

James 3:2

For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.

Brain teaser today. Do you remember when you were learning how to walk? For me it was over 65 years ago, and I can barely remember what I had for lunch yesterday. That's where the brain teaser comes in, because we can't remember when we were learning how to walk. But if you have kids you very likely remember when they were learning how to walk. Or maybe you don't have kids, but you know those who do, and you remember when their kids were learning how to walk, or maybe they are learning how to walk right now.

Even animals, when you watch those nature shows with those cute little baby animals trying to take their first steps and seeing them stumble and fall, and we say ahh, how cute and laugh. And with people, it is cute when a baby is learning to walk and they stumble and fall, and the parents and adults and even older siblings encourage them to go on and help teach them to learn how to walk. But as a child, you never learned how to walk right away, it took time, with stumbling and falling, and then that first step happened and everyone got excited. You may not remember, but believe me, everyone was excited. Then after that first step, there were more and more steps to the point that you could not only walk, but run as well. But once again, it did not happen right away, it took time and over time you stumbled and fell less and less

Now we can all testify to this, that even when we were growing up, even in our teens and 20 somethings, there were things that caused us to stumble and fall, some were caused by obstacles in the way and others were just us being downright clumsy. As you get old, you may not run as much, or even at all, and you walk more carefully, because you don't want to stumble and fall.

But regardless of your age, when you do stumble and fall, you don't just sit there giving up and saying, *"I hate walking, I'm never going to walk again."* No we don't say that because walking is important to get around and get to places, even if it's the bathroom or bed.

With this super long introduction, what am I getting at? Good question and the answer is in today's devotional verse, which says: ***"For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body."***

Did you catch those three word ***"we all stumble"*** Who better to know this than the author of the book, who is James, the half brother of Jesus. *"Yeah, my brother Jesus was perfect, and seeing His perfection growing up, I must admit that I stumbled a lot of times"* James may say.

Even as you read throughout the bible of great men like Abraham, Moses, and King David, they all stumbled at one time, or should I say, many times just like we all do.

You have heard of the Hall of Faith, which is Hebrews 11, but did you ever realize that those mentioned in the Hall of Faith, would also be included in the Hall of Stumblers.

Abraham, who was willing to offer his own son Isaac on the alter to God,

† **Hebrews 11:17** *By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son*

Also he tried to do things on his own by having a child by Hagar, instead of Sarah.

† **Genesis 16:2** *So Sarai said to Abram, "See now, the LORD has restrained me from bearing children. Please, go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her." And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai.*

“Oops, look who stumbled” we would say about Abraham.

What about good old Moses where it says:

† **Hebrews 11:24** *By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter*

Yet we forget that Moses had his moment of stumbling when He first tried to do things his way and not God's way.

† **Exodus 2:14-15** *Then he said, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you intend to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" So Moses feared and said, "Surely this thing is known!" When Pharaoh heard of this matter, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh and dwelt in the land of Midian; and he sat down by a well.*

And after stumbling, Moses would not return until 40 years later to be God's spokesperson to deliver the Children of Israel from Egypt. But Moses walked with God for those 40 years and didn't just sit around doing nothing.

So these should be words of encouragement to you, because we have all stumbled, as James says. But it does not mean that we give up, because if Moses would have given up and not looked to God, the Children of Israel could still be in bondage to Egypt or God would have used someone else.

What about Abraham? Sure he tried things his own way, as did Moses to, but still God picked him up, brushed him off and had him keep going, because God had a purpose for him, and a promise.

God has a purpose for you to, what it is you may very well know, but you may feel that since you stumbled, not just once but multiple times, that God won't use you. But He will, just like He did with Moses and Abraham, and all the men and women in the bible, because they are all included in "***we all stumble***".

We seem to forget that we are living the bible right now, even though we know the end, we have not reached the end, so the purpose God has for each and everyone of us is in the bible that you read everyday. Not by name, but we each play a part in what happens in the bible, and here is one verse to prove that.

† **1 Thessalonians 4:17** *Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.*

This is talking about the rapture and the word, "***we***" includes you if you are a believer, but you know who else the "***we***" includes? It includes anyone you share Jesus with and turn to the Lord.

So sure, you will stumble and probably have in the last 24 hours or 24 seconds, but God still loves you and wants to use you. So get up and keep pressing forward to the calling that God has for you.

† **Philippians 3:12-14 (NLT2)** *I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me. No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.*