

Luke Lesson 17

Luke Chapter 17

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Memory verses for this week: *John 16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*

Introduction: We continue our study of the book of Luke this week as we continue in chapter 17. Last weeks lesson began with the parable of the unjust steward. Later Jesus taught on divorce and pointed out how it is God's desire for us to stay with our mate once we are married. The chapter closed with the account of Lazarus and the rich man who went to hell. This is an actual account, not a parable as some teach. Proper names are never used in a parable.

I. Instruction in Forgiveness

Luke 17:1 Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come!

Luke 17:2 It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

Jesus warns that stumbling-blocks will surely come. He declares that men will be guilty of leading others to sin and that it would be better for that person who lead another astray to have a millstone hung about his neck and be cast into the sea. We should do our best to not offend others or do anything that will lead a young Christian to do the wrong things.

Luke 17:3 Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.

Luke 17:4 And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.

Jesus does some serious and direct teaching on forgiveness in verse 3 and 4. He says that if someone trespasses against us, we are to go to that brother or sister who has offended us and tell him of the wrong he has done. Many times church members may go and tell a lot of other church members about being offended and yet not say a word to the true offender. It is easier to talk about other people's failures than to try and rectify the issue. This is not right. In Matthew Chapter 18, we are given the exact order in how we are to deal with offences.

Mat 18:15 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.

Mat 18:16 But 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.

Mat 18:17 And 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 a heathen man and a publican.

Mat 18:18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Mat 18:19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

The teaching is clear and we should really follow this in order as the rules were given. And once things are lined out, we should not say anything else about it. If you let a fire die, it goes to embers and totally goes out. However, if you keep fanning the flames as many do when problems come up, issues will not go away. Jesus gives instructions that if we are offended and the other person repents and comes back and makes another mistake, we are to continue to forgive them. He says even if this happened seven times in one day, we are to forgive. Most likely, this would never happen. But we are not to slow in rectifying issues that divide us.

Luke 17:5 And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.

Luke 17:6 And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.

Just as the apostles asked the Lord to increase their faith, we should also do this. God can help us with our unbelief, and as we draw closer to the Lord, the greater our faith will become. Dan Halog sent me an email this week where in a certain presentation, it said "He who is richest is not the man who has acquired the most, but the one who has learned to live with the least."

When we totally trust our lives to God, there is nothing that we have to have. We can be like Paul and accept whatever comes our way and be content in that. Jesus says here that we could cause a tree to be uprooted and thrown into the sea if we had the faith of a mustard seed. A mustard seed is perhaps the smallest of all seeds, yet that little bit could move trees and mountains. And I truly believe that some of those mountains we move are obstacles that we face in life that appear too large for us to manage.

Mark 11:22 And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.

Mark 11:23 For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

Mark 11:24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

II. A Parable of Service

Luke 17:7 But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat?

Luke 17:8 And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink?

Luke 17:9 Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not.

Luke 17:10 So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.

This is a lesson in humility that God desires all Christians to master. It is so easy to over estimate our devotion to the Lord and think our value of service is beyond what it really is. Jesus uses a parable of a farm hand to illustrate the duty of a servant of the Lord. If we hired a servant to go and work with us in the field, and we came in to eat, would the master tell the servant to go and sit to eat, or would he command him to serve the master and then eat? Of course, the servant is not greater than the master, and he would be the one to serve.

We should never get caught up in our service to the Lord and think we are very special. We are bought with the blood of Jesus and we should work and serve with gladness. It is not only a duty that we continue to serve God, but it is an honor that we have been called. And then, after we have done all we could do, we need to acknowledge that we are nothing. As verse 10 says, "We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do." As I told a family the church helped a few weeks ago, we would not even care about others if it was not for the difference Christ has made in our lives. All honor and glory goes to the Lord in our work.

1 Cor 6:19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

1 Cor 6:20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

J. Vernon McGee had a good comment on these verses.

There are people who believe that because they try to follow the Sermon on the Mount and are good neighbors and try to love people, that someday God is going to pat them on the back and say, “What a fine person you are. You have earned your way to heaven.” If you keep the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount, which you cannot, you are doing only what you are supposed to do. Do you think you would receive salvation for that? My friend, that’s what you are supposed to do as one of His creatures. We need to recognize that salvation is a *gift*; you cannot work for it. Keeping God’s Law is a duty. **i**

III. The Ten Lepers Healed

Luke 17:11 And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

Luke 17:12 And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off:

Luke 17:13 And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

It says that as Jesus journeys towards Jerusalem, he passes through Samaria and Galilee and comes into a certain village where ten lepers lived. These men stood afar off it says. There were rules laid down in the Mosaic Law that lepers had to abide by. If a man was found to be a leper, he had to leave his home and friends and dwell apart from them in the wilderness.

When others approached him, he was to cry out “Unclean.” Note that these men cried out something different when Jesus came... they sought mercy from Jesus. These men were seeking help sincerely from the Lord. The great trouble with many today is that they acknowledge their need of a savior and admit they are sinners, but they don’t earnestly seek the Lord for salvation. They men cried out “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.” They came to the right one to get help.

Luke 17:14 And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.

We know from prior accounts that Jesus typically healed others immediately. Perhaps what Jesus said to them was discouraging as he told them to show themselves to the priests. Under the law, when a man had leprosy, he was to go show himself to the priest. Then the priest would offer sacrifices for him in order that he might be officially cleansed and restored in the congregation of the Lord. All ten of these men do not hesitate, but go forth. Perhaps they knew the law well enough to know that they would have to be cleansed to be restored into the congregation. As they turned, acting in obedience to the word of the Lord, it says they were cleansed.

iJ. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible commentary [computer file], electronic ed., Logos Library System*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1981 by J. Vernon McGee.

Why did Jesus want them to go to the priest? For 1500 years after the law had been written, not one example was ever given of a leper in Israel being cleansed. This would be a great testimony to the religious leaders to see 10 lepers cleansed from leprosy. The only lepers we have record of being cleansed were Miriam and Naaman. Miriam was leprous for only a short time. Perhaps the priests wondered what value Chapter 14 of Leviticus had since no Jew had been cleansed up to this point.

Matthew Henry said this about the Lord's Instructions.

Christ sent them to *the priest*, to be *inspected* by him, who was the judge of the leprosy. He did not tell them positively that they should be *cured*, but bade them *go show themselves to the priests*, v. 14. This was a trial of their obedience, and it was fit that it should be so tried, as Naaman's in a like case: *Go wash in Jordan*. Note, Those that expect Christ's favors must take them in his way and method. Some of these lepers perhaps would be ready to quarrel with the prescription: "Let him either cure or say that he will not, and not send us to the priests on a fool's errand;" but, over-ruled by the rest, they all *went to the priest*. As the ceremonial law was yet in force, Christ took care that it should be observed, and the reputation of it kept up, and due honour paid to the priests in things pertaining to their function; but, probably, he had here a further design, which was to have the priest's *judgment of*, and *testimony to*, the perfectness of the cure; and that the priest might be awakened, and others by him, to enquire after one that had such a commanding power over bodily diseases.

III. *As they went, they were cleansed*, and so became fit to be looked upon by the priest, and to have a certificate from him that they were clean. Observe, *Then* we may expect God to meet us with mercy when we are found in the way of duty. If we do what we can, God will not be wanting to do that for us which we cannot. Go, attend upon instituted ordinances; go and pray, and read the scriptures: *Go show thyself to the priests*; go and open thy case to a faithful minister, and, though the means will not heal thee of themselves, God will heal thee in the diligent use of those means. ii

Luke 17:15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God,

Luke 17:16 And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.

Luke 17:17 And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?

Luke 17:18 There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.

iiHenry, Matthew, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Bible*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers) 1997.

Luke 17:19 And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

One of the men turned back and glorified God with his voice. The man realized that he had a miraculous cure, and wanted God to receive the honor for it. Jesus asks him "Were there not 10 cleansed? But where are the nine?" It is really bad when God does good things for people that they fail to even acknowledge the Lord. The Samaritan realized that only God could heal a leper and he turned back to Jesus acknowledging Him as God.

IV. The Pharisees Demand to Know When the Kingdom Should Come

Luke 17:20 And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:

Luke 17:21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

Luke 17:22 And he said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it.

Luke 17:23 And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them.

Luke 17:24 For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day.

The Pharisees demand to know when the kingdom of God would come. Jesus tells them that you can't just observe and find the kingdom, but in reality the kingdom of God is within you. When we are saved, the Holy Ghost come and dwells within us. Verses 22-24 speak of the tribulation time when we will be coming to a close of time. During the tribulation many rumors will spread that certain ones are Christ and that he is in a certain place. The comment about the lightning coming from one part is speaking of the close of the tribulation at the second phase of His coming.

Luke 17:25 But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation.

Luke 17:26 And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

Luke 17:27 They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

Jesus tells them of how He must suffer man things and be rejected of the people of this particular time. This of course speaks of what He must face there on

Calvary when He would pay the sin debt of all mankind. He warns how that things will be like they were in the days of Noah. Many in that day were eating, drinking, and being married. Even as Noah and his family entered into the ark, many did not realize that destruction was about to come.

Yet the flood came and only those inside the ark were saved. Jesus is our ark, and only those who know Him as Lord and Savior will be saved from the tribulation that awaits the lost here on earth. And greater than the tribulation, we are saved from the wrath to come of those who will have to pay the debt of sin in the flames of hell one day.

Luke 17:28 Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

Luke 17:29 But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.

Luke 17:30 Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

Luke 17:31 In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.

Luke 17:32 Remember Lot's wife.

These two examples from the Old Testament of Noah and Lot were given to warn the people that if they did not listen, they too would perish like those who rejected God in those days of old. Verse 31 speaks of the tribulation period when those that need to flee go back and try to take their things with them. He says remember Lot's wife, who perished as she looked back to all the things they had as they were being destroyed. God had warned them to not look back, and when she did, she turned into a pillar of salt.

Luke 17:33 Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

Luke 17:34 I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

Luke 17:35 Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

Luke 17:36 Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

Luke 17:37 And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

The first verses in this section speak of the initial coming of the Lord. Some will be taken and some left behind. Two women will be grinding together and one will be taken and the other left. Only those who have accepted Christ will be taken.

The days of tribulation will be really a horrible time. Verse 37 speaks of the Battle of Armageddon.

Rev 14:17 And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

Rev 14:18 And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.

Rev 14:19 And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

Rev 14:20 And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.