

# **Cut Finger (Obey) (Forgiveness)**

*You are my friends if you do what I command. John 15:14*

## **The Basic Bible Truth**

God has been very definitive and honest in the Bible about right and wrong. He has displayed, many times in graphic detail, what sin looks like and where it leads. An honest study of His Word leaves little guesswork when it comes to discerning absolute righteousness. But our human nature is questioning. Much like a bull fenced in a pasture, we test the fences, seeing how hard we can push or how far we can reach through before we get reprimanded or hurt. Fences work two ways. They keep us in, but sometimes more importantly, they keep unwanted things out as well. Sexual promiscuity and STD's. Alcohol and addiction. Pornography and addiction. God says "No" for more reason that a "just because I say so". Sin unchecked ultimately destroys.

## **The Object**

Fake Severed Finger  
Soft Pine Cutting Block  
Hatchet  
White Rag With Red Food Coloring Splashed On It



This object will generally invoke a strong emotion from an audience. As I turn my back to the audience, I take the hatchet, slam it into the cutting board so that the blade sticks into the wood nicely. I then place the severed finger next to the blade and wrap my hand in the red stained cloth. Turning around, I begin the lesson, holding the board, hatchet, and fake severed finger in my free hand.

## **The Lesson**

I own a small woodworking/millwork shop. The power equipment we use demands respect and unwavering attention. The slightest lapse in concentration, and horrific things can happen. Many years

ago, I would “initiate” a new employee with a hard lesson. My general presentation to any new employee was to explain in detail how each machine ran, the dangers each piece of equipment posed and why absolute attention was required when running a piece of equipment. We of course had proper shielding in place at all times, but there are still ways to get hurt in a woodworking shop. On our bulletin board is a laminated poster of proper care for severed fingers, hands, and limbs. It shows in fairly graphic detail how to administer first aid if those terrible situations should occur. A few moments with a new employee would always be spent in that portion of the shop, just to reinforce the safety meme. Then work would begin.

If I found them to be lax in any respect of safety, they “suffered my sense of humor”. I would get one of the older employees to help me. When the two of them were alone in an area of the shop, the experienced employee would “pop” a small piece of wood in a saw when the new guy was not looking, and then literally run off to the bathroom, leaving the saw running. I would conveniently be nearby, looking concerned, and would tell the new guy to go turn off the saw while I went to check on the other employee. As he would draw close to the saw, the severed finger was seen laying right there on top of the table, and their face would go white with shock at seeing the horror that lay before them. Then I would step in with a smile, pick up the finger, and remind them again of why we go through all of the safety training that we did. Without fail, every one of the people who experienced this harsh reality, thanked me for the lesson. They thought about it each time they started a piece of equipment from that point on.

God has a harsh reality lesson for us as well. Sin is deadly. Not only is the punishment for sin draped in a death penalty, but sin itself, if left unchecked, will destroy us. Look at anyone caught in the ravages of addiction and understand that their quest into that world of sin began with a fairly small step. Our human nature is to push at the fences a bit, just to see how far we can go without too much punishment.

God has much to say about right and wrong in the Bible. Interestingly, I can find no place where He condones situational ethics in any shape or form. God has a sincere list of right and wrong. It is clearly black and white—clearly detailed and explained, but our sin nature is always looking for an excuse or a reason to doubt God’s commands. And they are commands, by the way, not mere suggestions. He has delineated good from bad, right from wrong, and acceptable from inappropriate. Satan is an expert in gray. He can take a large amount of good, mix in a little bit of bad, and entice us with the deadly mixture.

It would be unthinkable to pour arsenic into a salt shaker and put it up in the spice cabinet. The individual unlucky enough to grab that salt shaker and use it would undoubtedly pay for it with their life. Sin is just as deadly—maybe more so, because we don’t always see it as dangerous. We entertain it much like we might initially come up and pet a dog—and only later find out that it is rabid.

When we allow Satan’s lies into our lives, our defenses are weakened, and if not fortified by the cleansing of the Word and forgiveness of our sin, the results will not be good. God’s commands, the fences in our lives, are there for a reason. They keep us in the pasture where life is good and we can be happy. Fences also keep unwanted predators out of the field. God only wants us to experience the best. All we have to do is obey.

We are often described as sheep in Scripture. A sheep wandering around in the wild will not last long. It will soon become a meal for some predator. Satan roams this earth, wandering back and forth in it, looking for anyone that he can devour. He will be more than obliging, if we begin to entertain sin in our lives, to cause us harm as well.

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