

# Don't Be A Stumbling Block

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[ 0 : 00 ]     Open your Bibles now, if you would, to Matthew chapter 18. Matthew chapter 18 and verse 7. Matthew 18 and verse 7. Today, we're going to read a passage of Scripture and talk about don't be a stumbling block even to the least.

Don't be a stumbling block even to the least. No matter who they are, I want to have a sweet relationship and I want to encourage them to serve Jesus. So read with me, if you would, Matthew 18, 7.

Woe unto the world because of offenses. For it must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom they come, the offense cometh. Wherefore, if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off and cast them from thee.

It's better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, crippled or maimed, or crippled or with an amputated leg, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.

And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee. It's better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire. Take heed that you despise not one of the least of these little ones.

[ 1 : 05 ]     For I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost. How think ye if a man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, does he not leave the ninety and nine and go into the mountains and seek that which is gone astray?

And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoices more of that sheep than of the ninety-nine which went not astray. Even so, it's not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

That's going to be an exciting thing for you to look at. But you'll notice that we're cutting off hands and feet and plucking out eyes, but we won't have any of that in the service today.

We might learn a little bit about mortifying or putting to death certain parts, and so you'll see that that truth is still for us today. Let's have a word of prayer and ask God to bless this service today. Father, we love you.

We thank you so much for the opportunity to be in your house. We thank you for your people. We thank you for your word. Thank you for everybody you brought here today that's a regular attender, and I thank you for anybody who's first time today, and I pray you'd bless them.

[ 2 : 14 ]     I pray, God, that if anyone's here that's not saved, that today would be the day that you would convict them of their sin and cause them to be saved. And I pray that every Christian would learn from today that we want to be careful of our testimony to love our brothers and our sisters and to love our children and to live in such a way that we would be a good testimony for your honor and glory.

I'll give you praise for it. In Jesus' precious name, amen. All right. Thank you, Bibles, if you would. And turn with me to the book of Matthew chapter 18. Matthew chapter 18. You remember where we are in the passage of Scripture.

Jesus has been talking to them, and then somebody came and wanted to know if he'd pay the tax, the temple tax, and he said, definitely I'll pay the temple tax. And he did pay the temple tax, so he didn't have to pay the temple tax.

He only paid the temple tax, so he wouldn't offend anybody. And then in Matthew chapter 18, verse 1, we saw that he's talking to us about their desire to be the greatest.

It's the same time. And they walk in, they say, well, which one of us is going to be the greatest? And he said, boy, you guys have got it all wrong, and what you're doing offends people, and you ought not be like that. And then you get down to verse 7.

[ 3 : 18 ] And in verse 7, he's going to talk to them about not offending the least. No matter how unimportant a person is, no matter how small a person is, no matter how little money a person gives, they should not be offended.

They should be respected. So read with me, if you would, Matthew chapter 18 and verse 7. The Bible says, Woe unto the world because of offenses. For it must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes.

That word offense there is a word that means stumbling block. It's a word that means something that would cause a Christian that's not strong to fall, or even a stronger Christian to fall.

It's the basis of a word like scandal. It's something that would cause somebody to fall. The word world here refers to the fallen world. Look at it. It says, woe unto the world because of offenses.

Woe unto the world. And so it's like the world is going to bring offenses. The fallen world. The world of human beings that are in rebellion against God. The world refers to the enemies of the church of God.

[ 4 : 25 ] The people under the influence of Satan and his rebellion. And so the world already brings enough offenses. That's what it says.

It says, woe unto the world because of offenses. So if you're saved, there is a lot of pressure on you to turn your back on God. That's the first thing it's in the passage.

There's a lot of pressure, a lot of things brought on you by the world, by the fallen world, by the enemies of the cross of Christ, by sin to get you to turn your back on Christ and go back to the world.

Here's how the world seduces us. Look at 1 John 2 and verse 15. A passage of scripture I would imagine that you're familiar with. The Bible says, love not the world.

That's not the same world. You know, the word world can mean, for God so loved the world. And he's talking about all the people in the world. The word world could mean even the creation. And we're supposed to love the creation.

[ 5 : 19 ] That's wonderful that God gave us a beautiful creation. But the word world is often used when it's talking about this rebellious group against God. And so he says, love not the world. Neither of the things are in the world.

If any man loved the world, the love of the Father is not in him. So it's don't love those that are against God, that that's against God. The things that would draw you away from God, don't love that.

There are things in this world that would cause you not to serve Jesus. There are things in this world that would cause you to turn your back on serving God. So he says, love not the world. Neither of the things are in the world.

Verse 16, for all that's in the world. And now he lists it. So I'll know. So underline it in your Bible. What are the things in the world that would cause me to quit serving Jesus? Number one, the lust of the flesh.

The things I want. Lust just means desires. And so there are things in this world that we desire. We look at something and say, man, I'd like to have that. I want that. I would enjoy that.

[ 6 : 15 ] I want that. That's something for me. Then the lust of the eyes. Things that I look at and I think, boy, that's beautiful. That's pretty. That's what caused my attention. The pride of life is not of the Father, but it's of the world.

So there's things attracting my flesh and my person and my ambition and my power and things that I want to have happen. And the world passes away. But the word of God, but he that doeth the will of God abides forever.

So just know this. When you got saved, you're in a war and there's something in you, or not in you, but outside of you that's pulling you and pushing you and making you think about maybe I won't serve God.

Sometimes money has this draw on you and you're like, I love God, but I need this money and I want this money. Sometimes it could be sex and it could be power and it could be popularity.

But there's a ton of things going on all around us that would pull us away from God and cause us not to serve him. That's what the world offers. It's going to do everything it can. It stands in rebellion to God.

[ 7 : 18 ] It's just going to do everything it can to get those of us that are serving him to quit. Look, if you would, at Matthew chapter 24 and verse 11. The world does everything it can to get people to stop following Jesus.

And it'll do it by persuasive words and signs. Matthew 24, 11. The Bible says, And many false prophets shall arise and shall deceive many.

So you're going to have false prophets. So now there's going to be all kind of false religion, even false sin, Christ standing up. And because of iniquity, because of sin, because of twistedness that's going to be so prevalent, the love of many will wax cold.

And then there'll be false Christ and false prophets and great signs and wonders that would deceive even the elect, the people of God. So you live in a world where, man, there's religious stuff pulling you away from God.

And there's money pulling you away from God. And there's personal stuff pulling you away from God. And in every way, you're in a war. You decided to follow Jesus. You decided to get involved in serving him.

[ 8 : 19 ] You love him. But, man, everything in every way is pulling against you. So a lot of that's like persuasive words. You don't need this. And you don't need that.

And you can serve God. And you can enjoy this. And it's going to say all these things to you. But everything's trying to pull you away. And then he says there's also something pushing you away. And that's persecution. Look, if you would, in Matthew chapter 10 and verse 16.

He said, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Do you realize that all around you are people who would eat you and destroy whatever loves God?

Not the people. We're not talking about the people. We're talking about the rebellion. We're talking about the attitude that would keep a Christian from serving God. But in Matthew 24, 9, he said, they shall deliver you up to be afflicted and kill you.

And you shall be hated. In verse 10. And then many shall be offended and betray one another and hate one another. So there's this whole system that's at work to pull us away from God.

[ 9 : 21 ] To pull us away from serving God. To pull us away from honoring God. And by the way, if you ever notice a new Christian, they get so excited about serving Jesus. And then they have to cool off to get as cold as the rest of us.

Because new Christians are really excited about God. And then the longer they're around the rest of us, they're like, they settle down and become, they'll get over it. They'll get over their excitement. That's that world system playing in our lives.

That kind of dulls and deadens our love for God. And dulls and deadens our service. They're brand new Christians. So they're excited about reading the Bible. We're well past that. They're brand new Christians. They can't help but go to church.

They love the word of God. We're well past that. And so there's this world system at work in our lives. All around us. And you need to know that. The world pushes so hard. It causes the followers of Jesus to be tempted to question his authority.

And even doubt his legitimacy. Or the legitimacy of his word. So everything, just be honest. Everything in the world is trying to get you not to believe this book. Everything in the world is trying to get you not to surrender your life to Jesus.

[ 10 : 26 ] Everything in the world is trying to deaden and pull us away. Jesus said, whoa. Hey, threat, condemnation, judgment on the world. Because we know what the world is trying to do.

But this is going to be a while when I want to give you another verse before we leave this first point. That the world brings offense. Is that it's kind of a necessary thing. Look if you went at 1 Corinthians chapter 11 and verse 19.

For there must be also heresies among you that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. Now that's a crazy verse. Look at what it said in 1 Corinthians 11 and 19. It said there must be heresies.

So the Lord allows all this garbage to happen so he can find out who really is his. So he can find out who really is his. So heresy, false teaching, and junk is in the church.

So he can find out who is really his. I'm sure you've heard the story in the Bible of Jehu. And old Jehu had decided he would get rid of all the Baal worshipers. And so he told everybody, you ever seen anybody worships Baal?

[ 11 : 31 ] I am the number one worshiper of Baal. All of you come and bring all of your clothes that you worship the devil in, the Baal in. And you come to the church and get there with us. And then he walked in the room and he said, now if you're not one of us, if you're not a worshiper of Baal, you need to get out.

And so now there's only the cream of the crop left. He steps out the door and says, lock the door and kill them all. He was trying to find out. If you're a worshiper of Baal, I'm going to find that out. When I was a young preacher, I've always been a little on the dumb order, but I was really dumb.

I was a brand new youth director and a pastor. I'd started my first church. And so I'd been a youth director for years and pulled crazy stuff. And so one night in a revival, I decided to have some young men I knew from the Christian school I taught in to dress up, put on a mask over their face and come in with guns and rough me up in front of the church.

And they were going to come in with guns and they didn't have them cocked and they didn't have them loaded. They were going to beat me up. They didn't touch anybody else. They didn't threaten anybody else. And so I'm standing in there and hear these guys go, I know what's happening.

It's like a skit to me. Well, they got real guns and they threw me against the wall and they beat me up. This happened like 35, 40 years ago. They didn't really beat me up. They were shoving me around. And then I stepped forward and I went ahead and preached.

[ 12 : 42 ] Well, the next day, I'm out visiting our church. Remember, they all told me, we ain't never going to that church again. Never. And they said, you go to that church, you could get killed. One of the men told me, he said, I was ready to take a chair and bust one of them in the head.

And I found out real quick, you don't do that stuff. You know, that's maybe work with teenagers. You don't do that with adults. But you do realize what God's doing. He said, I like a little bit of junk to be going on. So I know if you really love me.

I like a little bit of heresy. Watch what he said in 1 John 2 and verse 19 before we move to the real meat of the message. The Bible says, they went out from us, but they were not of us.

For if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us. But they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not of us. Isn't that a wild passage? I know you've heard some pastor use that to say, when they leave your church to go join another church, they were not of us.

That's not what this is about. This is about, they were Christians, and they were serving God. And then one day, they just decided they'd turn their back on God and then walk away. And you were like, they were such good Christians. And they turned their back and they walked away.

[ 13 : 44 ] And he said, no, they never were one of us. They were never born again. They were never on their way to heaven. They were never truly saved. That's not what happened. They went out from us to show they weren't. So number one thing I want you to look at in that passage of Scripture, Matthew 18, 7 is, the world's got offenses.

There are offenses all around us. But the real meat starts in that same verse. And it says, but you shouldn't be the one that's bringing the offense. We already got the world out there doing enough stuff wrong.

We already got all the bad folks and all the garbage going on. There's an invitation for sin on television every day. There's an invitation at work maybe.

And there's everywhere around us, there's an invitation to quit serving Jesus and to do wrong. Look what the Bible said, Matthew 18, 7. It said, woe unto the world, that wicked system, because of offenses.

Because it must needs be that offenses come. Yeah, we need them. I need to find out if you're really in. But he said, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes. So yes, there's a lot of junk out there.

[ 14 : 47 ] But it ought not be one of you. It ought not be one of you. We know who the enemy is. But we don't need a guy dressed like us, talking like us, and acting like us, who would bring that into the church.

So he said, the real woe is a Christian who causes other weaker brothers to fall. The little ones can be hurt and stumble because they do not fully understand what's going on or being said.

If you lead others to sin, you're going to hurt yourself as well. Leading a person to sin is worse than just doing it yourself. There are many ways to cause another one to stumble into sin.

First illustration in the Bible, Adam and Eve. The world, Satan, talked Eve into eating the fruit. Adam had not yet eaten the fruit. The devil talks Eve into eating the fruit, and Eve walks over and talks Adam into it.

Adam wasn't even deceived. The Bible said he just did it willingly. But there Eve is convincing Adam to eat the fruit. There's somebody bringing an offense that's going to bring big hurt.

[ 15 : 49 ] In Revelation 2 and verse 14, there's a story of people that would teach the doctrine of Balaam. In other words, there were people in the New Testament still doing what old Balaam did in the Old Testament. You know about Balaam because you come on Sunday nights and Thursday nights, and you've read about him and heard about him.

We spent time talking about him. He decided to cause God's people to not succeed. He tried to curse them. The curse didn't work. And when the curse didn't work, he taught Balak, the wicked king of the world, he taught him to put a stumbling block, verse 14, before the children of Israel so they would sacrifice unto idols and commit fornication.

So he got them messed up. He got them to be a fornicating bunch of idol worshipers, and he accomplished his purpose. So he was one of them, and he brought sin. Verse 29 was saying, I have a few things against thee, because I'll suppress that woman Jezebel, which calls herself a prophetess to teach and to seduce my servants.

You cause? There's a woman in the church that was teaching people to sin. There's this lady in the church. I don't know if her name was really Jezebel, or they're just giving her that nickname. I remember one day in Peru, this guy was having big problems with his wife, and they came to see me, and we're sitting in her office, and he introduced his wife to me, and her name's Delilah.

And I went, nobody would name their kid Delilah. I said, you don't mean Delilah. I said, not Delilah like in the Bible. He said, yeah. I said, oh, Lordy, buddy, if she lives up to her name, we got real problems.

[ 17 : 17 ] Amen. Well, see, that's what's going on in the story. There's a lady that was in the church, and if you look at the verse there, she said that she was a teacher of the Bible. She said she was a discipler.

She said she was doing it, but she was teaching people to commit fornication. She was like in the church saying, hey, it's okay. A little sex is okay. Sex sin's okay. She was bringing that offense, and she was in the church and is being warned against it.

Are you ready for another one? We told about how you could do it inside the church. The world has offense, but it ought not be you. The world has offense, but it ought not be you. It ought not be me.

I don't mean just you. I mean us. It ought not be us. It ought to be one of them. If there's got to be temptation, let's let the world do it. It's like, you know, if you're out there and you know temptation's all around, maybe you've got your guard up, but maybe at church you've lowered your guard, and you're saying, I can trust these people.

It ought not be us. Here's another one. We can provoke our children to anger. Maybe that happens in Christian families sometimes. Ephesians 6, 4 says, And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and the admonition of the Lord.

[ 18 : 28 ] Don't hurt your children and cause them not to want to serve God. Don't do something that would cause your children not to want to serve God. Let me give you a few ideas. Showing favoritism towards one child over another.

We know what that did in Esau and Jacob's life. It caused big trouble. Don't show favoritism. That might provoke a child to wrath. Don't demand unrealistic achievements. So your kids can't ever live up to what you're asking them to, and that would just cause them anger and hurt.

And you may in your mind, you may in your mind be thinking, I'm just trying to get them to do their best. But if you go too far and you push too hard, when they can't do it, when they can't do it, and every child's not the same.

You may look at your older child and say, my older child was great in math, but my second child stinks in math, and so I'm mad and I'm pushing to learn math. But the problem is, maybe your second child is not going to be so good in math.

Maybe you ought to consider that. Or you could push too hard. When you're a kid or grow up, boy, I've been such a bad dad at doing that. I've been such a bad pastor. I've been such a bad teacher when I taught in school, because sometimes, don't we push too hard?

[ 19 : 34 ] Maybe when we shouldn't, there's times to push and times not to push. Or we could be showing something that provokes to wrath. Being critical. Being critical. By the way, they ought to be able to come into your house and know, man, I'm home.

I'm loved. I'm loved. I might be a bum in everybody else's minds, but not my mama's. I might be the kid that nobody else likes, but at home, I'm loved.

My dad loves me. You could maybe provoke them to wrath by being overprotective. Boy, that could be a Baptist thing, couldn't it? Man, you're so overprotective. Your kid's never seen people.

They even come to church and look around and go, wow, people! Because the only people they've ever seen is mom and daddy and other brothers and sisters. Overprotective. Or overpermissive. Just let anything go.

It's okay. I trust my kid. Or not allowing to make their own mistakes. How many times does your kid get in trouble and you're there to protect them when they need to learn from their mistakes? It's easier to learn from a little mistake while you're little than it is a big mistake when mom and dad can't be there.

[ 20 : 34 ] Or neglecting them. Or showing no interest in their opinions. I grew up in a world and a time when the idea was children to be seen and not heard.

So we don't talk to kids. We don't listen to kids. We're not interested in what kids think. That's probably not the best way to keep them from being, not being provoked to anger. So as parents, I could... The world's supposed to be the one that's hurting my kids and making them walk away from God.

I certainly don't want to be a dad doing that. I certainly don't want to be a dad doing that. I certainly want to do what I can to help my kids. Another way the world does it and we're not supposed to, it could be that we would give a sinful example as Christians.

It's a big deal that you are always modeling what godly people ought to do because everybody's watching you. In 1 Timothy 4 and verse 12, Paul wrote to Timothy, a young preacher out of his ministry, he said, let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of the believers.

And do you realize how much we could hurt other Christians? The world is supposed to hurt them. The world is supposed to make them want to walk away from God. But I'm afraid so many times it's been us. It's been preachers and church members and holy deacons and holy old ladies in the church and we've been just maybe not careful with our own testimony and being a good example.

[ 21 : 55 ] Or maybe the new thing is, you know, we don't want to be legalists so we go so far the other way that we're offending people. We don't want to be legalists so we go too far the other way offending people. Don't make liberty for your satisfaction.

Look at what the Bible says in Romans 14, 20. For meat, for food, don't destroy the work of God. So don't say, well I like, see they had this meat that was being offered to idols and it was a really good one.

You could get a ribeye at the store for five bucks a pound or ten bucks a pound or fifteen bucks a pound or you could get one that sat there aging a little bit in front of the idol for a couple hours. You could get that for a dollar a pound.

And so the one guy's doing it and Paul said, look, I know there's nothing wrong with you eating that meat but maybe that newer Christian is going to get offended by that. Be careful not to let your liberty. Look at verse 21. It's good neither to eat flesh nor drink wine or anything that would cause my brother to stumble or be offended or be made weak.

Look in 1 Corinthians 8 and verse 9. Don't let your liberty become a stumbling block. Verse 12. Don't wound their conscience.

- [ 23 : 01 ] Look at verse 13. Lest I make my brother to offend. So the world's tempting people. The world's doing everything it can to destroy us. But let's don't let it happen inside of here.
- Let's don't let it be one of us. Let's don't let it be one of us. Let's be careful with our children. Let's be careful of our example. Let's be careful what we teach. Let's be careful because yeah there's going to be a lot of junk but let's keep it out of here.
- That's what Jesus was telling them. Amen. How about this last one? If we don't teach them to follow Christ. In Hebrews chapter 10 and verse 24. Hebrews chapter 10 and verse 24 he said let us consider one another to provoke unto love unto good works.
- In verse 25 exhorting one another. Did you know did you realize everybody's watching you and you could be in the church and saying man I hope you're reading your Bible and praying let me share with you something God's showing me.
- Hey won't you come to church and be with me. Won't you learn to let's pray together so you can learn to pray with me. Why don't you why don't you learn to give like I give. Why don't you learn let me share my life with you.
- [ 24 : 05 ] That way instead of tearing them down we'd be building them up. But so many of us come to church and we say well I'm not the world's making offenses and I'm not the guy making an offense but you're not doing anything on the other side either.
- You're like I'm just here. I don't encourage them to sin but I don't encourage them to serve God. I just sit here. Could that be the same kind of offense? Why in the world do our young people walk away from God so quickly?
- Why in the world because maybe a church no one ever took the time to share with them what God was doing. What if the teenagers and the young adults and the young married couples had older people that said let me encourage you.
- Let me motivate you. Let me help you. Because see there is trouble on the outside. There is a lot of temptation on the outside to walk away from God. And we get inside the church and we know it man us preachers we've been the worst lot of all haven't we?
- I blame it on us first. We're jerks. We've been rude to people. We've preached hard messages. We've shown our temper. We've acted ugly. And we've fallen in sin and we've caused our problems and church people want to leave.
- [ 25 : 06 ] But it ain't just preachers. It's deacons and Sunday school teachers and regular church members. Hey the world's got enough. Let's don't let it be us. The world's got enough.
- Let's don't let it be us. You can say well everybody else is what reason it caused my kids to leave. Maybe not. Maybe you're not worried about the example. Maybe you're not sharing Christ. Third thing in this passage of scripture found in verse 8.
- We must take drastic measures with sin. Drastic measures with sin. This passage of scripture is like highly misunderstood and highly twisted and not compared with if not compared with other scriptures.
- But Jesus said he's talking to his guys and you know you remember we started off this conversation about do we pay the tax let's don't offend let's pay the tax then they come in bragging about who's going to be the greatest and he said what are you trying to be the greatest for?
- Instead of trying to be the greatest why don't you serve and think about your brother? Why don't you serve and think about your brother? And now he said don't offend anybody and he said look offenses will come from on the outside and offenses can come on the inside but it ought not be one of you.
- [ 26 : 11 ] And then he said and by the way if you've got a sin problem let's just cut your hand off. Let's cut your foot off let's just pluck your eye out let's just throw it because you don't want to go to hell having two feet.



That's what he's going to say. So what in the world? Lord help me that's ridiculous. But it's really not as ridiculous as it sounds when you understand all the scriptures and what the Bible said about it.

So let me take you to Colossians chapter 3 and verse 5 and remind you of an even stronger or possibly stronger saying that that echoes the same truth.

In Colossians 3 5 he said mortify. Do you know what mortify means? Draw a circle around the word mortify and draw it out to the margin and write mortician. Now that's pretty drastic.

It's one thing to get your hand cut off. It's another thing to mortify. To put to death. Write that in the margin. To put to death. You're going to put to death your members not even going to come out you're going to put to death your members upon the earth fornication uncleanness in order to infection evil concupiscence.

[ 27 : 13 ] Look at verse 8. Put off these anger, wrath, malice. Verse 9 put off the old man. Verse 10 put on the new man. So here's a Bible thing.

What is it that's causing you problems? What is it that's keeping you from serving God? What is it that's taking you down the sin path? And I think to be honest we all deal with that. I think if we were telling the truth every one of us there's junk goes on in our life.

There's stuff in our life that causes us not to walk with God. It could be it could be things we watch things we listen to places we go friends we have and he's saying serving God's more important.

Serving God's more important. My marriage is more important than me looking at Betty and saying I could eat lunch with that lady and you shouldn't be worried about it. I should just say no no no I'll cut that off.

I'll mortify that. I won't do that. Loving Betty ought to be more than it ought to be me being willing to say I'll never look at porn because you're worth that. Here's what he said we don't want to offend anybody.

[ 28 : 16 ] We want to help people serve Jesus. And if you have something that's just eating your lunch spiritually. You know the old you heard the old story about the cowboy and they said when he got saved he'd always before he got saved he'd always hitched his horse in front of the bar and everybody knew if he was in town because his horse was hitching rail out front of the bar but after he got saved he started hitching in front of the hardware store and people say he ain't in town they said check over on the other side and when they checked there that's where his horse was and he said I can't hitch up where I used to because I'm not a mess up.

I can't go the same place I used to go can't do what I used to do I need to cut off my hand not literally we're not going to cut off anybody's hand today and you might have seen some stupid movie where somebody took a hot spoon and plucked somebody's eye out and they're mocking Christianity that's not what he was talking about he was talking about what is it it's not your hand by the way that does the stealing it's your heart that does the stealing it's not your eye that does the look and it's your heart that wants you out of look so he was just saying to you take drastic measures how about this one in 1 Corinthians chapter 9 verse 27 the apostle Paul said I keep under my body and bring it into subjection lest that by any means when I preach to others I must have become a castaway so get rid of habits and situations and relationships or anything that causes you to stumble and fall spiritually sin is not more important than the savior sin is not more important than the savior we turn from our sin to the savior this is kind of an aside here it's in the passage though hell is real he just mentioned it and just went on because he knew they all knew that's 2015 and y'all are kind of like well maybe hell doesn't exist but if you look in Matthew chapter 25 and verse 41 you'll find out it is real in Matthew chapter 18 in Matthew chapter 18 he said cut off your hand cut off your foot you don't want to you don't want to suffer forever and hell fire

Matthew chapter 25 and verse 41 we find out God created the hell for the devil and his angels then shall he say also unto them on the left hand depart from me you cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels in Revelation chapter 20 and verse 10 the devil and the false prophet and the beast will be cast in the lake of fire and brimstone they will be tormented forever and ever you need to know no matter how much is out of the pulpit now no matter how much people kind of overlook hell Jesus didn't overlook hell he was not afraid to mention hell just like this he mentioned hell like I could say Atlanta I could tell you if you go 400 south and head that way you're going to Atlanta you'll get to Atlanta if you keep on there I could say that y'all would all be like yeah well everybody knows that he said I'd cut off my hand and I'd cut off my foot and I'd pluck out my eye before I'd want to go to never lasting fire and never lasting hell he just said it like it's okay that's the truth so there is a hell and people go there and they're tormented it's everlasting it was made for the devil and his angels if your name is not written in the Lamb's book of life that is your future

Matthew chapter 18 and verse 10 Matthew chapter 18 and verse 10 take heed that you despise not one of these little ones for I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my father which is in heaven so what happens is in church and if you're one of those mighty apostles that wants to know who's the greatest we're kind of like it really don't matter what the teenagers think of us it don't matter what that guy over there or that lady over there or that person over there thinks and we despise these little it's not talking about children it is children also but it's also just a brother or sister who doesn't have position let me just explain something to you about pastors I'm going to tell you the blunt truth we do not want to offend money people I mean we're going to work at it if I think what I'm about to say is going to hurt that money guy and he's going to leave the church I just ain't saying it because good night I know what will happen he leaves we're in trouble but there's this other guy comes to church and he's a nobody and he can't give any money and all of a sudden we're like it don't matter

I'll just rip him he said no no no no no you don't do that you don't decide how to preach based on who's sitting there you don't decide how to live based on who it is to despise is to look down on them and consider them inferior not worth our consideration or care to see them as though they were worthless we despise others when we flaunt our liberty we despise others when we show partiality when we give a certain seat to a guy because we think he deserves a better seat when we we treat him differently because they have more to offer the church we despise when we think of our needs and our wants and not those of others we despise when we mock externals when somebody comes in the door but they're dressed in a three-piece suit driving a nice car we're gonna be like whoo glad you're here somebody comes in smelling a little bit like they hadn't had a bath maybe they got a lot of marks on their body or whatever and we all look at them like we're not sure we want you and he said no no no that's not how we treat people that's not how we treat people we despise others when we judge others that have fallen in sin and we think well they deserve it we despise others when we use them to accomplish our purposes and our goals it's easy not to worry about little people the apostles are worried they're forgetting so many others and seem to forget that others are important to God too you know fact is sometimes a dad can let you rough up his older kid and play rough with his older kid a lot quicker than his little kid because his little kid needs somebody to punch him punch you for him the older kid he might say you just punch go ahead son punch him

[ 34 : 25 ] I'll watch don't mess the little kid he said don't you mess my little ones don't you walk around like certain people are worth it more than others are God's watching him and listening to him he's got an angel in heaven speaking I got one minute and I got three pages so watch this real quick now the last point number five is he cares about the individual that's a wonderful truth in this passage starting in verse 11 1811 and let me just sum up the story for you real quick here's the story there's a hundred sheep and one is missing and he's more worried about the one than he is the 99 that's the story he's worried about the one instead of the 99 so understand that our God cares about the little people our God cares about the people nobody else cares about our God cares about that other guy we're all in here like hey there's 99 of us and we're doing good and he's like yeah but there's one missing and I'm going for him he's a sweet God you came today and you said

I don't measure up and the other 99 they look really good and I don't think I measure up them and he'd be like yeah but I'm worried about you more than I'm the 99 that's what he'd be saying in Romans chapter 5 and verse 6 he said when you were yet when we were when we were yet without strength underline without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly we were without strength and ungodly and that's when he died 580 said while we were yet sinners Christ died Jesus isn't worried about the numbers he's worried about the individual you matter to him you matter to him he loves you this morning he is glad you're here and maybe nobody else cares about you but the God of heaven cares about you and Jesus said boys let me explain something to you I like the individual I'm looking for him he doesn't want anybody to be lost in Hebrews chapter 2 and verse 9 he said by the grace of God that Jesus should taste death for every man in verse Timothy 2 3 he said it's good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior who will have all men to be saved and to come into the knowledge of the truth verse 6 who gave himself a ransom for all

Paul said that's why I'm a preacher because God wants them all to be saved in verse John 2 he said not for he's a perpetuation for our sins but not ours only but for the sins of the whole world did you know Jesus is the kindest person that ever walked this planet and the Bible teaches us that somehow you get twisted you got this false idea your theology leads you to a kind of a rough Jesus look what it says in Matthew 12 14 Matthew 12 14 then the Pharisees went out and held a council against him and how they might destroy him in verse 15 the multitudes followed him and healed all of them look at it last part he healed them all and then they said this is so he could fulfill what the prophet Isaiah said and in verse 18 he said he will show judgment he'll give an answer how to think how to turn to the Gentiles Gentiles I'm here to give you help I'm here for you verse 19 listen to this is while he will not strive nor cry he was like what that means is he ain't gonna be yelling at nobody he ain't gonna be fighting with nobody look at that verse 19 verse 20 he said a bruised reed he shall not break you know in other words like you're down at the flower shop and you're fixing to stick some some reeds or some kind or some kind of plant in there and you notice a bruised part and you take the scissor and you throw it away he said no no he won't do that that's ridiculous he won't do that you might be bruised and messed up this morning but he ain't looking to cut you off he won't even hurt a bruised reed that's what it says in the verse look at it he won't break it and there's a smoking flax and he won't quench it you ever you ever back in the old days when you had candles and or or kerosene lamps and you get ready to put it out and it's still smoldering and the smoke's still coming up he said well there's still a little life I ain't giving up yet isn't that sweet he's a good God say amen there he's a good God Luke chapter 9 and verse 56 he said the son of man didn't come to destroy people oh read that verse read that verse the son of man has not come to destroy men's lives but to save them you want to hear a wild one he rejoices when one gets saved and Luke 15 70 he said there's likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repents more than over 99 just people who needs no repentance he cares about you your mama might not care your daddy might not care your neighbors might not care no one may care about you but he cares you may have come hurt and bruised and about to extinguish the life in you you're just at the end of your rope and you're like nobody cares he cares for you there's 99 good ones but he's looking for you that's what the passage says by the way the whole passage is don't offend people not even that little guy that one that came today you love him that one that came today that no one else would hope for you love him

I want him saved I want him to go to heaven so you're here and you're wondering I don't know if I fit in this church looks like a whole bunch of people got everything together I'll just give you a hint Jesus is looking down saying I ain't talking to 99 I'm talking to you I'm not talking to 99 I'm talking to you I love you you came bruised and you came hurting and you came about ready to end it all but I'd never hurt you I didn't come to destroy men's lives I came to save them and you can be saved today and I invite you today to put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ who died on the cross and paid your sin debt for you I invite you today's the day you can be saved today's the day you can have all that sin and all that mess and all that bruising can be taken care of by Jesus it can all be taken care of by Jesus all that smoldering wick that's about to go out it's like my life is just a waste and burned out and I don't know if I even deserve to live he's here saying I'm here for you I'm here for you I'll make a difference in your life and then for you

Christians I would just say he doesn't want us hurting even the least he wants us to be real careful about our testimony because a lot of people could get hurt feelin' for you of this make me hang in the Corps you help me get rid of people you