

Tuesday, March 31 ~ Stumbling Through Life ~ Mark 9:42-50

Reading events chronologically in the Gospel of Mark, sometime shortly after the Transfiguration, Jesus warns His followers about hazards. These actions are significant because the Transfiguration fulfilled both the Law and the prophets while publicly manifesting Jesus as the Christ. Then Jesus on His authority expressed the seriousness of anyone acting as an impediment to others or ourselves in what we do, where we go, and what we see. Clearly, Jesus makes us responsible to be vigilant, protecting others and ourselves from distractions that separate us from having the ideal relationship with the Father.

These notions are timeless and universal. In the highly social media driven modern world where words and deeds of influencers, leaders, and followers are publicized instantly, we often witness demonstrations of insensitivity and poor judgment. The conclusion is not unavoidable. We still can choose to pause and therefore resist stumbling over our own shortcomings.

During the Lenten season as we engage in a time of introspection, I wonder if we might more carefully examine our own words and deeds that become stumbling blocks for ourselves and others. Let's always aspire to be the light and salt that we are called to be as Christians.

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Causing to Stumble

⁴²“If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them if a large millstone were hung around their neck and they were thrown into the sea. ⁴³If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out. ^{[44] [a]} ⁴⁵And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. ^{[46] [b]} ⁴⁷And if your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, ⁴⁸ where

“the worms that eat them do not die,
and the fire is not quenched.”^[c]

⁴⁹Everyone will be salted with fire.

⁵⁰“Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can you make it salty again? Have salt among yourselves, and be at peace with each other.”

Footnotes:

- a. [Mark 9:44](#) Some manuscripts include here the words of verse 48.
- b. [Mark 9:46](#) Some manuscripts include here the words of verse 48.
- c. [Mark 9:48](#) Isaiah 66:24