

Mark 9:47

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire:

Analysis

Jesus warned about eyes: 'if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire' (ἐὰν ὁ ὄφθαλμός σου σκανδαλίζῃ σε, ἔκβαλε αὐτόν· καλόν σέ ἐστιν μοιόφθαλμον εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ ἢ δύο ὄφθαλμοὺς ἔχοντα βληθῆναι εἰς τὴν γέενναν τοῦ πυρός). Eyes represent what we see, desire, covet—the lust of the eyes (1 John 2:16). Jesus taught that lustful looking is adultery (Matthew 5:28). If visual media, internet, or physical locations trigger lust, eliminate them. Better to navigate life partially sighted than enter hell with perfect vision. The phrase 'kingdom of God' (v. 47) is synonymous with 'life' (vv. 43, 45)—eternal life in God's presence. The alternative is 'hell fire' (geennan tou pyros, γέενναν τοῦ πυρός)—eternal separation from God in conscious torment. Jesus demands radical action because stakes are eternal.

Historical Context

Ancient Mediterranean culture was highly visual—public baths, theaters, marketplaces provided opportunities for lustful seeing. Jesus' command to 'pluck out' the offending eye was hyperbolic but serious—whatever leads to sin must be eliminated. Blindness in ancient world meant severe disability and likely poverty. Yet Jesus said even this is preferable to hell. The eye's connection to desire appears throughout Scripture—Eve 'saw that the tree was good' (Genesis 3:6), David 'saw a woman washing herself' leading to adultery (2 Samuel 11:2), Achan

'saw... coveted... took' (Joshua 7:21). Jesus taught that external behavior flows from internal desire (Mark 7:20-23). Therefore, controlling input (what eyes see) is crucial for holiness. Digital age intensifies this challenge—pornography, social media, entertainment bombard eyes with temptation. Jesus' teaching demands radical measures.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What 'eyes' (visual media, locations, relationships) might need 'plucking out' to avoid sin in contemporary digital culture?
2. How does Jesus' teaching that internal lust is adultery (Matthew 5:28) elevate moral standards beyond mere external behavior?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἐὰν ὁ ὄφθαλμοὺς σου σκανδαλίζῃ σε ἐκβαλε
And if G3588 eye thine offend thee out
G2532 G1437 G3788 G4675 G4624 G4571 G1544

αὐτόν· καλόν σοι ἔστιν μονόφθαλμον εἰσελθεῖν εἰς
it better for thee it is with one eye to enter into
G846 G2570 G4671 G2076 G3442 G1525 G1519

τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ ἢ δύο ὄφθαλμοὺς ἔχοντα
the kingdom of God than two eye having
G3588 G3588 G2316 G2228 G1417 G3788 G2192

βληθῆναι εἰς τὴν γέενναν τοῦ πυρὸς,
to be cast into hell fire
G906 G1519 G3588 G1067 G3588 G4442

Additional Cross-References

Mark 9:43 (Parallel theme): And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

Matthew 18:9 (Parallel theme): And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.

Matthew 5:22 (Parallel theme): But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

Psalms 119:37 (Parallel theme): Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way.

Job 31:1 (Parallel theme): I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?

Genesis 3:6 (Parallel theme): And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

Luke 14:26 (Parallel theme): If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

Galatians 4:15 (Parallel theme): Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.