

SICK OF EVIL • Week 4: Hall Pass to Harm

Daily Briefing • Day 5 of 5 • Nobody Does This Alone

WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE

No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

1 Corinthians 10:13

Sunday's last two action steps were about people: escape the ones dragging you away from God, and engage the ones pursuing His best. Today we look at why that is not optional for anybody serious about killing off sin and eradicating its crippling effects in their lives. You can watch or listen to the sermon at 1mso.church or on the One Missoula app.

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, I pray that You would help me put people around me who amplify and accelerate my pursuit of You and Your best. I pray that You would bring the right people into my life and help me remove people who are dragging me away from You. I pray that, as I wrestle through the loneliness associated with the transition, You would be present in a powerful way in my life. I ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

TODAY'S TEACHING

There is a reason people who are serious about getting sober do not try to do it privately. There is a reason serious athletes have coaches and serious climbers use ropes. Nobody thinks less of them for it. In almost every area of life where the stakes are high and failure is expensive, going it alone is understood to be foolish rather than brave.

But then there is sin, where an enormous number of Christians decide the smart move is to handle it entirely by themselves and tell nobody.

This week has been personal on purpose. Temptation is not sin. You are not a slave and you are not powerless. Cut out what has to go. Check your claims against your life. All of that happens between you and God. But the last piece is not something you can do alone, and Scripture is direct about it.

The writer of Ecclesiastes puts it plainly: *"Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up"* (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10). Notice he does not say two are better than one because it is more pleasant or popular. He says it because people fall, and the person who falls alone frequently stays down.

He finishes with an image worth holding onto: *"And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him. A threefold cord is not quickly broken"* (Ecclesiastes 4:12). One strand snaps, but braid three together and it holds. That is not sentiment about friendship. It is a statement about what survives pressure.

The other half of this is harder, because it involves subtraction of people in your life. Paul writes, *"Do not be deceived: 'Bad company ruins good morals.' Wake up from your drunken stupor, as is right, and do not go on sinning"* (1 Corinthians 15:33-34). He starts with do not be deceived, which means people were being deceived on exactly this point. They believed they could stay close to whoever and whatever normalized the destructive behavior but still remain unaffected. Paul says that is not how humans work.

So there are two moves, and most people only want to make one of them. Adding good people feels encouraging. Stepping back from someone who has been part of your life for years, who has never done anything to you personally except make the self-destructive things feel normal, is genuinely painful. But if you did the work on Day 3 and named something that has to go, and that thing is attached to a person, then the amputation is not finished.

READ & MEDITATE

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. ¹⁰For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! ¹¹Again, if two lie together,

they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? ¹²And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

1 Corinthians 15:33-34

Do not be deceived: “Bad company ruins good morals.” ³⁴Wake up from your drunken stupor, as is right, and do not go on sinning. For some have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame.

Read Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 and notice the writer assumes falling as an unavoidable reality of human existence. His question is not whether you will fall but who is there when you do. Then read 1 Corinthians 15:33-34 and notice Paul opens with a warning about being deceived, not a warning about bad people.

REFLECT

Reminder: honest introspection and Scripture-informed self-assessment are far more beneficial than self-delusion and wishful thinking.

The writer of Ecclesiastes does not ask whether you will fall. He asks who is going to be there when you do.

If you fell hard this month, who would actually know? Not who could find out eventually, who would know when you need them most?

If the honest answer is nobody, what has kept you from letting anyone in? Pride, fear of what they would think, or that you have not wanted to be talked out of it?

Fill in the blank from Ecclesiastes 4:12:

And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a _____ cord is not quickly broken. (Ecclesiastes 4:12)

*These fill-in-the-blank questions use the ESV text. Your Bible may use different words for the same idea.

Why do you think the writer went past two and made the point with three? What does that suggest about how much support a person under real pressure actually needs?

Paul opens with “do not be deceived,” which means people were genuinely convinced they could stay close to people who are close to their temptation but remain unaffected.

Who in your life makes the thing you are trying to kill feel normal, acceptable, or even funny?

Be honest about whether you have told yourself you are strong enough for that friendship to not affect you negatively. What has it actually cost you so far?

Most people want to add good people without subtracting anybody. Scripture calls for both.

What is the specific subtraction? Less time, a changed setting, an honest conversation, or a full step back?

And what is the addition? Name one person actually pursuing God's best who you could get closer to on purpose this month. (Reminder, Life Group sign-ups are happening right now! Register [Here](#))

Looking back over the whole week: temptation is not sin, you are not powerless, something has to go, your claims have to match your life, and none of it happens alone.

Which of the five hit you hardest, and why that one?

What is the one thing from this week you are actually going to do something about? Do some honest introspective self-assessment before moving on.

MY "I WILL" STATEMENT

Sample: *This week I will tell one specific person the actual thing I am fighting, ask them to check on me by a set date, and I will name one relationship or setting I need to step back from and take the first step to do it.*

This week, because of what God has shown me in His Word, I will:

PRAYER

Write your prayer or pray out loud. As we've read, God's ear is not dull. Talk to Him like He is listening and wants to hear from you.

MEMORY VERSE

Write or recite 1 Corinthians 10:13 from memory:
