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Morning Service

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## **Are You a Stumbling Block?**

Stumbling blocks are serious problems. When Jesus saw that the crowd of people would soon see and hear the Disciples fighting over who would sit next to Him at the throne he rebuked them quickly and harshly for their lack of humility and ultimately their understanding of all His teachings. The last thing He wanted was the young follower to leave that place imitating the sinful pride being displayed. By this we can see that we are not only responsible for ourselves but our neighbors, the closest of which is our families.

The 'takeaway' phrase that our Savior gives in his instruction is the outcome, "*you have won your brother*". It's not about theological sword fighting, or manipulating someone into submission. It's about using the Love of God to properly ask for and/or give forgiveness in all cases of offense. If we do anything but this, or do this with a sour attitude, without forgiving someone who may have offended us, or not offering true contrition for our wrongs in the matter, then we are a stumbling block and are in danger of losing much. Jesus said it would be better to lose an eye, or a limb than to cause another to stumble.

We are not left to wonder how to avoid doing this. Our Lord gives us wonderful instruction in his Word on how to keep our pride and human emotions in check. We need to stay under the council of God's Word, not as heady philosophers like the Pharisees, but as humble learners, like the child Jesus lifted up while he preached. The attitude of humble seeking will cause us and keep us as teachable subjects of the Kingdom. Subjects who will be able to win brothers.

## **Notes**

As you listen to the sermon keep the following questions in mind.

- Am I a stumbling blocks for others?
- What kind of example were the disciples setting for the crowds?, for each other
- The disciples were told to repent if they even hoped to see the Kingdom, do I need to repent of something?
- Do I believe what Jesus said? Is there an 'eye' in my life that I need to pluck out? Is not doing it really worth the consequences?

Do I take sound scriptural correction as an offense, or a gift from God?

We must make effort to repent of our sin and be able to be humbly instructed.

We need to know our place.

### How we stumble

- We react outside the Word. Are we granting or asking for forgiveness?
- We give into pride, which elevates our opinions and feelings over the Word of God. We see ourselves a brilliant, but we really are like animals reacting on instinct.
- We remain ignorant to the Law of God.

### The remedy for stumbling

- Diligently studying the Word of God as humble learners.
- Actively seek out sin in our lives and eradicate it.
- Keep a Godly attitude in our obedience.
- Strive to be a doer of the Law, not a judge of the Law

### Scripture References

**Matthew 18:1-35** At that time the disciples came to Jesus and said, "Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" (2) And He called a child to Himself and set him before them, (3) and said, "Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. (4) "Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. (5) "And whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me; (6) but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea. (7) "Woe to the world because of *its* stumbling blocks! For it is inevitable that stumbling blocks come; but woe to that man through whom the stumbling block comes! (8) "If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life crippled or lame, than to have two hands or two feet and be cast into the eternal fire. (9) "If your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it from you. It is better for you to enter life with one eye, than to have two eyes and be cast into the fiery hell. (10) "See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven continually see the face of My Father who is in heaven. (11) ["For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.] (12) "What do you think? If any man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go and search for the one that is straying? (13) "If it turns out that he finds it, truly I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine which have not gone astray. (14) "So it is not *the* will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones perish. (15) "If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. (16) "But if he does not listen *to you*, take one or two more with you, so that **BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY FACT MAY BE CONFIRMED.** (17) "If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. (18) "Truly I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven. (19) "Again I say to you, that if two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by My Father who is in heaven. (20) "For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst." (21) Then Peter came and said to Him, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" (22) Jesus \*said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. (23) "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. (24) "When he had begun to settle *them*, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. (25) "But since he did not have *the means* to repay, his lord commanded him to be sold, along with his wife and children and all that he had, and repayment to be made. (26) "So the slave fell *to the ground* and prostrated himself before him, saying, 'Have patience with me and I will repay you

everything.' (27) "And the lord of that slave felt compassion and released him and forgave him the debt. (28) "But that slave went out and found one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and he seized him and began to choke him, saying, 'Pay back what you owe.' (29) "So his fellow slave fell to the ground and began to plead with him, saying, 'Have patience with me and I will repay you.' (30) "But he was unwilling and went and threw him in prison until he should pay back what was owed. (31) "So when his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were deeply grieved and came and reported to their lord all that had happened. (32) "Then summoning him, his lord \*said to him, 'You wicked slave, I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. (33) 'Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, in the same way that I had mercy on you?' (34) "And his lord, moved with anger, handed him over to the torturers until he should repay all that was owed him. (35) "My heavenly Father will also do the same to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart."

**Proverbs 19:2** Also it is not good for a person to be without knowledge, And he who hurries his footsteps errs.

**1 Timothy 1:12-13** I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service, (13) even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief;

**2 Peter 2:12** But these, like unreasoning animals, born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed, reviling where they have no knowledge, will in the destruction of those creatures also be destroyed,

**Proverbs 3:1-35** My son, do not forget my teaching, But let your heart keep my commandments; (2) For length of days and years of life And peace they will add to you. (3) Do not let kindness and truth leave you; Bind them around your neck, Write them on the tablet of your heart. (4) So you will find favor and good repute In the sight of God and man. (5) Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. (6) In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight. (7) Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and turn away from evil. (8) It will be healing to your body And refreshment to your bones. (9) Honor the LORD from your wealth And from the first of all your produce; (10) So your barns will be filled with plenty And your vats will overflow with new wine. (11) My son, do not reject the discipline of the LORD Or loathe His reproof, (12) For whom the LORD loves He reproves, Even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights. (13) How blessed is the man who finds wisdom And the man who gains understanding. (14) For her profit is better than the profit of silver And her gain better than fine gold. (15) She is more precious than jewels; And nothing you desire compares with her. (16) Long life is in her right hand; In her left hand are riches and honor. (17) Her ways are pleasant ways And all her paths are peace. (18) She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, And happy are all who hold her fast. (19) The LORD by wisdom founded the earth, By understanding He established the heavens. (20) By His knowledge the deeps were broken up And the skies drip with dew. (21) My son, let them not vanish from your sight; Keep sound wisdom and discretion, (22) So they will be life to your soul And adornment to your neck. (23) Then you will walk in your way securely And your foot will not stumble. (24) When you lie down, you will not be afraid; When you lie down, your sleep will be sweet. (25) Do not be afraid of sudden fear Nor of the onslaught of the wicked when it comes; (26) For the LORD will be your confidence And will keep your foot from being caught. (27) Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, When it is in your power to do it. (28) Do not say to your neighbor, "Go, and come back, And tomorrow I will give it," When you have it with you. (29) Do not devise harm against your neighbor, While he lives securely beside you. (30) Do not contend with a man without cause, If he has done you

no harm. (31) Do not envy a man of violence And do not choose any of his ways. (32) For the devious are an abomination to the LORD; But He is intimate with the upright. (33) The curse of the LORD is on the house of the wicked, But He blesses the dwelling of the righteous. (34) Though He scoffs at the scoffers, Yet He gives grace to the afflicted. (35) The wise will inherit honor, But fools display dishonor.

Hebrews 5:11 Concerning him we have much to say, and *it is* hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.

Matthew 19:4 And He answered and said, "Have you not read that He who created *them* from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE,

1 Timothy 1:3-5 As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, (4) nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than *furthering* the administration of God which is by faith. (5) But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

Psalms 118:27 The LORD is God, and He has given us light; Bind the festival sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar.

Psalms 119:99-100 I have more insight than all my teachers, For Your testimonies are my meditation. (100) I understand more than the aged, Because I have observed Your precepts.

Romans 10:2-3 For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge. (3) For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.

Philippians 3:6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.

John 2:17 His disciples remembered that it was written, "ZEAL FOR YOUR HOUSE WILL CONSUME ME."

Psalms 69:8-9 I have become estranged from my brothers And an alien to my mother's sons. (9) For zeal for Your house has consumed me, And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.

James 4:11 Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks against the law and judges the law; but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge *of it*.

Matthew 7:1-5 "Do not judge so that you will not be judged. (2) "For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you. (3) "Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? (4) "Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye? (5) "You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

We are glad you have chosen to listen to this sermon and pray that it gives you strength, the want for obedience, and a desire to have God's abundant Grace mortify sin in your life. If you have any questions or comments please email [chuck\\_ezell@yahoo.com](mailto:chuck_ezell@yahoo.com).