

Stumbling Blocks

Matthew 18:1-14

Introduction

- Jesus uses someone as an object lesson
 1. The Greek word used for this person means l_____ child (verses 6 and 10 support this idea).
 - a. In Jewish thought a little child would include the ages from infancy to seven years old.
 - b. The child whom Jesus used was about three or four
 - 1) The child could w_____ and understand Jesus.
 - 2) The child had not lost his i_____, since Jesus talks about being humble as this child.
 2. The little child is used as a metaphor for b_____
 - a. Nowhere is Jesus talking about little kids only
 - b. Everywhere Jesus uses the term little ones, it refers to b_____ (see vv. 6,10,14)
- Jesus lesson is about stumbling blocks
 1. There are stumbling blocks for the u_____
 2. There are stumbling blocks for the b_____

Re_____ the stumbling blocks to salvation (1-3,8,9)

- In order to enter heaven's kingdom (i.e. become s_____), two things must occur:
 1. You must be t_____
 - a. This Greek word should not be translated as converted since that means to be saved in our minds.
 - b. It refers to a c_____ of direction. Many unbelievers have turned from sinful behaviors without trusting Christ.
 2. You must become like l_____ children.
 - a. Little children have a t_____ nature
 - b. An unbeliever must trust Jesus who has p_____ His trustworthiness by His death for us and His resurrection.
 3. If these conditions are not met, there is no way one can enter heaven's kingdom (v. 3 uses a d_____ negative which means "in no way" or "not ever.")
- Do you believe the gospel is true but are unwilling to trust Christ because you are unwilling to give up some sinful behavior?
 1. Do you want to spend eternity in eternal fire? yes or no

2. If the answer is no, Jesus says to c_____ it out of your life or else you WILL end up there (vv. 8,9).
- Even though believers have removed the stumbling block from their lives, does not mean they can stumble back into that sin. Many times those stumbling blocks remain a w_____ that we have to struggle with throughout our Christian life.

Re_____ to be a stumbling block to believers (6,7,10-14)

- We cannot eliminate stumbling blocks
 1. The w_____ is full of the and it is inevitable that they will come (v. 7a)
 2. Jesus pronounces a w_____ on those who are the instruments of stumbling which could refer to:
 - a. E_____ punishment for the unbeliever.
 - b. Un_____ experiences in this life for the offender.
- We must recognize the stumbling blocks in the w_____
 1. S_____ stumbling blocks
 2. Get r_____ quick enticements (1 Tim 6:9,10)
- We must make sure that we are not a stumbling block to any fellow b_____.
 1. If the believer's weakness is alcohol, you don't invite him over for a meal and serve alcohol.
 2. If the believer's weakness is gambling, you don't put him up in a hotel next to a casino.
 3. Being a stumbling block
 - a. Steers a person away from their d_____ to Christ.
 - b. Does not demonstrate l_____ (Rom 14:15,21).
 4. The world needs to see believers co-exist in h_____ with all its variety of weaknesses (Jn 13:35)

Conclusion:

- What if you are a believer with a certain weakness and a stumbling block is placed before you, enticing you to give in to that weakness?
 1. You are not d_____ to failure.
 2. If you give in, you cannot b_____ your failure on the stumbling block.

3. If you give in to your weakness you are s_____ from your devotion to Christ. God will not let you perish but will bring you back (vv. 12-14)

●Two questions:

1. To the unbeliever:

- a. What is keeping you from committing your life to Christ?
- b. Is it worth spending an eternity in the Lake of Fire?

REMOVE the stumbling blocks and TRUST Christ

2. To the believer:

- a. What are you doing to guard yourself against your weaknesses?
- b. Are you being sensitive to the weaknesses of our fellow believers?

REFUSE to be a stumbling block. Walk in LOVE.