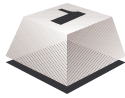
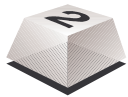


STUMBLING BLOCKS



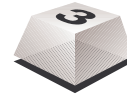
WHAT ARE STUMBLING BLOCKS?

- are stones in the road—lying on or embedded in and projecting above the surface
 - often fall from mountains and roll on to the roads
 - sequence: foot (Prov 3:23) strikes a stone (Psa 91:11–12), you stumble (Isa 8:14), fall (Rom 11:11), and hurt yourself—your foot or body (Isa 8:15)
- we have all experienced this, so it's a good analogy of the CWL
 - stumbling blocks are often mentioned in the Bible
- better to remove stumbling blocks than to walk around them—to protect others (Isa 57:14)
- may intentionally be put in front of others to hurt them (Lev 19:14)
- best way to avoid stumbling is to travel during the day (John 11:9–10)



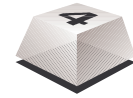
SPIRITUAL STUMBLING BLOCKS

- are stumbling blocks that hurt your heart or soul: 'that this may not become a... stumbling block of the heart to my Lord' (1 Sam 25:31 RCL)
- may be personal sins, your love for others, Christian liberty, and persecution



CAUSES OF STUMBLING

- (1) sinning puts stumbling blocks in front of your own feet; e.g., vengeance and murder (1 Sam 25:11, 13, 22 with 25:31)
 - *you can't sin without hurting yourself in some way* (e.g., Prov 6:27–29)
 - *the more sins you commit, the more stumbling blocks you lay in front of yourself*
- (2) your sins may be stumbling blocks for others (Ezek 44:10–12)
 - *it's hard to sin without hurting others because people copy the sins of those they admire* (Heb 4:11)
- (3) human viewpoint and love may be a stumbling block for others—your advice tempts them to set aside God's plan for their lives (Matt 16:21–23)
 - *man's interests (HVP) are often more attractive than God's (DVP)*
 - *good intentions are not always good*
- (4) your liberty may be a stumbling block to the weak (1 Cor 8:9–13)
 - *Law of Love sacrifices personal liberty to keep weaker believers from stumbling* (Rom 14:13, 15, 16, 21)
 - *to do things that cause the weak to stumble is the same as placing a stumbling block before the blind*
- (5) persecution may be a stumbling block (Matt 13:20–21; cf. 24:10; 26:31, 33)
 - *they decide the CWL isn't worth the struggle or sacrifice*



HOW TO KEEP FROM STUMBLING

- (1) quit sinning (Ezek 18:30)
 - *the less you sin, the less you will stumble*
- (2) practice the Law of Love (1 John 2:10)
 - *give up your liberty until they mature or move away*
- (3) cultivate a love for God's Word (Psa 119:165)
 - *to love the Law is to desire to possess it—to make it your own*
 - are two conditional promises in this verse: *maturity produces inner peace and protection from stumbling blocks*
 - *Scripture is a lamp unto your feet to help you see stumbling blocks in time*
- (4) get wisdom and understanding (Prov 3:21–23)
- (5) separate from people who put stumbling blocks in front of others (Rom 16:17–18)
 - *do you really want to be around those who hurt the spiritual lives of others?*