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THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

John 5:31-47
Lesson #21
Stumbling Blocks
12/06/2015

The only difference between



Stumbling Blocks &
Stepping Stones

is how we use them.

1

Opportunities that became Obstacles.

- Israel's gold from Egypt.
- Spiritual gifts in ministry.
- Material wealth.
- Education & technology.
- Heritage.



2

Opportunities or Obstacles?

- Joseph's enslavement?
- Jesus' Cross?
- Paul's Thorn?
- Our troubles?

*6 Stepping Stones
that became
Stumbling Blocks
in John 5:31-47*



3

John 5

“³¹ If I alone bear witness of Myself, My testimony is not true. ³² There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the testimony which He bears of Me is true. ³³ You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth. ³⁴ But the witness which I receive is not from man, but I say these things that you may be saved. ³⁵ He was the lamp that was burning and was shining and **you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.**”

Stumbling block #1 - **Messengers.**

4

*The messenger
gets in the way when:*

- He feels that he owns the sheep.
- He makes himself the attraction.
- He fails to feed the sheep the full Gospel.
- He gets in the way of Christ's Spirit.
- People buy into any of the above.

5

“³⁶ But the witness which I have is greater than that of John; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish, the very works that I do, **bear witness of Me**, that the Father has sent Me.”

Stumbling block #2 - Signs and Wonders

- They become the main or only attraction.
- They are about ME, my wants and ego.
- They make Jesus a chaplain to the American dream.
- They lead to a sense of entitlement.

6

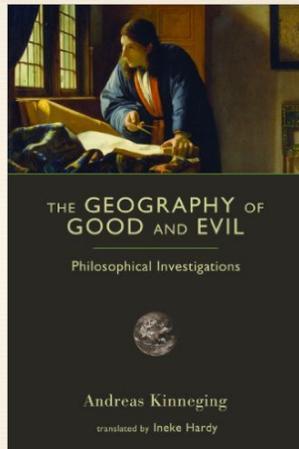
“³⁷ And the Father who sent Me, He has borne witness of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form. ³⁸ And **you do not have His word abiding in you**, for you do not believe Him whom He sent.”

Stumbling block #3 - Presuppositions

- Our presuppositions are too small. We see only secondary causes for life's wonders.
- We suppress our hearts deep spiritual longings.
- We give little time to meditation, reflection, contemplation, and audit of our lives.

7

“Modern Western culture has lost an appreciation of the importance of leisure (time to reflect and imagine).”



8

“³⁹ You search the Scriptures, because **you think that in them you have eternal life**; and it is these that bear witness of Me; ⁴⁰ and you are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life.”

Stumbling block #4 - Bible.

- **Bibliolatry** - Loving the Bible more than God.
- **Being more enamored with theology than with Christian living.**
- **Equating Biblical knowledge with spiritual maturity.**

9

“⁴¹ I do not receive glory from men ⁴² but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves. ⁴³ I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another shall come in his own name, you will receive him. ⁴⁴ How can you believe, when **you receive glory from one another**, and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God?”

Stumbling block #5 - Man.

- Give other people a messianic role.
- Make the 2nd commandment the 1st commandment.

10

“⁴⁵ Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, **in whom you have set your hope**. ⁴⁶ For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me. ⁴⁷ But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?”

Stumbling block #6 - Law.

- Reducing the Christian life to rules.
- Allowing traditions to overrule principles.
- Viewing judgmentalism as the chief sign of spirituality.

11

