

## Luke Chapter 17

**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!"**

“Offences”: Literally snares. It is expected that those in the world will cause Christians to be offended, stumble and sin, and they will be judged for it. But it should not be that fellow believers lead others into sin, directly or indirectly. One would be better off dead (Rom. 13:14; 19:21; 15:2; 1 Cor. 8:13).

**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."**

“A millstone”: Literally “the millstone of a donkey.”

“Little ones”: Believers; God’s children who are under His care. This speaks not of literal children, but children in the sense described (in Matthew 18:3-4), those who have humbled themselves like children, i.e., true believers (Matt. 18:6).

Possibly, some of what Jesus is saying here is preparing the disciples for the hardships that lie ahead. Jesus is speaking prophetically about Judas Iscariot being the one the offence will come from. He says woe to the one it comes by.

Little ones here could be new Christians; this is also a warning to the disciples that their way will not be easy either. There is tribulation in this life for all followers of Jesus.

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

“Rebuke him”: It is the Christian’s duty to deal straightforwardly with a brother or sister in sin.

This is Jesus speaking to the disciples. He is saying make sure that you are living right before you start correcting someone else. We see here that people in ministering capacity are supposed to point out sins (in love). Make sure this same sin is not in your own life, before you point it out in someone else.

Jesus is also saying, be quick to forgive them and start them out again. Church is a hospital for sinners, not a hotel for saints.

**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."**

“Seven times in a day”: I.e., no matter how many times he sins and repents. The number 7 was not to set a limit on the number of times to forgive (Psalm 119:164), but precisely the opposite. Christ meant that forgiveness should be granted unendingly (Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13).

Jesus is saying in this to continue to forgive him as many times as he asks. Seven, you remember, means spiritually complete. This is not to be thought of literally, but just to mean every time they ask. It is not for us to ask whether they really repented or not, just forgive them when they ask.

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

“Increase our faith”: Literally, “Give us more faith.” They felt inadequate in the face of the high standard He set for them.

Everyone has been given a measure of faith as we read (in Romans 12:3). The way to increase the faith is by using our faith. Practice using your faith and it will grow. There is a gift of faith also, which is perhaps what the twelve are asking Jesus for here. We know that without faith it is impossible to please God.

**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."**

“Faith as a grain of mustard seed”: True faith, by Christ’s definition, always involves surrender to the will of God. What He was teaching here is nothing like positive-thinking psychology. He was saying that both the source and the object of all genuine faith, even the weak, mustard-seed variety, is God. And “nothing will be impossible with God” (Luke 1:37).

Jesus tells His own here, that even a little faith can bring about mighty miracles. It seems unreasonable that a tree would uproot itself and be planted in another place. Jesus says, if you had as much faith as the size of the very small mustard seed, the tree would do it. A tree mentioned in the New Testament. Probably (the black mulberry).

Not maybe, it would! The problem is, we doubt. We jump now to a whole new subject, the parable of the unprofitable servants.

Verses 7-10: The point of this parable was that a slave, or servant, should expect no special reward for doing what was his duty in the first place. The demanding standards Christ set, (verses 1-4), may have seemed too high to the disciples, but they represented only the minimal duties for a servant of Christ. Those who obey are not to think their obedience is meritorious.

**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?"**

Jesus is explaining here that the servant usually serves his lord, even if he has been in the field working. The servant generally has his own quarters and eats at his own table or else waits until the family is finished and then he eats.

**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?"**

Jesus is teaching here the difference in the lord and his servant. The duty of the servant is to serve his lord. We Christians are servants of the Lord. We must serve Him as long as He desires. We cannot quit a job because it gets hard, but we must work until the Lord says it is enough and releases us from that job.

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

This was his job. The boss doesn't thank you every time you get a job done. That is your obligation if you are working for him. We workers for the Lord do not have to be thanked either. It is our obligation to do the job the Lord has given us.

**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."**

“Unprofitable servants”: I.e., not worthy of any special honor.

We don't need applause for every little job we do. Our reward will come when our Lord says, "Well done thy good and faithful servant". We do not need or deserve the praise of the world for doing our job.

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

“To Jerusalem ... passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee”: Luke did not explain the reason for such a circuitous route, but a comparison of the gospels yields several clues. It appears that time elapsed between verse 10 and verse 11. The raising of Lazarus at Bethany, near Jerusalem (John 11), appears to fit into this timeframe.

John 11:54 states that after raising Lazarus, to avoid the authorities who were seeking to kill Him, Christ went to “a city called Ephraim”, north of Jerusalem near the border of Samaria.

From there He apparently traveled north through Samaria and Galilee one more time, possibly to join friends and family from Galilee who would be making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the Passover. From there He would have traveled south by the conventional route, which would have brought Him through Jericho (18:35), to Jerusalem.

This just reminds us again, that this is toward the end of Jesus' ministry. He is headed for Jerusalem.

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

“Lepers”: These men were ceremonially defiled and forced to live outside the village (Lev. 13:4; Num. 5:2-3). They were legally required to stand at a distance, and thus their communication with Christ was by shouting.

These ten men stood afar off because they were to be separated from their people when the priest declared them with leprosy. They were to cry out "unclean" when anyone came near them. This was an incurable disease unless God healed you. "Ten" we know symbolizes world government. We also know that leprosy was symbolic of sin.

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

“Have mercy on us” (16:24; 18:38-39; Matt. 9:27; 15:22; 17:15; 20:31; Mark 10:47-48). This was a common plea from those desiring healing.

This should be the cry of everyone in the whole world, not just these lepers. The mercy of the Lord is what saves every one of us even though we do not deserve saving. This lifting of their voice here was so that Jesus would hear them over the crowd. Notice they call Him Master. They believed He would heal them.

When a person was healed of leprosy, he had to show himself to the priest so the priest could proclaim him healed. When the priest said he was healed, he could move back home and begin his life again. Instead of Jesus saying you are healed. He just said go show yourself to the priest as you see in the next verse.

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

“Go shew yourselves unto the priests”: I.e., to be declared clean (Lev. 13:2-3; 14:2-32).

We see by this, that Jesus sent them on their way before the leprosy left. They had to activate their faith to be made whole. As they went, they were healed. Many times, the Lord had the one He was healing to do something to show that they believed they would be healed.

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

“One of them ... turned back”: His response was reminiscent of the conduct of Naaman (2 Kings 5:15), “The others, eager to be declared clean so that they could return to normal life in society, evidently continued on to the priest, forgetting to give thanks.

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

“He was a Samaritan”: Jesus’ sending the lepers to show themselves to the priest suggests that they were Jewish. This Samaritan had been permitted to associate with them when all were ceremonially unclean, but in their healing, they did not share his deep gratitude.

We see here a grateful man. He gives God the glory for his healing. All ten were healed, only one came back to praise God. He was a humble man falling down on his face at Jesus' feet. A Samaritan was hated of the Jews, perhaps he thought Jesus might not help him because of his nationality, and his gratitude was overwhelming.

**Luke 17:17-18 "And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where [are] the nine?" "There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger."**

“This stranger”: Evidently Jesus did not view “Samaritans as anything more or less than other Gentiles.

Jesus, calling this Samaritan a stranger, makes it appear that the other nine were perhaps Hebrews. These nine quickly forgot where their healing came from and didn't bother to come back and praise God.

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

“Made thee whole”: Literally “saved you”.

This same message was given to nearly everyone Jesus healed (your faith hath made you whole). Jesus could heal them, but they had to accept the healing.

## **Luke Chapter 17 Questions**

1. Jesus warned the disciples that \_\_\_\_\_ would come.
2. What did He say about the one they come by?
3. What would be better than offending one of the little ones?
4. Why is Jesus prophetically speaking of bringing offences?
5. If a brother trespasses against you, what two things should you do?
6. What did Jesus warn them about correcting someone?
7. Church is a \_\_\_\_\_ for sinners, not a \_\_\_\_\_ for saints.
8. How many times in a day did Jesus tell them to forgive?
9. In verse 5, what did the apostles ask Jesus to do?
10. What do we read about faith in Romans 12:3?
11. Without faith it is \_\_\_\_\_.

12. What small item did Jesus compare faith with in verse 5?
13. What could you say to a sycamine tree and have it obey you, if you had faith?
14. Why can't we do miracles in Jesus' name?
15. What is this parable about the servant explaining?
16. What is the duty of a servant?
17. When is it okay to stop a fight?
18. Where was Jesus headed for when He met the lepers?
19. How many lepers were there?
20. What did a leper cry when anyone came near?
21. What did the lepers call Jesus?
22. What is leprosy symbolic of?
23. Why did Jesus tell them to show themselves to the priest?
24. How many came back and praised God?
25. When did the actual healing take place?
26. What one word makes us know the Samaritan was with nine lepers who were Israelites?
27. What did Jesus tell the Samaritan made him whole?