

THE GRIEVOUS EVIL OF CAUSING BELIEVERS TO “STUMBLE”
(Matthew 18:5-9)

- I. The PRINCIPLE (Matt. 18:5-6)
 - A. The believer is UNITED WITH Christ (18:5)
 - 1. The CHILD represents any BELIEVER
 - 2. The BELIEVER must be received as CHRIST’S REPRESENTATIVE
 - 3. To RECEIVE the believer is to RECEIVE Christ
 - B. The believer is DEFENDED BY Christ (18:6)
 - 1. The PROMISE is to ALL BELIEVERS
 - 2. The implied JUDGMENT is DIRE

- II. The PERIL (Matt. 18:7-9)
 - A. The PERPETRATOR will face God’s WRATH (18:7)
 - 1. The WORLD in GENERAL (v. 7a)
 - 2. The INDIVIDUAL in PARTICULAR (v. 7b)
 - a. LURING others to sin
 - b. PROVOKING others to sin

- c. MODELING sin by EXAMPLE
- B. The BELIEVER must address HIS OWN SIN (18:8-9a; cf. 5:29-30)
 - 1. Taken literally, calls for self-MUTILATION to PREVENT temptation
 - a. CUTTING OFF an offending HAND or FOOT
 - b. TEARING OUT an offending EYE
 - 2. Taken figuratively, calls for dramatic SEVERING of SINFUL impulses
- C. The PENALTY is “the FIERY HELL” (18:9b)
 - 1. The destiny of the WORLD at large and the INDIVIDUAL UNBELIEVER
 - a. Primarily for REJECTING CHRIST
 - b. Secondly for creating OBSTACLES to FAITH and ALTERNATIVES to GODLINESS
 - 2. The destiny of the SUPPOSED believer who CHERISHES his SIN
 - a. In general, PREFERRING whatever causes your own COLLAPSE
 - b. In particular, the PRIDE of denying God’s GRACE (cf. 18:10)