

Summary

In this sermon, the pastor introduces a new series called "Creature Teachers," which explores lessons God has embedded in creation for believers to learn from. The focus of this first message is the gazelle, drawn from Proverbs 6:1-5, where the Bible uses the image of a gazelle escaping a hunter to illustrate how Christians should flee from certain dangers rather than negotiating with or tolerating them. The pastor outlines four specific areas where believers must run: debt (especially co-signing for others), sexual immorality, the love of money, and evil desires. Throughout the message, he emphasizes that following Jesus is not easy, and that love does not justify living in disobedience to God. He closes with a powerful reminder that Christians should not only flee from sin but actively pursue righteousness, community, and a deeper walk with Christ.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for bringing us together today. As we open Your Word and discuss what it means to live faithfully for You, we ask that You quiet our minds and soften our hearts. Help each person in this group to hear not just what they want to hear, but what You want them to receive today. Give us courage to be honest with one another and with ourselves. May Your Spirit lead this conversation and draw us closer to You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Ice Breaker

What is one thing you have run away from in your life, literally or figuratively, that turned out to be the right decision?

Key Verses

- Proverbs 6:1-5
- Proverbs 22:7
- Proverbs 22:26-27
- 1 Corinthians 6:18-20
- 1 Timothy 6:10-11
- 2 Timothy 2:22

- James 1:14-15
- Psalm 51:4

Questions

- The pastor said that following Jesus is not easy and that it often requires difficult separations. Have you ever had to distance yourself from a person or situation in order to follow God more faithfully? What was that like?
- Proverbs 6:1-5 uses the image of a gazelle escaping a hunter to describe how we should respond to certain dangers. What does it look like practically to "run like a gazelle" in your everyday life rather than negotiating with temptation?
- The sermon identified four areas to flee: debt, sexual immorality, the love of money, and evil desires. Which of these do you think is most normalized or minimized in today's culture, and why?
- The pastor pointed out that a baby gazelle learns to run from danger before it is even a week old. How are we doing as a church community at teaching new believers to recognize and flee from spiritual danger early on?
- The story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife shows someone who chose to lose his coat rather than his character. Can you think of a time when doing the right thing cost you something? How did God use that situation?
- The pastor warned that you cannot simply flee from sin without running toward something. He said, "Don't run from something, run to something." What does it look like in your life to actively pursue righteousness rather than just avoiding wrong?
- The sermon closed with the statement that love does not justify living in disobedience to God. How do we, as believers, hold onto grace and compassion for others while still being honest about what God's Word says?
- The pastor emphasized the value of life groups and Christian community as a safeguard against temptation, referencing 2 Timothy 2:22. How has Christian community helped you resist temptation or pursue righteousness in a specific way?

Life Application

This week, identify one area from the four discussed (debt, sexual immorality, the love of money, or evil desires) where you have been negotiating or flirting with temptation rather than fleeing from it. Take one concrete step to run from it, and one concrete step to pursue righteousness in its place. Consider reaching out to a trusted friend or life group member for accountability as you take that step.

Key Takeaways

- God uses creation as a classroom, and the gazelle teaches us to flee from danger quickly and without negotiation rather than flirting with or tolerating temptation.
- There are four key areas the Bible calls believers to flee: debt (especially co-signing for others), sexual immorality, the love of money, and evil desires.
- Following Jesus is not easy, and it sometimes requires difficult separations from people, habits, or situations that pull us away from God.
- It is not enough to simply run from sin. Believers must also actively pursue righteousness, faith, love, and community with other Christ-followers.
- Love does not justify living in disobedience to God. True love for God and others is expressed through obedience to His Word, not through rationalizing sin.

Ending Prayer

Lord, thank You for the truth of Your Word and for the grace You extend to each of us. We confess that we have all, at times, negotiated with temptation rather than running from it. Forgive us, and give us the courage and the speed of a gazelle to flee what harms us and to pursue what honors You. Help us to not just run from sin, but to run toward You, toward righteousness, and toward one another in genuine community. Strengthen us this week to take the steps we discussed today. May our lives bring glory to You in every area. In Jesus' name, Amen.