



PRACTICES: STUFF CHRISTIANS DO TO GROW

SERMON 4: HOPE FOR ENTANGLED FAITH

Connection: Practices To Free Your Faith

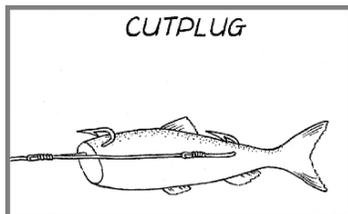
Clarity: The Problem is the Thorns

Crossover: Thorns & Fruit to Sin & Righteousness

“The killing of the flesh is your duty, but His work.”

~Kris Lundgaard, *The Enemy Within*

Connections: Practices to Free Your Faith



And when the timorous Trout I wait
To take, and he devours my bait,
How poor a thing, sometimes I find,
Will captivate a greedy mind...”

~ Izaak Walton

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.” (Hebrews 12:1-3)

Going Deeper

(For individuals or small groups to go deeper with the passage)

1. Read Mark 4:7, 18-19; Hebrews 12:1-3 and James 1:13-16. What are some parallel thoughts between these passages. What images are used?
2. What is a Bible story you can think of that highlights either the power of sin to tempt and corrupt, or the way to resist sin and overcome temptation?
3. What are the categories of thorns Jesus lists? What are some sins within those categories? Is there an area you are struggling with now?
4. Read these three passages: Heb. 12:1-3; Gal. 5:16-17; Phi. 2:12-13. What are you called to do? What resources do you have available? Where is your hope?
5. Spiritual Exercise: Ask the Holy Spirit to expose an area of sin in your life, not an action, but a sinful belief or habit that is strangling your fruitfulness. Trust and obey God’s word. Confess the sin to God (1 John 1:9) and a mature Christian friend (James 5:16) and begin the work of putting this sin to death.