

## To Avoid Stumbling and Falling

**The process of stumbling and falling** - James 1:13-15 - 13 When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; 14 but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. 15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

- Dragged away and enticed – Stumbling the act of losing balance from not being alert
- Sin is birthed – The fall is allowing the stumbling to Lose control to the sinful nature
- Death is birthed – When we give into sin and turn away from God

**Everyone stumbles if not they would be perfect** - James 3:1-2 - Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. 2 We all stumble in many ways. If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check.

**Falling is actually a choice and we tend to make the wrong choice** - 1 Cor 10:11-13 - 11 These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come. 12 So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! 13 No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

### THE CAUSE OF STUMBLING AND FALLING

**The world's purpose is a sin magnet** - Matt 18:7- 7 "Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to sin! Such things must come, but woe to the man through whom they come!

**We are in the times where people are looking to glorify our desires instead of Glorifying God** - 2 Tim 4:3-4 - 3 For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. 4 They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.

**Christian living for their freedoms** - 1 Cor 8:9-13 - 9 Be careful, however, that the exercise of your freedom does not become a stumbling block to the weak. 10 For if anyone with a weak conscience sees you who have this knowledge eating in an idol's temple, won't he be emboldened to eat what has been sacrificed to idols? 11 So this weak brother, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge. 12 When you sin against your brothers in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. 13 Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause him to fall.

**It's dangerous for us to cause others to sin** - Mark 9:42 - 42 "And if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a large millstone tied around his neck.

**A Christian who tries to be justified by anything other than faith in Jesus is falling from Grace** - Gal 5:4-6 - 4 You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. 5 But by faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope. 6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. **The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.**

**The love of money is a big reason for Christians falling** - 1 Tim 6:9 - For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

**If you are not informed and focused the Christian lifestyle could cause you to fall –**

Matt 13:20-21 - 20 The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. 21 But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away.

Luke 7:23 - 23 Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me."

### HOW TO AVOID STUMBLING AND FALLING

**The ingredients to not falling** - 2 Peter 1:3-11 - 3 **His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him** who called us by his own glory and goodness. 4 Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. 5 For this very reason, **make every effort to add to your faith goodness;** and to goodness, knowledge; 6 and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; 7 and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. 8 For **if you possess these qualities in increasing measure,** they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins. 10 **Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For IF YOU DO THESE THINGS, you will never fall,** 11 and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

**We must totally rely on Christ** - Jude 24-25 - 24 To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy— 25 to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

**The Bible and the Holy Spirit warns us of things to come so we don't go astray** - John 15:26-16:4 - 26 "When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me. 27 And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning. 16 "All this I have told you so that you will not go astray. 16:2 They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God. 3 They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me. 4 I have told you this, so that when the time comes you will remember that I warned you. I did not tell you this at first because I was with you.

**Christianity is not just something you say; it's a lifestyle...The right lifestyle** - Heb 10:35-39 - 35 **So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded.** 36 You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. 37 For in just a very little while, "He who is coming will come and will not delay. 38 But my righteous one will LIVE BY FAITH. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him." 39 **But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.**

**We have to live an alert life in order not to fall** - 2 Peter 3:17-18 - 17 Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position. 18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

**We will have to make some very tough life decisions in order to stay out of danger** - Matt 5:29-30 - 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

**In trying to help one another make sure you're not the reason someone stumbles** - Rom 14:13- 13 Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way.

**Others Salvation must come before our freedoms** - 1 Cor 8:9-13 - 9 Be careful, however, that the exercise of your freedom does not become a stumbling block to the weak. 10 For if anyone with a weak conscience sees you who have this knowledge eating in an idol's temple, won't he be emboldened to eat what has been sacrificed to idols? 11 So this weak brother, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge. 12 When you sin against your brothers in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. 13 Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause him to fall.

**We must make sure, even when we mean well, not to cause someone to stumble** - 2 Cor 6:3 - 3 We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited.

**Our life purpose must be to Glorify God** - 1 Cor 10:31-33 - 31 So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. 32 Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God— 33 even as I try to please everybody in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.

**Remove false teachers and false teaching –**

1 Tim 1:3-7 - 3 As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer 4 nor to devote themselves to **myths** and **endless genealogies.** These promote controversies rather than God's work — which is by faith. 5 The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. 6 Some have wandered away from these and turned to meaningless talk. 7 They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not know what they are talking about or what they so confidently affirm.

1 Tim 6:20-21 - 20 Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to your care. Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge, 21 which some have professed and in so doing have wandered from the faith. Grace be with you.

**We must make sure even when providing assistance that it doesn't cause stumbling** - 1 Tim 5:11-15 - 11 As for younger widows, do not put them on such a list. For **when their sensual desires overcome their dedication to Christ,** they want to marry. 12 Thus they bring judgment on themselves, because they have broken their first pledge. 13 Besides, they get into the habit of being idle and going about from house to house. And not only do they become idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying things they ought not to. 14 So I counsel younger widows to marry, to have children, to manage their homes and to give the enemy no opportunity for slander. 15 **SOME HAVE IN FACT ALREADY TURNED AWAY TO FOLLOW SATAN.**

**We must examine ourselves continually to make sure our hearts are not pointing in the wrong direction** - Heb 3:12-13 - 12 See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. 13 But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

**Not only are we to minister to unbelievers, we are also to minister to lost believers** - James 5:19-20 - 19 My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back, 20 remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins.

#### THE DANGERS TO FALLING AWAY

**When someone has fully received what Grace has to offer and they still chose to go away is doomed** - Heb 6:4-9 - 4 **It is impossible for those** who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, 5 who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, 6 **if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance**, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace. 7 Land that drinks in the rain often falling on it and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is farmed receives the blessing of God. 8 But land that produces thorns and thistles is worthless and is in danger of being cursed. In the end it will be burned. 9 Even though we speak like this, dear friends, we are confident of better things in your case — things that accompany salvation.

**If anything other than the TRUE GOSPEL is preached it eternally condemns the one that does it** - Gal 1:6-9 - 6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— 7 **which is really no gospel at all.** Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if WE or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! 9 As we have already said, so now I say again: If ANYBODY is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned!

**As with these false prophets, if we choose to leave God we are in a very dangerous and bad place** - 2 Peter 2:20-21 - 20 **If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ** and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. 21 It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them.

**Completely living for the sinful nature is Spiritual suicide** - Heb 10:26-31 - 26 If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, 27 but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. 28 Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know him who said, "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," and again, "The Lord will judge his people." 31 It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.