

Not being a stumbling block

Matthew 17:24-27

Things that are hard to understand about Jesus
The suffering Son of God



24-25a:

25b-26:

The children of the king have abundance, privilege, ...
Jesus is the only and beloved Son of Almighty God. Yet...

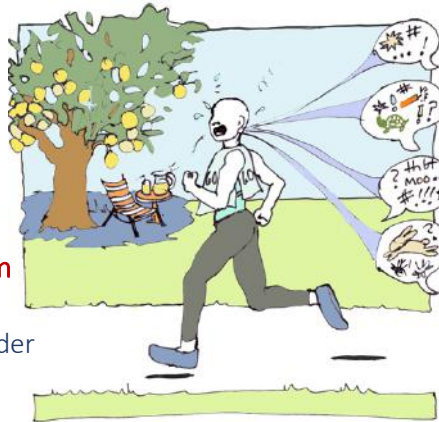
27:

The Big Idea

Jesus surrendered His rights
so He wouldn't hinder
people's paths to God

He expects His disciples to follow Him

Running is hard
Temptations for relief make it harder
"Comments" make it harder
Finding and Following Jesus
can be hard
Stumbling blocks make it harder
Disciples sacrifice their rights rather than being a stumbling block
to others



What are we to do?

For other Christians, sacrifice our rights

"Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother or sister to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause them to fall."

1 Corinthians 8:13

For people finding Jesus, sacrifice our rights

"I have become all things to all people, so that I may by every possible means save some."

1 Corinthians 9:22

"In your relationships with one another, **have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:**
Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God
something to be used to his own advantage;
rather, **he made himself nothing**
by taking the very nature of **a servant**,
being made in human likeness.
And being found in appearance as a man,
he **humbled himself**
by becoming **obedient to death**—
even death on a cross!"

Philippians 2:5-8

"Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, **in humility value others above yourselves**, not looking to your own interests but **each of you to the interests of the others.**"

Philippians 2:1-4

Reflection Questions for later today or this week...

1. What are ways that secondary things have been a stumbling block in your journey to know Jesus more? What would it look like to set those things aside to know Jesus more?
2. What are ways that you could be (and might have been) a stumbling block for others to know Jesus more, even though you have the right to those things? What would it look like to set those things aside so they can know Jesus more?
3. What are ways that you could be (and might have been) a stumbling block for the unity of the Church, even though you have the right to those things? What would it look like to set those things aside so that the Church can be more united?
4. How can we discern when an issue is not secondary, and it is worth holding to even if it becomes a stumbling block to others?

Conversation starters with people in daily life, whether or not they are Christians

Have you ever seriously considered the life and teachings of Jesus?
Has anything made that hard to do?