

Luke Chapter 17

- Jesus' day started back in **chapter 14** when He was invited to the house of a Pharisee for the Sabbath meal, where they had set a trap with a man who had the dropsy to see if Jesus would heal him on the Sabbath.
 - After making various corrections there, he spoke some parables leading into a discussion about discipleship.
 - In **chapter 15** He turns His attention to the publicans and sinners who wanted to hear Him. He talked about our use of our resources, leading up to the parable of the prodigal sons.
 - **Chapter 16**, still the same day Jesus is addressing his disciples teaching about stewardship, about the unjust steward that used his position in this life to secure his eternity – ending the story of Lazarus and the rich man – still dealing with the issues of stewardship.
 - He's still on his way to Jerusalem, He's teaching and preparing His disciples not only for His crucifixion, but He's also preparing them to minister in His place when He's no longer there physically to do that Himself.
 - He will cover 4 basic topics in this chapter: forgiveness, faithfulness, thankfulness, and preparedness.
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V: 1-2 Sometimes this verse is interpreted as dealing with interpersonal relationships which preaches good and fits with the concept of forgiving and dealing with each other in a loving manner, but that is not the true intent of this scripture.

[The reason I say this is because of the definition of the key word in this first verse:](#)

- **Offences:** (G4625). skandalon, ("scandal"); a derivative of G2578; a trap-stick (bent sapling), i.e. snare (fig. cause of displeasure or sin), occasion to fall, cause of stumbling, offence, thing that offends, stumbling-block.
- Any person or thing by which one is drawn into error or sin.
- Jesus is saying it is impossible to avoid these things; those traps and snares are out there that would cause us to fall into error or sin, they are a reality, and we have to learn how to deal with them.

Matthew 7:15-16 ¹⁵“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. ¹⁶You shall know them by their fruits...”

John 8:31-32 ³¹... if ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed; ³²And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

[Paul wrote about the Bereans:](#)

Acts 17:11 “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”

- Like the Berean’s, compare what you’re being told to the Word of God.

1 John 4:1-3 “¹Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. ²Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: ³And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of anti-Christ, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.”

- Woe unto that person who causes someone to stumble in their faith. Most likely he had the Pharisees and Scribes in mind who were doing just what Jesus was talking about.

Galatians 1:8 “But though we or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.”

- “*These little ones...*” His disciples and new comers in the faith, those just coming to Christ as opposed to “children” causing the children of God to stumble through our poor witness, but this does apply to little children as well – those who would destroy their faith from the evil men that designed our public school system with the intent of taking their faith away to the foolish parent who tells their child that there is no God.
- In context He is probably talking about the “*publicans and sinners*” from **Lk. 15:1**.

Paul cautions us:

1 Corinthians 8:9 “But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak.”

- For love’s sake, we can’t live our lives oblivious to the fact that others are watching.
- “... *cast into the sea...*”: Jews were not a sea faring people. **1 Kings 9:26-27**

Picture: millstone

- Jews only fished the Sea of Galilee, not the Mediterranean. They were generally afraid of the ocean and of drowning. They were the only coastal nation that didn’t use drowning as a form of capital punishment.

V: 3-4 Take heed, be careful: speaking to the disciples.

- If our brother trespasses / sins against us, causes us to stumble then rebuke him, correct him, confront him – and if he repents – forgive him.
- If he sins again, and you go through the same process then forgive him again.
- The Rabbi's used to say that if you can forgive a man 3 times then you're a perfect man; Jesus double's that and adds one.
- The condition is repentance; if a man does the same thing over and over again saying he's repenting – we might question the sincerity of that repentance.
- This passage does not stand alone, as we apply this passage to offenses and relating to our brother's and sisters; if it's needed it should be a loving, private rebuke intending to minister to them.

Matthew 18:15-20 ¹⁵“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. ¹⁶But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. ¹⁷And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.”

Ephesians 4:15 “But speaking the truth in love...”

Galatians 6:1 “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.”

- If they repent, we must forgive:

Ephesians 4:32 “And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.”

- We need to take heed not just to forgive, but to not be that person who causes others to stumble in their faith:

Romans 14:13 “Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.”

1 Corinthians 10:32 “Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:”

V: 5 After hearing the teaching on offenses and forgiveness the Apostles ask Jesus to increase their faith – they are thinking that this will not be an easy task.

- It's not in our nature to forgive repeatedly, it takes a living faith to obey these instructions and forgive others.
- Jesus often gave commandments that on the surface seemed impossible to do, but when a person by faith seeks to obey that commandment, they discover that they have already been given what they needed to perform it.
- Our obedience in forgiving others shows that we are trusting God to take care of the consequences, to handle the misunderstandings, and work everything out for our good and for His glory.
- Mature Christians understand that forgiveness is not a cheap exchange of words, like when squabbling children will flippantly say "I'm sorry" to each other.
- Real forgiveness, true forgiveness always involves pain; somebody has been hurt and there is a price to pay in healing the wound.
- Love motivates us to forgive, but faith activates that forgiveness so that God can use it to work out blessings in the lives of His people.
- Thus their request: "*Lord increase our faith...*"

Romans 10:17 "*Faith cometh by hearing, hearing by the Word of God.*"

- As they make their request, the Word of God speaks to them:

And the Lord said...

V: 6 The disciples said "Lord, increase our faith."

- Jesus says "Unleash your faith!"
- Jesus responds saying if you have even the smallest amount of faith, you will be enabled to do impossible things.
- Faith & power are inter-connected.
- The mustard seed is very small, (poppy seed muffins) yet there is life in it, and it can grow and bear fruit.

Mark 4:31-32a ³¹It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: ³²But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs..."

James 2:14-26 Speaks of a living faith that is manifest...

- If our faith is a living faith, it will grow, and it will enable us to obey God's commands.

Psalm 37:5 “Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass.”

- Forgiveness is a test of both our faith and our love. When we say those words “I forgive you” there is a spiritual transaction that takes place, it is an expression of our faith that God will make it all right. (no but’s...)
- Human nature being what it is, there will always be offenses, providing plenty of opportunity to exercise our faith and love!

V: 7-10 “But” – contrast, or in this case striking a balance – one lesson with another.

- Most of us can’t relate to having a servant, it’s for the rich and famous; but in that day many people had hired servants, even in fairly low income houses.
- “Will work for food” was the real deal in those days.
- Jesus is kind of getting down to the everyday realities of life.
- Faith that does not result in faithfulness will not accomplish God’s work.
- It is good to have faith to do the difficult and impossible, but it is important to have the faith to do the routine tasks that our master has called us to.

Zechariah 4:10 “For who hath despised the day of small things?”

- Privilege is always balanced with responsibility.
- Jesus is describing what to them would be an unthinkable situation: A master ministering to his servant.

Yet this is what Jesus has promised to us:

Luke 12:35-38 ³⁵Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; ³⁶And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. ³⁷Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.”

Matthew 20:28 “Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

- The servant described here is responsible to outside jobs like plowing the field, tending to the cattle, and inside jobs like cooking.
1. This story emphasizes faithfulness to duty no matter what the demands might be, and the argument here is from the lesser to the greater.

2. If a common servant is faithful to obey the orders of his master who does not reward or even thank him, how much more ought Jesus' disciples obey their loving Master, who has promised to reward them graciously.
 3. A faithful servant should not expect any special reward, since he only did what he was told to do.
 4. "Unprofitable" (G-888) . achreios, useless, good for nothing, unmeritorious, unprofitable, it is also translated as "without need".
 5. Nobody "owes" us anything – the servant was profitable in the sense that his work in the field and in the house had value.
 6. This statement means, "My master does not owe me anything extra."
 7. The fact that Jesus will reward His servants is completely a matter of grace. We do not deserve any thing because we have obeyed Him and done what He said.
 8. As His servants we must be careful that we don't have the wrong attitude toward those things He calls us to.
- There are two extremes to avoid:
 1. Merely doing our duty in kind of a slavish way, because we have to.
 2. Doing our duty because we hope to gain a reward, or favor with God.
 - In the parable of the prodigal sons back in Chapter 15 – the older son was miserably obedient, always hoping that his father would throw him a party for being such a good boy, and becoming increasingly bitter when it didn't happen.

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- The right attitude for Christian service unto our Lord is simply doing it from the heart, doing it for love.

Ephesians 6:5-6 ⁵"Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; ⁶not with eye-service, as men pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;"

John 14:15 "If ye love Me, keep My commandments"

- When you love the One you're serving, it's a joy to serve Him!

1 John 5:3 "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandment: and His commandments are not grievous."

Psalms 40:8 "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart."

V: 11-19 The healing of the 10 lepers:

V: 11 As He passed through Galilee and Samaria on the way to His final trip to Jerusalem.
(Map)

V: 12-13 As He came into an un-named village He was met by a group of 10 men who had leprosy. This is a mixed group of Jews and Samaritans, maybe some other Gentiles – their tragic circumstances have brought them together.

- If a person had leprosy, they were required to stay at least 100 feet away and cry out to anyone around them “un-clean, un-clean!” to keep others from contracting their disease.
- If they were up-wind, they had to stay even farther away, leprosy is and was a mystery; it was incurable and fatal.
- Then and today, how people get leprosy is a mystery. Dr. Hansen was able to isolate the bacillus / bacteria that produces leprosy, and in experimentation they injected it into healthy humans – who never got the disease. In other cases there were people who worked with lepers for years and never got the disease – but then later became lepers. No one has ever figured out how it’s transmitted or why one person gets it and another doesn’t.

2 Thessalonians 2:7 “The mystery of iniquity...”

- Leprosy is analogous to sin because it separates us from God, and our families, and eventually it kills us.

Romans 6:23 “The wages of sin is death...”

- The fact is that leprosy is incurable and deadly apart from the divine intervention of God.
- In Leviticus 14 we have the law of the leper on the day of his cleansing: the leper would go to the Priest, with specific sacrifices and offerings, ritual bathing, shaving off all his hair, clean clothes, the priest would inspect the leper, wait 7 days and inspect him again and pronounce him clean – restored.
- In the same way God intervenes in our sinful leprous lives, He brings the sacrifice, the cleansing, the clean clothes, and restoration all through His Son, Jesus Christ.

Romans 6:23 “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ.”

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- So here are these 10 lepers who have heard of Jesus and His healing of the multitudes, they cry out to Him – “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.”

- Like us, apart from Jesus there is no hope, He is their only hope.
- This reminds us of “Blind Bartimaeus”

Mark 10:46-47 “⁴⁶And they came to Jericho: and as He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging. ⁴⁷And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me. ⁴⁸And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, thou son of David, have mercy on me.”

- I can't think of a time or situation where when someone cried out to Jesus for mercy, where He didn't show mercy.
- Those who cry out to Jesus for mercy will receive it!

V: 14 Jesus responds to them, “Go show yourselves to the priests” – the first step as laid out in Leviticus Ch. 14 – the first step is “Go...” Jesus gave them a role to play a part to do.

- As they went, as they took heed to the Word of God, as they were obedient – they were cleansed, healed.
- As they went – there was a progressive element to this healing; not all healings are instantaneous, some are progressive as this was.

John 15:3 “Now you are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.”

V: 15-19 One of the 10, seeing that he was cleansed turned back to Jesus – with a loud voice glorified God, fell down on his face at Jesus' feet, giving Him thanks.

- Giving glory to God for the great things He hath done!
- The Samaritans were considered outside the covenant of God, treated as non-Jews.
- You would think that all 10 of these men would return to give thanks to the Lord, but I'm brought to think of the many times that I personally take God's blessings for granted, I can't be too hard on those guys.

Psalm 92:1-2 “¹It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High: ²To shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night.”

Psalm 107:8 “Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men.”

V: 19 Jesus informs this Samaritan that he is not just “healed” – but that this expression or confession of faith has made him “whole”.

- The others were healed physically of their leprosy, but they would one day die. This Samaritan was healed both physically and spiritually. It doesn't do any good to be healed physically then to perish – this man, by faith was made “whole” – he was healed spiritually.

Mark 8:36-37 ³⁶For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? ³⁷Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”

- By giving thanks to the Lord, by giving Him glory, by humbling himself before God he received more than just healing, he received forgiveness for his sins, he was made a part of the family of God; he was made whole.

V: 20 “Demanded” of the Pharisees – more conflict with the religious leaders, they weren't asking nicely, it was confrontational.

- They were looking for the kingdom of God in an earthly sense, the resurrection of the Davidic kingdom – on earth, the Messiah getting rid of Roman rule, and ultimately leading them to conquering the whole world.

Psalm 2:8 “Ask of Me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.”

- That was the promise of God to the Messiah and so they are looking for the Messiah to lead them in conquest – and they would like to know when that is going to happen.
- Jesus responds: “the kingdom of God cometh not with “observation:””.

Observation: (G:3907). parateresis, par-at-ay'-ray-sis; from G3906; inspection, i.e. ocular evidence:--observation.

- It is to watch with hostility, to catch someone in the wrong as when the back in Luke 14 when the Pharisee invited Jesus to dinner and they “watched” him – with hostility to see if He was going to violate the Sabbath.

Coming up – is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar?

Luke 20:20 “And they watched him, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of His words, that so they might deliver Him unto the power and authority of the governor.”

- The kingdom isn't going to come because you demand it, or expect it in your own terms, on your conditions or pre-conceived ideas.

V: 21 Jesus is saying you're missing it! It is right in front of you and you're not seeing it!

- The kingdom of God is **within** you: this word is also translated as "**among**" you – both interpretations seem to apply. Jesus is standing right in front of them, yet they reject them.
- When we confess that Jesus is Lord and receive Him – then the kingdom of God is within us!

1 Corinthians 3:16 "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

- There will be that time when Jesus comes to reign on the earth, it will be called the time of the kingdom of God – Jesus taught us to pray:

Matthew 6:10 "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

- Certainly we look forward to that day – we pray for it to come quickly, but at the same time we can experience the kingdom of God now in our hearts, as we submit our lives to Jesus – the kingdom of God is where He reigns!
- The kingdom of God isn't a place, it's a person – Jesus!

V: 22 We will long to be with Jesus.

V: 23-24 Look here! Look over there! – Go not after them!

- There are people who are constantly running from this place to that place trying to find the "hot spot of blessing" – Look, it's happening in **Toronto – the "Toronto blessing"**, oh, it's move now it's the "**Brownsville revival**" – it's moved again it's **angel feathers and gold dust at Bethel!**
- The Jehovah's witnesses are saying that it's happened in New York, that it happened in a private chamber in 1917 – this is false.
- Jesus is saying that like as when lightening strikes it is seen from afar and all over – not just to a chosen few; when Jesus comes we're all going to know it.

V: 25 "But first" – before all of that, we need to keep things in their proper order – Jesus must go to the cross.

- Jesus is dispelling any thoughts that He's on the way to Jerusalem to start a rebellion or making any attempt to establish an earthly kingdom – Jesus is going to Jerusalem to suffer on our behalf.

V: 26-30 Back to the issue of timing – much like the Olivet discourse:

- It will be like the days of Noah or like the days of Lot – in both situations life was just going on as usual, seemingly without a care in the world, then sudden destruction.
- It will come at a time when it is completely un-expected:

Matthew 24:44 “Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

V: 31-32 There will be no time to pack or gather just to move, this sounds like the description in Matthew 24 & 25.

- It will be a day when an attachment to earthly things will imperil a man's life.
- As with Lot's wife, this is no time to look back to the things of the world.

Luke 9:62 “And Jesus said unto him, no man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”

V: 33 Whosoever would seek to save their own lives; it won't work – we can't save ourselves, can't work enough, can't get around God's word – apart from Jesus we're all going to perish for our sins.

- But if we'll die to ourselves, lose our lives in His – we shall be preserved in Heaven.

John 12:25 “He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.”

Galatians 2:20 “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.”

John 3:36 “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”

V: 34-37 There are a couple of ways to look at this – given the examples of Noah & Lot, the ones who were preserved were the one's taken out of harms way –

much like the rapture where the saints are taken away prior to the wrath of God being poured out in the great tribulation.

1 Thessalonians 5:9 “For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.”

V: 34-35 Speak to the rotundity of the earth – spherical nature of the earth not discovered by science until centuries later.

- The rapture will occur when it is night time in one place and day time in another place

V: 37 “where Lord?” Jesus has spoken of those being taken and left behind on different occasions.

- Just as eagles / vultures gather to dead bodies, so the lost will be gathered for judgment.
- There will be a separation of the saved and the lost.
- Those that are left behind, facing the tribulation and the death and destruction that comes with it – left for dead, a feast for the vultures.

2 Peter 2:9 “The Lord knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.”