

INTRODUCTION:

Life is a journey to eternity with only two possible destinations—heaven or hell. Mt 7:13-14.

There are only two ways through life because there is only one path that leads people who walk on it to heaven. All other paths, no matter where they start, end up taking people who walk on them to hell. John 14:6.

The way to heaven is not an easy path, but by God's grace we can get on it and walk down it and its rewards more than offset its difficulties and far exceed the passing pleasures of sin. Jude 1:24.

The only way we know we are on and walking down the path to heaven is by understanding and following the word of God. Ps 119:105; 2 Pe 1:19.

The devil has placed temptations all along the path to heaven hoping we will trip over them and stop walking down the path to heaven. Je 18:15.

God calls these temptations stumbling blocks. In this morning's lesson we will study what God teaches us about stumbling blocks, a subject that is vitally important for us to understand.

DISCUSSION:

To get on and stay on the path to heaven we must repent of our sins so they are not stumbling blocks to us. Ezek 18:30B-32; Ps 101:3.

When the repentant stumble, and they do stumble (Ja 3:2), they get up and keep walking down the path to heaven. Pr 24:16.

But, the repentant do not take it for granted that they will always get up and keep walking down the path to heaven. 1 Co 10:12. *Rather, they assure it by always ...*

1. Being humble. Pr 16:18.
2. Avoiding temptation whenever possible. Pr 4:11-12, 14-15; Isa 57:14.
3. Growing stronger in the Lord so they are always becoming better able to resist temptation. *They do this by constantly ...*
 - A. Learning more about the word of God. John 16:1; 2 Pe 3:17-18.
 - B. Practicing what they know about the word of God so they are always applying it more perfectly. 2 Pe 1:5-8, 10-11.
 - C. Asking God to help them better learn and do His will. Ps 140:4; Isa 40:28-31; Ezek 14:3.
4. Watching for stumbling blocks, finding the way around them, and getting past them as quickly as possible. 1 Co 10:13-14. *Some common stumbling blocks they watch for include ...*
 - A. Trusting in money more than God (Pr 11:28).
 - B. Sexual immorality (Re 2:14).
 - C. Envy (Ps 73:2-3).
 - D. Being naïve about persecution (Mt 13:20-21).
 - E. Things they should not say (Ja 3:2).
 - F. False doctrines they should not believe (Mal 2:7-8).
 - G. Etc.
5. Doing whatever it takes to continue walking down the road to heaven. Mt 18:8-9.
6. Assembling and associating with other saints and seeking their counsel. Ec 4:9-10; Je 50:32; Pr 11:14.

APPLICATIONS: *We must ...*

1. Be careful how we walk. Ep 5:15.
2. Never think we cannot get off the narrow way. Mt 26:31-35.
3. Not be stumbling blocks (Mt 18:6-7) in matters of law (Mt 13:41-42) or liberty (1 Co 8:9, 13).
4. We must love people enough to tell them when they are being stumbling blocks to us and if people tell us we are being stumbling blocks to them we must listen to them and change as love demands. Mt 16:23.