



WEEK TWO: STUMBLING BLOCKS

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By Josh Miller

This week we continue into *True Religion* to talk about how disputable matters can turn into stumbling blocks. What comes to mind when you think of stumbling blocks? One example pops into my mind. For me, it's like coming home with a dozen glazed donuts knowing my wife has been counting calories all day. In the church today, spiritual stumbling blocks are a lot more serious than donuts, and they affect the health of the local church in a big way.

Where Am I Today?

- 1) When we talk about stumbling blocks, we aren't talking about actual sin, but something that has the potential to lead yourself or others to sin. Take a moment to think about where you are today. Are you considerate of the people around you? Do you take into consideration their personal struggles, beliefs on disputable matters, or even cultural upbringings?

Into the Bible

Paul has quite a few things to say about how relationships matter and how we are to deal with, and respond to, each other's weaknesses. Let's take a look at some passages of Scripture where it talks about, and deals with, stumbling blocks.

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- 2) **Read Romans 14:13-14.** When it comes to disputable matters, what are two things Paul says we should never do to each other?

- 3) Continue reading **Romans 14:15-19.** What is the reason Paul gives to avoid stumbling blocks? What should we be pursuing instead?

- 4) Sometimes a stumbling block gets placed in front of us. Even Jesus had to deal with this at times. Let's look at how Jesus handled one situation. **Read Matthew 16:21-23.** How did Jesus respond to Peter?

- 5) Humanity doesn't change over time, and the problems the early church faced are the same problems we still face today in the church. Not only was the struggle of stumbling blocks happening in Rome, but it was also affecting the church in Corinth. **Read 1 Corinthians 8.** What has the potential to turn into sin? How did Paul say we should treat our liberty?

How Does This Apply?

- 6) Like Jesus had to deal with, have you had anyone be a stumbling block to you?
How did you respond?

On the flipside, have you ever been a stumbling block to someone?

- 7) How does putting aside our differences help each other's personal growth?

- 8) Are you willing to put your freedom aside to accommodate a relationship? If you have an example, share it with the group.

Digging Deeper: Going Further on Your Own

Most times we can control, and are able to remove, hindrances in our lives. The central idea we are talking about in this study is how not to be a stumbling block to each other as believers. For non-believers, the idea of a stumbling block changes. The biggest stumbling block to them is not you, but rather, what Jesus' death

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means to them personally. While we can help point people to Christ, the decision to accept Jesus as Savior is not your decision to make for them. Each person has to decide whether Jesus will be a stumbling block for them or the cornerstone of their salvation. To help understand this better, let's take a look at two passages that talk about Jesus' death as a stumbling block to people.

9) **Read 1 Corinthians 1:22-25.** What does it say caused Jesus to be a stumbling block? To whom was He a stumbling block?

10) **Read 1 Peter 2:4-10.** What are two things that Peter says Jesus can become to you?