

# Slaying the Dragon: Out With The Chump, In With The Champ

Kenny Luck

Founder, Every Man Ministries

*This is the second in a four-part series we are calling “Slaying the Dragon,” where we will explore God’s destination for us. All men have dragons standing in their way, preventing them from being closer with God. We are going to look at how to slay the dragon. To slay your dragon you have to have a sharp blade and a clear aim. Along our dragon slaying journey, we’ll talk about some dragon slayers. Finally, we’ll give you spiritual solutions to slaying your dragons and allowing you to get to your physical destinations, health destinations, professional destinations, personal destinations and emotional destinations. Sin is the dragon that we all have to slay.*

When we look at Romans 8:29, I want you to see that God’s preplanned journey for every person is to become like Christ. “For those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.”

His plan is not to accessorize your life. It’s not for you to become wiser. **It is for you to become like Jesus.** That’s the definition of every God’s man. Let’s get that really, really clear.

Say that out loud: “To become like Christ.”

It’s out with the chump, in with the champ. That’s the way I look at it every day: I wake up with **less Kenny and more Christ.** You can put your own name into that equation. That is what God is doing.

That’s the goal. That’s the journey. That’s the path. It’s like a knight who has been commissioned to go on a quest. That’s your quest and that’s my quest. My quest is to become more like Christ and to do whatever it takes, to fight any foe that comes against that quest and go against any enemy.

Now it’s time to look at the dragon.

If you have a Bible, turn to Hebrews 12:1-3. We’re going to look at the obstacle — the dragon — that we need to slay.

Hebrews 12:1 says: “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,”

Verse 2 goes on to say: “fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him He endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Verse 3 says: "Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart." What an example of a person who had a destination and fought hard to get to that destination. He fought battle after battle after battle, not to get to a place of success and comfort by the way, but a place of sacrifice and suffering to pay a price for our sins.

What I love about that passage is the picture of a runner. Go back to verse one of that passage. It's a picture of a stadium where a marathon runner comes in. That's you, and you are running the last lap. Picture the great crowd of witnesses surrounding you. Imagine coming into that Olympic stadium. You hear the roar of the crowd. You picture the scene. It's what you have been dreaming of and training for. Press the rewind button and go back to the start 26 miles earlier. You have people cheering you on but the goal is to last, to economize your efforts.

I don't know how many of you run, but no one runs in a Pea Coat. You don't put on a scarf or wear a backpack. If you watch runners at the beginning of a marathon, they have next to nothing on. They have the lightest shoes, the lightest clothing, the lightest tank top. Why? Because they need the economy of effort, the less drag there is, the easier it is to get to the destination.

That's the picture we're presented with in Hebrews 12:1-3.

This is about you running a race, you having an economy of effort, you slaying the giant and getting there, just like Jesus did. Even as Jesus had to reject sin in order to get to His destination, so do you. It wasn't as if He didn't battle for it. Satan tempted Him in every way. The Bible says that Jesus was tempted in every way and yet was without sin. That's why He got to the place He needed to get to, the Cross.

I think a lot of us realize that sin is a drag, but more importantly, sin is the dragon. Sin saps(?) energy. When you give yourself to activity that does not show love for God and for the people that you love in your life, it will drain you of your mental energy, your emotional energy, and your love for God. It will make you insensitive; desensitize you to the people around you who need your love and support.

Do you see why the Bible wants you to lay aside sin and get some economy of effort and why it's worth shedding it? How many of you guys use ankle weights, or put a donut on a bat? You practiced by weighting yourself down on purpose so that when the time came, you would be feeling lighter as you took the action.

I work out every week. I wear weights by means of a flap jacket. I do these high energy exercises where I am jumping and waving my arms, going side to side. For the first round, I have this big weight vest on, and it is so cool by the second round. It feels so good when I put the vest down, then my jumping almost seems effortless.

That's the picture of sin in the Bible. I work out for a physical reason. In our corrupted nature, we are walking around with 100-pound weight vests of sin in our lives. It is unnecessary. It's

unnecessary, and it's dragging you down. We don't have our economy of effort. What would your life be like without that thing weighing you down, dragging and draining your energy, causing you to have to look over your shoulder, having to hide something, having to eat(?) the wall again, again and again? Isn't it tiring?

The Bible says let us therefore lay aside everything — key word — **everything** that hinders, whether it be an attitude, action, or way of thinking that hinders, and I love the description, "that so easily entangles."

When I was getting this message ready, I remember going back to Sleeping Beauty, because if you have kids, particularly girls, you will become an expert in "Beauty and the Beast," "Sleeping Beauty," and "The Little Mermaid."

In "Sleeping Beauty," the evil queen transforms into this dragon. The prince has to come to the rescue. He's got to get to this castle, where Beauty is the prize. Then, all of a sudden, the queen starts throwing all of these obstacles in his way. One of the things she throws in his way is briars. Briars are like a razor wire of thorns and branches. Have you ever tried to get through life's briars, something that's really sticky, something that's really thorny, and things that catch you and rip your shirt or cut your finger??

I remembered the queen's magical power creating all these briars and I thought — oh my goodness — that's sin, that's sin in my journey. I'm supposed to become like Christ, and then by my own choice, I create briar patches in my life by hanging on to things instead of shedding the sin that so easily entangles.

The Bible says that sin is the dragon that we all have to slay. Sin is the thing that stands in the way, between you and Christ-likeness. What does Jesus say the solution is?

Open your Bible to Mark 9:43-47. We are going to look at some dragon slayers.

First, Jesus identifies the dragon and then gives us the solution. "If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out."

Then, verse 44-45, says: "...And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into hell."

Finally, verse 46-47, says: "And if your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell..."

We will look deeper at these revealing truths of Scripture in Part Three of our journey into "Slaying the Dragon."

**Kenny Luck** is the founder of Every Man Ministries and the men's pastor at Saddleback Church. Watch and read more of Kenny's teaching here at **[EveryManMinistries.com](http://EveryManMinistries.com)**.