

LESSON 12
 THE TRANSFIGURATION
 AUGUST 19, 2020

Stumbling Blocks
 Matthew 18:1-14; Mark 9:33-50; Luke 9:46-50

TRUE GREATNESS AND STUMBLING BLOCKS
 MATTHEW 18:1-14; MARK 9:33-50; LUKE 9:46-50

Mark 9:42-50 – **Stumbling blocks to others**
“Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe to stumble ...”
“These little ones ...” – Those who His apostles wanted sent away – young, growing disciples.
“Stumble” – again from the Greek *skandalizo* meaning “to trip up” (Strong); “an impediment in the way” (Thayer)

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Key words in this context:
“It would be better ...” (Matthew 18:6; cf. Matthew 5:29-30; 7:11). A comparative expression.
 For someone who causes a *“little one ... to stumble”* to have a *“heavy millstone hung around his neck”* and *“cast into the sea.”* (Mark 9:42)



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“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.” (Matthew 18:7)

- Some obvious like Balaam. (Numbers 31:16; Revelation 2:14; cf. Proverbs 4:16)
- Others come through negligence and carelessness. Intentions do not matter!
- **How do we prevent either?** (Proverbs 3:23; Psalms 119:162-165; 1 John 2:10)

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Stumbling blocks to self: (Mark 9:43-48)

“If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off ...”

- Anything you **do**.

“If your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off ...”

- Anywhere you **go**.

“If your eye causes you to stumble, throw it out ...”

- Anything you **look at**.

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How can we prove to be a stumbling block to others?

1. Commission/omission AND tolerance of sin. (1 Corinthians 5:1-11; 6:9-11; James 4:17)
2. False teaching (Malachi 2:8; 2 Peter 2:1-3)
3. Hypocrisy. (Galatians 2:13; Luke 12:1)
4. Use of “liberties” (1 Corinthians 8:9, 13)
5. Half-heartedness. (1 Chronicles 28:9; 1 Kings 8:61; 11:4; 15:3; Mark 12:30)
6. Carnally focused. (1 Corinthians 2:14; Romans 8:6-8)

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7. Unhealthy influences (Ezekiel 14:3-4; Psalms 101:3)
8. Distracted living. (Luke 10:38-42; Mark 4:19)
9. Lack of effort. (1 Corinthians 9:24)
10. Spiritual drifting. (Hebrews 2:1-2)
11. Lack of growth. (2 Peter 3:17; Hebrews 5:12)
12. Failing to flee temptation. (1 Corinthians 10:12)

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Rid your life of anything, anywhere, or anyone that is keeping you from running your race with endurance. (cf. Hebrews 12:1-2)

Again, the comparison is made, ***“It is better ... to enter life crippled ... lame ... with one eye ... than to be cast into hell ... where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.”***

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Again, the focus is on **purity of heart** rather than the flesh.

Matthew 5:27-30 stresses to make such sacrifices for the sake of your heart.

The key is to change our thinking.

Cutting off one’s hand or foot fails to address the root of the problem ... the heart.