

BEING BETTER OFF

INSPIRED BY MARK 9:38-43,45,47-48

At that time, Joshua said to Stan, “Brother, we saw someone performing some of your music on the streets. We tried to stop him because he isn’t part of our group. We don’t want anyone imitating your work and robbing you of your fame and fortune.” Joshua replied, “Calm down. Think about it. Anyone who performs my music will help spread my name. They are paying me the highest compliment. Sharing my songs and enjoying my music isn’t hurting me, it’s helping. Whoever is listening to our stuff is not against us, they are for us.

“Our mission is to spread the love of Christ through songs of joy. Anyone who can give a spark of hope that all may know they belong to Christ will surely not cause us to lose our reward. I don’t do this to have tons of money in the bank or gold records on the wall. My reward comes when I see the light of new life in the eyes of a soul who was feeling lost and forlorn. My reward comes when we have tons of believers in the pews and smiling faces lining the walls. Their joy and faith inspire me to be a better man.”

Joshua proposed to his younger brother that they do a little exercise. “Think back on this past month, Stan. How many times, besides Sunday Mass and band rehearsal did you listen to uplifting music with a message of the Good News? Do you sometimes revert to songs and videos that reflect sinful ideas and actions? Might your friends sometimes pressure you into cheating on exams, objectifying women, discriminating against people who are different from you, or demeaning and ridiculing others?

“Now, consider if someone in your small group from Church saw you doing those things. How would that feel? Would you encourage the boys in the First Communion class to behave like that, to watch bad videos, or listen to vulgar music? It would be better to spend the rest of your life blind, deaf, and mute than to cause one of those little boys who believe in Christ to sin. If your phone causes you to sin, turn it off. It’s better for you to go through life with less screen time than to expose yourself to the things that bring you down. And if the TV causes you to watch sinful things, cut it off. It is better for you to go through life without watching some popular programs than with TV, being plunged into the darkness of that rabbit hole of misery. And if some types of music cause you to sin, pluck them out of your playlist. Better for you to listen to fewer songs with a clean heart and mind than to listen to music which glamorizes sin, where temptations do not die, and true hunger and thirst for the fire of the Holy Spirit is not quenched.”

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