

**JUST CUT IT OFF**





## **MATTHEW 5:29-30, 18:7-9**

- To say this is a difficult concept would be quite the understatement. It is assumed that, under normal circumstances, we cherish and nourish our own flesh (Ephesians 5:29).
- Jesus emphasizes the overall point by selecting body parts that are very high on the list of "survival essentials." He could have mentioned your appendix, pinky toe, that odd-looking mole, or the hair on the back of your hands – but the force of the statement would have been lost!

# IS IT JUST SIN?

- Somebody might be tempted to think that Jesus is only talking about stumbling blocks that are inherently sinful. While it's true that sinful behaviors will cause us to stumble, are there other things that are not necessarily sinful that cause as much spiritual ruin?
- Matthew 19:16ff – Being rich isn't a sin, but it was a lifestyle that the rich young ruler was unwilling to leave behind. It would probably make us quite uncomfortable to probe too deeply into the morally-neutral things that cause us to stumble around.
- So let's do just that...

# UNCOMFORTABLE YET?

- Too much time wasted on the internet
- Too much emotion wasted on a sports team
- Too much investment in politics
- Too much of your son or daughter's childhood spent at work
- Too much mental energy spent daydreaming
- What about that habit, hobby, or recreational activity that you've convinced yourself isn't sinful? Drinking? Smoking? Gambling? A favorite TV show? EVEN IF these things could be called just questionable or neutral, Christians have been tripped up by a lot less – such as where their meat has been (1 Corinthians 10:23ff).



**ROMANS 14:7FF**

# SEE IT AS A NET GAIN

- Losing something now for the sake of your spiritual welfare shouldn't be viewed as a loss. In fact, Romans 14:18-21 makes it clear that when we remove the stumbling blocks (a minor loss of something temporary, physical) we help build up our brothers and sisters in the faith (surely a major gain, spiritually and eternally – see 1 Cor. 10:32-33).
- Stumbling blocks keep us from our potential. By definition they hold us back, knock us down, and make us less efficient and effective.



**YOU NEVER HAVE TO BE ALONE IN THIS**

