

Causing Someone to Stumble



by Dawn Reed
E. Ky. Columnist

My son used to slip on the floor in the living room. He did it often and was very dramatic. "Mommmm!" he would yell and then go on and on about how he almost died in the fall. "Oh, stop it!" I would call from the next room, thinking he was just being goofy. This went on for years.

Our associate Pastor's daughter kept falling in front of the television. We chalked it up to her being little. She was four and not very graceful.

One day, as I was dusting, I nearly fell in the same place! Suddenly, I realized my son had been right all that time! It was the PLEDGE-for the love! I was over-spraying when I dusted the furniture, making the hardwood floor oober slippery. I had unintentionally been causing people to fall, to stumble. Dad gum it!

Knowing is the first step. I could have said, "That's the way I've always done it," or "That's just the way I am,"

and changed nothing. People I cared about would have continued to fall or stumble. Eventually someone would have gotten hurt.

Besides the dusting, I wonder if there are other things I'm doing to make people stumble. Do my words or actions lead people TO Jesus or AWAY from Him? When others see me, do they see a good reflection of my Heavenly Father?

The apostle Paul wrote in Romans 14:13 "... make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister." In 1 Corinthians 8, he penned "... be careful that the exercise of our rights does not become a stumbling block..." In Ephesians 5:15 he reminds us to be careful how we live. He urges us to live holy lives in Romans 12:1.

Living a holy life is not just for old people, whose days are numbered. It's for all followers of Jesus because

ALL of our days are numbered! We are called to be a light to the lost. So that means... just because we CAN do and say things doesn't mean we always should. We don't want to trip up non-believers or those who are new in their faith!

When we ask Him, God will show us if we are causing people in our lives to stumble spiritually. He will tenderly tell us what needs to be eliminated. He can help us make amends and change our habits. Call it "housekeeping" if you want.

I will never be perfect. Ever. But my prayer is to look more like my Father every day!

I feverishly mopped the areas of the hardwood floor where anyone had fallen, then called my son, now grown, to apologize. He had been right!

My new habit is to spray Pledge directly on the cloth when I dust. I don't want anyone to get hurt on my watch!

THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

Do not let your adornment be merely outward — arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel — rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. 1 Peter 3:3,4



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BIBLE TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of Cornelius in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. Whose first chapter begins, "The elder unto the wellbeloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth"? 3 John, Galatians, Hebrews, Jude
3. What were Gihon, Pison Tigris, and Euphrates as connected with the Garden of Eden? Cities, Kings,

Rivers, Caves

4. In Revelation 2, what city was said by John to have "Satan's seat"? Pergamos, Miletus, Patara, Sodom

5. From Acts 13, where were Paul and Barnabas deserted by Mark? Jericho, Perga, Athens, Damascus

6. In 1 Kings, who is given credit for writing 1,005 songs? Jacob, Solomon, Philip, David

Answers on bottom of Page 9

"Test Your Bible Knowledge," with 1,206 multiple-choice questions by columnist Wilson Casey, is available in bookstores and online.

Seeds of Hope

Bud Wilkerson, a nationally respected football coach was once asked by a reporter, "Coach, how much has football contributed to the nation's desire to be physically fit?"

Looking at the reporter, he said, "Nothing - not one thing."

Surprised, the reporter asked, "Would you care to elaborate on that?"

"Certainly," said Wilkerson. "I define football as twenty-two men on a field desperately needing rest and forty-thousand people in the stands desperately needing exercise."

The writer of Psalm 96 must have thought the same way the coach did. "For great

is the Lord and most worthy of praise." Here the Psalmist is talking about those who are in the stands cheering and shouting about His greatness. But before there was cheering he wrote of those who were taking God's message of salvation to the lost and dying - those who were on the "field" involved in a battle for the souls of mankind - the ones who were "declaring God's glory and marvelous deeds" and "sharing and proclaiming His salvation!"

John R. Mott once said, "If a man has religion he must do one of two things with it. If it is false, he must give it up. And if it is true, he must give it away."

Imagine how loud the shouts would be in heaven if we had more people on the field battling for the souls of the lost and dying? We must give it away.

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The Besetting Sin

by BOB CASEY, preacher
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Within the first and second verses of Hebrews 12, there are some alarming thoughts mentioned. The writer says, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, ²Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Acts 7:55-56 tells us where our lord is right today.

I believe that most Christians would like to think that their relationship with Jesus could stand up to all adversity that may come our way. But just like Peter in his denial of Christ during the mockery of the trial, he also became weak in his commitment, having previously said, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." ^{Mat. 26:35} But, he did not do it.

Then in Mark 10:17-22, here is the story commonly called the story of the rich young ruler who came to Jesus running (anxious) to obtain the information concerning eternal life. He approached Jesus at this time in an attitude of humility, by kneeling and calling him 'good master,' asking this all-important question about living eternally.

Then, under the Law of Moses, the which also our Lord was raised, began to quote him from the Ten Commandments. Jesus said unto him, "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God." ^{Mark 10:17} Then, as the Lord continues to apply these commandments, it appears the young man stopped him at only six of them. It seems that he was in a hurry for his answer, saying, "Master, all these have I observed from my youth." ²⁰ What lack I yet? "Then Jesus beholding him loved him," (even knowing his besetting sin) "And said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me." ²¹

And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions. ²²

So his counselor was met, but when considering it, it seems that he rejected it for he went away sadly. The Bible never reveals any more about him.

I believe that even though this young man must have had many good qualities; yet, he also seemingly had done as 1 John 2:15-17 warns us about, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. ¹⁷And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

Someone has said, "within the best of men there is some weak point." He is probably right, for all Christians are in a constant struggle to live godly. In Romans 7:24, Paul called himself a "wretched man!" Who "shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then, he reveals his struggle, "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." ²⁵

What are the points of this letter? We most likely can see ourselves somewhere in this struggle to live godly, so we must put forth much constant effort in our struggle for Heaven; less we fail of the Grace of God. I suggest some ways to help us ask; helps me. A consecrated life of service to Jesus through prayers, Bible reading, church attendance without fail, be always interested in the souls of others; especially your families. Seek out the Lord when a besetting sin threatens to overtake you. He is always looking out for you, but it is our duty to make our appeal to him.

In 1 John 1:6-16, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar and his word is not in us. Friends, notice carefully what verse 7 says, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

So, this is the only way to overcome our besetting sins is to walk always for the light of God's Word.

Visit us soon as we struggle to make Heaven our home.

Sincerely, Bob Casey, (1-859-369-4165), local

Americanisms



"The greatest moments in life are not concerned with selfish achievements, but rather in the things we do for people."
— Walt Disney

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Stickeler's Puzzle



Using the letters in the word INTERCHANGEABILITY, find as many "number words" as you can.

The numbers nine, thirty and ninety are a few examples.

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BIBLE WORD SEARCH

by Elie's Spiritual Treasures

EPHESIANS 1:3-4

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.

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Find the bolded/underlined words in the diagram. They run in all directions — forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

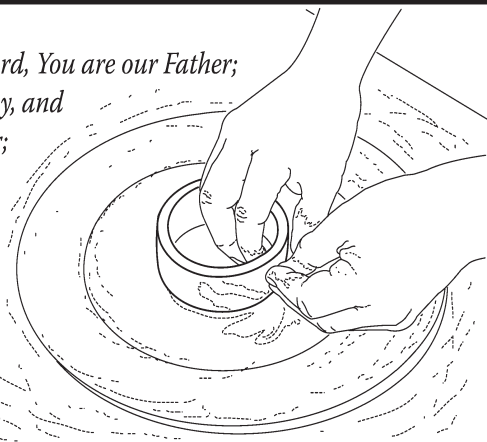
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But now, O Lord, You are our Father; We are the clay, and You our potter; And all we are the work of Your hand.

ISAIAH 64:8



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