road, a certain man said to Jesus, “I intend to follow you wherever you go.”

“The foxes have dens and the birds of the air have nests,” replied Jesus, “but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.”

To another man, Jesus said, “Follow me.”

“Lord,” he replied, “let me first go and bury my father.”

“Leave the dead to bury their dead,” said Jesus, “but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.”

“Lord, I will follow you,” said another, “but first, let me close my affairs at home.”

But Jesus said, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and then looks back to the things behind is fit for the service of the kingdom of God.”

Approximate Timeline of Jesus’s Public Ministry

EARLY LIFE	EARLY MINISTRY	1 st Feast of PASSOVER	SUMMER	1 st Feast of BOOTHS	WINTER	2 nd Feast of PASSOVER	SUMMER	FALL	WINTER	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL	WINTER	SPRING
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DEVOTIONAL DAY 21 (SATURDAY, MARCH 19)

Cut it out!

Based on Matthew 18:1-35; Mark 9:33-50; Luke 9:46-50

Would you cut off your one of your hands or one of your feet if they caused you to do something wrong? As a parent, if you caught one of your children stealing something with their hands, would you cut off their hand? This would be a dramatic and permanent way of stopping us from sinning, would it not? The result would be that we would be crippled for life.

Isn't this what Jesus is telling us to do in Mark 9:43 – 47? Jesus says we should “cut off” whatever is causing us to sin, whether it be our hand, foot, or eye. Seems like an unsettling requirement.

No, Jesus is not teaching you and me to literally cut off any limb or body part, but He wants us to be so appalled by the sin in our lives that we should be willing to take the most drastic action necessary to remove it, namely amputation.

We know that as Christians we will be tempted to sin. Satan and his demons gain great satisfaction when you fall into temptation because it removes you further away from a growing relationship with God. The reality, though, is we all struggle with temptations. How do you deal with the temptations of greed, lust, pride, not forgiving others, foul language – whatever sin tempts you?

We must recognize that this sin in our path must be dealt with. Jesus gives us a clear way to deal with it. Cut it off. Amputate it. How does this apply to our daily life? We must take the most severe of actions to get the temptation out of our pathway.

If you struggle with lust, what can you do to amputate this sin? Cut off anything that allows lust to creep in and tempt you. Maybe putting a block on your computer to keep you from seeing any inappropriate pictures. Don't spend time alone with anyone where you could be tempted to sin sexually. Throw away those books with explicit ungodly sexual scenes in them.

*“We are saved by faith alone,
but the faith that saves is never alone.”*

— Martin Luther

Many years ago, I found myself getting further and further away from God. I was spending lots of time with non-believers in just normal friendship situations. I was enjoying fellowship with them. Sadly, I realized that I was not having a godly influence on them, but I was falling into their lifestyle. What was the solution of how to get back on track with my relationship with God? I had to make the difficult decision to stop fellowshiping with them. I had to amputate that relationship for a while. Until I was strong enough in my faith to withstand their ungodly influences on me, I had to cut off that relationship.

Is it easy to amputate sin? Sometimes not. You will need to spend time in God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to lead you to live a life pleasing to God. Fellowshiping with other believers who have a strong faith will help keep you accountable for obeying God's Word.

Dear God, I pray that You will give me the courage and strength to radically remove the things in my life that do not honor you. I want to show my love to you by obeying your Word and hating sin just like your Son Jesus did. Thank you for giving us your Holy Spirit to give us the power to overcome the sin temptations that cross our paths. Amen.

--By Tim Doerbaum

WRITE DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS IN RESPONSE TO WHAT YOU HAVE READ:

WHAT DID GOD SAY TO ME?

PRAYER: WHAT DID I SAY TO GOD?

ACTS OF PRAYER: ADORATION, CONFESSION, THANKSGIVING, SUPPLICATION (How God Can Supply Needs)

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