

## REMOVING OBSTACLES

### Hebrews 12:1

**Obstacle** – A barrier, an obstruction, a blockage, or a hindrance.

**John 11:39** In N. T. times when a cave or tomb was prepared for the dead, a large round shaped stone was carved to cover and seal the tomb entrance. The stone was often four or five feet in diameter and weighed in excess of several hundred pounds thus taking several men a great deal of effort to move it.

**John 11:40; James 2:26** The principle that Jesus is teaching in this miracle is that God will do for us what we cannot do for ourselves; but He demands that we make every effort to do what we are capable of doing, to believe Him for the miracle we need and then act out our faith by removing the obstacles.

### Obstacles To Salvation

**John 3:16; Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 10:9-13** Ignorance – How sad to know that millions around the world that have access and may have heard the gospel but are ignorant about the bible and all the wonderful promises of salvation that is free for the taking. Have we tried to educate our loved ones?

**Acts 9:20-22; I Corinthians 13:1-2** Prejudice – Often miss-informed or un-informed people become offended by the approach of a friend or relative that is trying to defend Christianity or win them over by arguing their cause. Paul warns that it is love that is the gospel's message along with prayer.

**Luke 18:10-14; Matthew 19:16-22** Self-righteousness – This is an obstacle that needs to be taken away if there be any hope of salvation. So many will end up in hell because they thought they could earn heaven with their good works, self sacrifice and church membership.

### Obstacles To Believers

**Matthew 5:6; Romans 10:17; II Timothy 2:15** Spiritual Growth - It is so sad that many believers in good churches fail to grow into full Christian maturity in order for God to have a mature vessel to use.

**II Corinthians 1:3-4; Galatians 6:9-10** Christian love for brethren - We are admonished several times in scripture to love and help the brethren yet many believers are left lonely, hungry, depressed, many missionaries go without needed help because of selfishness and uncaring church members.

**Romans 12:1; I Corinthians 15:58** Commitment – Many church needs go unfilled because of the lack of commitment of members. This obstacle will come back and haunt believers at the Judgment.

**Malachi 3:8; Luke 6:38; I Corinthians 16:1-3** Financial giving No doubt finances with God's people is often a touchy subject. However, God is pretty plain that it is our responsibility to support and give to the church and to those that need our help like missions, brethren in need, church bills, etc.

**Romans 10:1; James 5:16** Care for the lost – There will be many tears and sorrow at the Great White Throne as we see family, friends, fellow workers and others we have known thrown into hell because of our lack of real love and concern for their souls. God will save them if we do our part.

**John 11:39-40; Mark 4:35-34** Christian unbelief - How often have we just given up on believing a certain thing would ever come to pass. It might be a job, a family crisis, a sickness, a lost family member. We think “it's too hard, I've gone to far, I messed up too much to think God can help.”

**Zephaniah 1:12-13; Revelation 3:16** Spiritual Apathy – This is a kind phrase that means *Laziness*. “I'll come to church if it's not too cold, not to hot, if I wake up in time.” God is disgusted with apathy.

God wants to work in our lives but will not if we do not do our part: **John 11:39** “roll ye the stone away”, **Joshua 6:15** “march around the city seven times”, **Nehemiah 4:7** “build the wall and prepare for battle”, **Luke 5:5** “Let down the net”, **II Kings 4:3** “borrow not a few” **II Kings 5:7** “did seven times in Jordan” **John 5:8** “take up thy bed and walk”. What do you need God to do for you? Are there obstacles, weights, or stones that you must remove in order for God to do His part? Make the effort!!