Mark 9:41–42

> *“Truly I tell you, anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to Christ will certainly not lose their reward. And if anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them if a large millstone were hung around their neck and they were thrown into the sea.”*

The Words of Christ and Their Deep Meaning

The Lord Jesus spoke these words to show the seriousness of our conduct toward those who believe in Him. Earlier, He said that signs will follow those who believe:

> *“In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will pick up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it will not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”* (Mark 16:17–18)

But alongside those miraculous signs, there are also spiritual consequences — rewards for obedience and curses for disobedience — that accompany believers.

When a person believes in Christ, repents of sin, and receives the Holy Spirit, God places upon them a heavenly reward — a divine mark in the spiritual realm. Whoever blesses such a believer shares in their blessing. Jesus said,

> *“Whoever receives you receives Me, and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me.”* (Matthew 10:40)

Thus, to welcome or serve a true child of God is to welcome Christ Himself. The reward for such kindness is eternal. But likewise, to curse or harm such a person brings upon oneself the curse of heaven, for Scripture says:

> *“I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse.”* (Genesis 12:3)

This promise, though spoken to Abraham, extends to all who are spiritual Israel — those who have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:7, 29).

So when you speak evil against, despise, or harm a believer — you are doing it against Christ Himself. It is not a small matter. Such words or actions can open the door to unseen judgment.

The Danger of Causing a Believer to Stumble

There is one sin even more severe than cursing a believer — and that is to cause them to stumble.
Jesus said it would be *better* for such a person to have a millstone tied around their neck and be drowned in the sea.

To *cause to stumble* means to intentionally do something that leads a believer into sin, temptation, or backsliding.
For example:

- A young woman who has given her life to Christ and decided to live in purity is deceived by a man who pretends to be godly, leading her into sexual sin.

→ The man carries a heavier judgment than the woman who fell, for he became a stumbling block.

- A woman, driven by lust or vanity, entices a brother in the Lord into immorality.
  → Jesus warns that for her, it would be better if she were drowned with a millstone than to face the eternal judgment awaiting such sin.

This shows that God fiercely protects His children. Whoever destroys the faith of one of His little ones commits an offense that cries out before heaven.

What Is a Millstone?

In ancient times, people used two heavy stones to grind grain — the *millstone*. The upper stone turned upon the lower to crush grain into flour. Every home had one; it was a basic tool for daily sustenance.

When Jesus used this image, He was revealing something

profound:
If someone causes a believer to fall, it would be better for that person's very *means of sustenance* — their work, livelihood, or provision — to become a burden that drags them to destruction.

In spiritual terms, Jesus was saying:

> *"It would be better if their own source of livelihood became their downfall — leading them to perish eternally."*

The phrase *"thrown into the sea"* symbolizes being cast into the lake of fire, the final judgment (Revelation 20:14–15).

A Warning to Those Who Mislead God's Children

Many people unknowingly destroy themselves by leading others astray — encouraging believers to compromise or sin.

For instance:

- Persuading others to dress immodestly, go to ungodly places, or adopt worldly

habits while knowing these things dishonor God.

- Mocking or tempting young believers to abandon their faith or purity.

Paul warns us:

> *“When you sin against them in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ.”* (1 Corinthians 8:12)

So, even though you may think you are merely influencing another person, in reality, you are sinning against Christ Himself, who lives within that believer.

The Final Judgment

On the last day, Christ will separate the sheep from the goats — the righteous from the wicked.
Those who comforted, helped, and respected the “little ones” (the believers) will inherit eternal life, but those who caused them pain and stumbling will face everlasting punishment.

> “Then He will say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’”
> (Matthew 25:41–46)

They will realize too late that every act of cruelty, mockery, or temptation toward a believer was a sin against the Lord Himself.

A Call to Repentance

If you have ever caused another believer to stumble — knowingly or unknowingly — there is still hope.
The Lord is merciful and ready to forgive all who repent sincerely. Confess your sin, turn from it, and determine to live in holiness.

Then, obey Christ’s command by being baptized in water in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38). After that, the Lord will fill you with the Holy Spirit, who will give you the strength to overcome sin and walk in truth.

Conclusion

The “millstone” symbolizes the heavy consequence of sin that destroys both spiritual and physical life.
Let us, therefore, walk in reverence, honoring every child of God — for in doing so, we honor Christ Himself who dwells in them.

> *“Do not cause anyone to stumble… whether Jews, Greeks, or the church of God.”* (1 Corinthians 10:32)

Blessed are those who bless God’s people; cursed are those who harm them.
Choose life, choose holiness, and stand on the side of Christ’s flock — the sheep that hear His voice and follow Him.

May the Lord bless you.

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