

Increase Our Faith!

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[0 : 00] Songs put everything in perspective, don't they? To get your Bibles with me, please, and turn to Luke chapter 17, the Gospel of Luke chapter 17.

My God is the Ancient of Days. My King is on His throne. This is my Father's world.

All phrases that give us eternal perspective on what's going on in the world. So, let's look at, we come to a new text in Luke, a new chapter.

Look at that, we're making progress. And we're going to look at, we're going to read verses 1 through 19 in Luke 17.

And though your translations may separate all those verses into several different sections, they all belong together, is my contention.

[1 : 22] So, we'll read them together, then we'll pray about them, and then we will dig into them. So, if you're able, please stand as I read from the Word of God written in the Gospel of Luke chapter 17.

He, Jesus, He said to His disciples, He said to His disciples, our faith. And the Lord said, if you have faith, like a grain of a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, be uprooted and planted in the sea, and it would obey you. Will any one of you have, who has a servant plowing or keeping sheep, say to him when he has come in from the field, come at once and recline at table? Will he not rather say to him, prepare supper for me and dress properly and serve me while I eat and drink, and afterward you will eat and drink? Does he thank the servant because he did what he was commanded? So you also. When you have done all that you were commanded, you say, we are unworthy servants. We have only done what was our duty.

On the way to Jerusalem, he was passing along between Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered a village, he was met by 10 lepers who stood at a distance and lifted up their voices saying, Jesus, master, have mercy on us. When he saw them, he said to them, go and show yourselves to the priests. And as they went, they were cleansed. Then one of them, when he saw he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. And he fell on his face at Jesus's feet, giving him thanks.

Now he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus answered, were not 10 cleansed? Where are the nine?

Was no one found to return and give thanks to God except this foreigner? And he said to him, rise and go your way. Your faith has saved you.

[5 : 30] So reads the word of God. Let's pray. Father, open our eyes that we might see wonderful things from your word. Make us to walk in the path of your commandments where we delight in it.

Incline our heart to your testimonies and not to selfish gain. Turn away our eyes from looking at worthless things and revive us in your ways.

Establish to your servant through your word that we may fear you. We pray in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated.

As I'm sure you are well aware, we are facing a serious issue in the church at large.

There are more people who are isolating. Distancing, it's called. From others, particularly from the church.

[6 : 51] And my concern is this. That if a Christian does this, distances himself from the church, from believers, from gatherings.

How is he following Christ? Because the great command that Jesus gave to his disciples is what?

What is the primary mark of a follower of Jesus Christ? What is his great command?

I don't mean what the greatest commandment of the Old Testament is. What is the greatest commandment that Jesus gave? You shall love one another as I have loved you.

By this, the world shall know that you are mine. By your love for one another. But see, how can we do this?

[7 : 55] If we're not engaged with God's people. How can we do this? Now, I'm not speaking to those who have physical reasons, have health issues.

I'm not speaking to that, obviously. But I'm speaking to people who intentionally distance themselves. Separate themselves and still call themselves followers.

Christians. I'm not here to judge. I'm just raising the question. I think it's a serious issue. I think COVID became an excuse.

And I think COVID became a purging vessel for the Lord to purge his church. So. Now, understand.

I have talked with many who have done this. I hurt with those who have left the church because they've been hurt by the church.

[9 : 03] They've been disappointed. They've been betrayed. They've been whatever. Shot, you know, shoot your wounded, right? I get it.

I've been hurt by the church. I got the t-shirt. You know, I went to the conference. Right? I got the flag and the hat, you know. I've been hurt by the church. I get it. Our first verse says, temptations to sin are inevitable.

There are those that cause us to sin. Those that cause us to fall away. So, I get it. I get it. I get it. But at a time in my life when I was severely hurt by people in the church, I naturally wanted to get away and leave.

But I didn't. One, because he wouldn't let me. Another is because what he said about the church.

That I need the church. That I needed to be with other believers. This is his call. This is his plan. As messed up in our minds as it seems to be, this is his strategy.

[10 : 30] This is his mission. By this, all men shall know that you are mine when you love one another. So, how do we do this?

Because it's hard. I'm preaching to the choir. You've been hurt. You've been hurt. You've been betrayed. You've been, you get it. Not hurt more than Jesus was.

Okay. So, let's dive in. So, here in chapter 17, Jesus turns back. Man, we've seen as we walk through Luke, since the end of chapter 9, Jesus set his face toward Jerusalem and he's going toward Jerusalem.

It's not a direct route because he's been doing it for however many chapters have been gone. Right? He's actually gone all the way down to Bethany. He's come back. Now he's in between, we're told in verse 11, he's passing along between Samaria and Galilee.

Well, that's not, Samaria and Galilee, that would, you know, okay, you got Galilee up here and then you have Samaria and then you have Jerusalem down here, right? So, if he's passing between Galilee and Samaria, how is he going to Jerusalem?

[11 : 51] He's going east-west instead of north-south, see? So, it's not a direct route. Luke is saying this is his mindset.

He's on his way to Jerusalem. He's got a lot of preaching to do, a lot of teaching to do, a lot of people to meet on the way, but he's on his way. And through that whole, all these chapters, he is turning back and forth.

He's dealing with the crowds and he's dealing with the disciples. Then he's dealing with the Pharisees. Then he's dealing with the disciples. Then he's talking to the Pharisees again. He's talking to the disciples. He's going back and forth.

But always his priority are his disciples. Okay? And this is what we have here in chapter 17, his disciples. He's training them.

He's training them. So, these first 10 verses, most scholars say are disjointed, unrelated sayings.

[12 : 55] And at first glance, when we read this, it seems like, yeah, it's kind of hopping all over the place. And verses 1 and 2, he's warning about stumbling blocks. Verses 3 and 4, he says, you know, rebuke and forgive your brothers.

And then verses 5 and 6, he's talking about faith and mustard seed faith. Then verses 7 to 11, it's a whole different thing, unworthy servants. And then verses 11 to 19, the 10 lepers.

Yeah, obviously, all over the place. The scholars, quote unquote scholars, like to use up a lot of white paper to talk about how, you know, they've got it all figured out.

That, you know, it's, never mind. I don't need to go off on that. They think that it's more proverbial. So, my question is, we've been walking through Luke for a few weeks now.

Did Luke just randomly piece things together? Is that our experience having read through Luke for these weeks?

[14 : 09] No. No. No. That's not how Luke writes. He's not random. He's extremely careful.

In fact, he tells us way back at the beginning of his book, right? He tells us what he's doing. Back in chapter 1, verse 1, he said, Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, meaning by Jesus, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us.

So, there's been eyewitnesses and they've talked about these things that were done. So, there's verbal reports and written reports. Verse 3, In other words, What you've been taught, what you've been taught, what you've been heard, I want to write it all out for you.

And the words Luke uses is carefully and orderly. Or accurately and consecutively.

Not randomly. Not thrown together. But intentional, deliberate words that Jesus spoke and events that Jesus did.

[15 : 47] He has researched this. It's not as if, oh, I got these extra things. I don't know where to put them. Maybe they fit in here. That's not Luke.

It's not Luke. It's not Luke. So, I'm going to trust Luke that this all makes sense. And I think when we look at these verses and agreed, they're a little bit awkward.

They're not kind of smooth transitions. It just kind of goes boom, boom, boom, boom. So, it seems a little harsh in the transition. He goes from stumbling blocks to taking care of your brother and then to faith and then to servants.

I get it. But if we take some time to let it, to kind of walk through it, I think we'll see, oh, no, these actually belong together very well.

So, let's see Jesus' deliberate orderly directives in these verses that he says to his disciples. What does Jesus want his disciples to understand in these words?

- [16 : 55] What does he want them to get as they get closer to the cross? As his time is dwindling with them, what becomes important for him to communicate to them, for them to grasp?
- So, what I think we have here are two related parts, two directives, two responsibilities. In the first ten verses, excuse me, the first six verses, Jesus is speaking to a responsibility that the disciples have for one another.
- And they need faith to do it. A responsibility that we each have toward one another, toward our brother.
- And then in verses, what, seven to 19, two different stories there. I see an attitude, a responsibility in terms of an attitude that we have toward God.
- So, first six verses are about my responsibility, our responsibility to one another, Christian loving one another. And then secondly, verses seven to 19, our attitude, response, and responsibility toward God.
- [18 : 18] And he says it in verse 10. Jesus gives a directive in verse 10, an application of this parable of the unworthy servant. A very strong directive.
- Okay? So, we have a couple of those. So, that's how we're going to break it down. So, verses one to six. First of all, first responsibility that Jesus wants his disciples to understand is that by faith, we are obligated for each other's sanctification.
- That's a nice sentence, isn't it? I worked on that. By faith, we are obligated. We have responsibility for each other's sanctification.
- By sanctification, I mean for each other's growth, for each other's maturity. If we see our brother sinning, we reprove him. If he repents, we forgive him. If we're involved with our brother and he sins against me seven times a day, I have a responsibility with that brother.
- Okay? For their growth. For their, and the word Paul would use is their sanctification. Right? We have salvation, then we have sanctification.
- [19 : 36] We are saved by God. We are sanctified by God as we cooperate with God to become more and more holy. More and more like Christ. So, our section has three parts here.
- Verses one and two is about stumbling blocks. Verses three and four about forgiving our brother. And verses five and six are about faith. So, how do these relate? So, he starts in verse one.
- He warns us about stumbling blocks. Or the ESV says temptations to sin. The word is scandal in the Greek. Scandal. It's usually translated a stumbling block.
- Something you stumble over. Or causing someone to stumble. Causing someone. So, here it's called temptation to sin. Right?
- It's a stumbling. Things we stumble over. That's common, he says. They're a cause. The cause of stumbling are sure to come. They're inevitable. In fact, literally in the Greek it says that it's impossible that they not come.
- [20 : 41] That's normal. That we're enticed to sin. That's normal. But, then part two of verse one. But woe to the one through whom they come. Okay, they're out there.
- We're going to stumble. We're going to be tempted. But woe to the one through whom they come. In other words, through the person that causes others to stumble. Woe to that person. Who entices others to sin.
- Or who tempts them to sin. And literally says at the end of verse two. Who scandalizes the little ones.
- Woe to that person. In fact, he gives a very graphic picture. Right? A very horrifying description of a way to die. Better for that person if they have a millstone.
- Which millstone is a huge stone that's used to crush the grain. And so, a millstone. So, it's like, okay, that's more than cement boots.

- [21 : 43] Right? It's got to put that thing around you. And thrown into the sea. It's a very violent death. Horrifying death. That would be better.
- Than that he should scandalize a little one. And that he should cause a little one to sin. The question is, who's the little one?
- Are we talking about children? You heard a little one? So, what's, so little in comparison to what? So, little in size. Little in age. Little in faith. Little in experience.
- Most likely, he means those who are immature. Christians. New Christians. New in the faith. New, new. Not, not, not growing yet.
- So, more vulnerable. More vulnerable. Woe to that person that causes those who are vulnerable. Could be young ones. To sin.
- [22 : 46] So, there's that. And then he said, then he immediately says, in verse 3, pay attention to yourselves. So, is he starting a new subject or is he saying, woe to the ones who cause others to stumble and watch yourselves in this?
- Yeah, I think so. But I think it relates to what he says next too. Right? So, pay attention to yourselves. Give heed to yourselves. Take, pay attention. Are you, are you aware of how you impact other people?
- See, or do you just kind of glide along? See, Jesus is saying, pay attention to yourselves. Whether you may, may impact others to stumble.
- Right? Paul, Paul writes a couple of chapters on, on, in the Corinthians about, you know, causing others to stumble. Man, if meat causes my brother to stumble, I won't eat meat. Right? He's being, he's so conscious of, I don't want to, to hurt another person's faith.
- And he's talking about weaker people. He's not talking about stronger people. He's not talking about, anyway. Just because somebody comes up to you and says, you know, you're causing me to stumble, doesn't, doesn't necessarily mean you have to give up that thing.
- [24 : 01] Because they just may be judgmental. But if it's a, I'm getting off track here. Why am I doing that? Okay. Wind the tape back.
- Forget that. Question is, do we consider? Do I consider how I impact others? Am I aware? Right?
- That others may watch and see and be influenced by what I do. Especially people who are younger in the faith. And then he says, right?
- Okay. Here's your responsibility. You're responsible not only passively in terms of that others, you could cause others to sin, but actively. You're responsible that if your brother sins, you go and rebuke him.
- If your brother sins, if he falls, if he sins, if he hurts you, if he sins in some way. And by the way, if your brother sins and you're aware of it, it has to be observable, not simply, I think they're struggling with pride.
- [25 : 02] You know, some subjective thing. It has to be observable. Otherwise, how can you help them? You can't just accuse them, I think you're proud. I think you're being, you know, whatever.
- I've done that. Backfires. Backfires. So that you can show them. So in Matthew 18, Jesus says, if your brother sins, show them. Show them how they've fallen.
- Show them their fault. Make it clear to them. And then remember Matthew 18, it's if he doesn't listen to you, then you bring in a couple of witnesses who aren't there to, as big guns to fire again.
- They're there to hear the two of you. To confirm whether you have a true perception of things. But you go and you show them their sin.

You help them see. And then if they repent, forgive them. Forgive them. Let it go. Right? You've shown them. He's repented.

[26 : 00] You're good. Then he adds, thank you so much, Jesus. Verse 4. If he sins against you seven times in a day. Okay. Okay. Stop there.

Seven times in a day. I think this brother has a problem. Don't you? I mean, he's sinning seven times a day. I mean, can you imagine a brother sinning seven times a day?

Oh, you can? Yeah. I guess, yeah, I looked in the mirror. I saw one. Seven might be conservative. How many times a day do I sin before God that I even know about?

But you can see it. It's kind of like Jesus is. In the Matthew, in a different situation, remember Jesus talked about forgiving your brother. And remember, Peter's like, how many times should I forgive my brother?

Up to seven times. And Peter thought he's going to the max. You know, he's been really generous. Seven times. And then what does Jesus say? Seven times 70, Peter. Which means, you know, stop counting.

[27 : 11] Here, I think it seems more excessive. Seven times is just one day. Each day. There seems to be a pattern of sinfulness going on there.

But forgive him every single time. So he sins against you seven times and turns to you seven times saying, I repent.

Literally, he says, I am repenting. Which communicates to me more than where I repent. Just sounds like, okay, I repent. I'm done. Okay, forgive me again.

He's saying, I am repenting. I'm working on it. I'm working on it. In other words, what I perceive in this brother that comes seven times against, somehow offends you seven times and then is repenting every time.

It tells me I got a brother who's weak and inconsistent. Who's struggling. Yet he's repenting. And so we as have a responsibility to show them grace and forgive them every time.

[28 : 21] Because that's what our father does with us. That's what our father does with us. I mean, you think the father goes, I think Bill's got a problem.

Why hasn't he worked this out yet? He's already repented for that thing about 80 times in the last month. Well, I'm not sure he's real genuine in his repentance.

No, he just forgives. And that's how we're to be. So then the disciples react to that. I think this next verse is connected.

I think the disciples hear this. You know, make sure you don't cause others to stumble. And when your brother sins, you rebuke him. And then when he repents, you forgive him and up to seven times a day.

And I think the apostles hear this in verse five. And they say, we need more faith. This is too hard. Jesus, do you know what you're asking? Seven times.

[29 : 27] This is too much. Our faith isn't enough for this. I think, Jesus, we need you to increase our faith so that we could be more like you.

Our faith isn't strong enough. Our faith is too weak. Jesus, you've seen this in us, haven't you? We're out in the storm, remember? We're out in the storm. And you're asleep.

And we wake you up. And we tell you we're dying. And you stand up and say, hush, be still. And all of a sudden, we're. And then you turn to us and said, where's your faith? So you know we don't have a whole lot of faith.

We haven't even got to Peter's denying Christ part yet. Right? Right? So we need more faith to do that. This is hard. You're giving us a responsibility that is really, really hard.

One, I don't like rebuking people. I don't like confronting people. So can I skip that class? Yes. That's a hard responsibility.

[30 : 39] So what does Jesus say? Do you need more faith? Of course, Jesus, he doesn't give them a direct answer. Why doesn't he give them a direct answer? He's going to tell them something that they're going to have to think about for a while.

All right. What does that mean? He tells them a little parable thing here. Verse 6. He said, if you have faith. He didn't say if you had. He says, if you have, present tense.

If you have faith, like a grain of mustard, mustard seed faith, you could say to this mulberry tree, be uprooted and planted in the sea and it would obey you.

So it's just like Jesus talks about mustard seed faith in another situation, but he doesn't use a tree. He uses a mountain. You could say to this mountain, right?

So moving a mulberry tree is just as impossible as moving a mountain. Want to know why? Diane, you know what a mulberry tree is?

[31 : 41] Yeah, I do. Okay. What's known about a mulberry tree? Vast, vast root system is what I read.

A vast, you can't do it. You can't take it out. You can cut it down. It's coming. But you can't uproot it. You ever had those weeds you can't get rid of?

It's like that. It's like the Johnson grass kind of thing. I don't know. We had that in California. So you have Johnson grass here? I've only lived there 20 years. I don't know. Anyway, it has a vast root system.

It's deeply entrenched. So if you have just a little. So what's a mustard seed? Mustard seed. Again, I used to have some and I don't know what I did.

They're tiny little things. Tiny, tiny, tiny little seed. So if you have that much faith. It's that much. You could say to that impossible root system, get out and go.

[32 : 50] Something deeply entrenched. Well, that got me thinking. What's deeply entrenched? Connected to what the disciples are saying. I need more faith.

I need more faith to do what? I need more faith to be a good example to others. I need more faith to be able to have the courage to rebuke my sinning brother and to do it with grace.

I need more faith to forgive that brother that sins against me again and again and again and again and again. And he keeps coming back and repenting.

Because I don't know if he's really repenting. But I'm not the judge. Exactly. I'm not the judge of that. My responsibility is to forgive him.

Every time. So if I am struggling with those things, what's deeply entrenched in me?

[33 : 58] Pride. Unforgiveness. Self-centered. Maybe anger. I've got anger that's lodged in.

Remember Paul talks about, you know, be angry, do not sin, do not give the devil a foothold. So unforgiveness. Some people say, you know, verse 3 says, you know, if your brother sins, then you forgive him.

So I don't have to forgive him unless he repents. I mean, if your brother repents, then forgive him. So I don't have to forgive him unless he repents. Can you hear anything in that language?

I don't have to forgive him. I'm not obligated to forgive him. Well, you might want to talk to Jesus about that.

Because the daily prayer we pray does not have any condition to it. Forgive us as we are forgiving. Forgive us as we are forgiving.

[35 : 00] Forgive us as we are forgiving. Those indebted to us. With no caveat, if they repent. So don't go there.

Don't go there. So what's deeply entrenched? Pride, unforgiveness, anger, hurt. Independent spirit.

You know, I'm not a social type. I'm one of those, what do they call it? There's the outgoing people and then there's the what? Introvert. That's the word. I couldn't think of it. I'm one of those.

I'd rather sit in the back. Yeah. Yeah. No, that's not far enough. I'll be way back there. I'm one of them back row, but I'd rather. And just, you know, some days don't even talk to me.

That's my nature. That's how God created me. But that's not what God does. So I have to fight that natural desire to pull back, withdraw, retreat.

[36 : 07] And that can become sinful. Say, well, God made me that way. Well, yeah, he did, but I mean, he made us with all that we are.

I mean, with our handicaps, with our, right? Just because he made me that way doesn't give me an excuse to live that way. Especially when he tells us very clearly, you go rebuke your brother when he sins and you forgive him when he repents.

How often does the church do that? Let's be honest. That's happened here.

I've been rebuked here. Grateful. Because there's other times where people just leave.

That's typically what Christians do in churches. When they get upset, people bother them enough. What do they do? Oh, we're going. We can't stand those people anymore. I don't like how they do, you know.

[37 : 21] Oh, there's changes now. Change the carpet. I'm out of here. That was a threat. Remember when we put the new carpet in? Oh, never mind. That was a scary moment.

No, this church handled it very graciously. But I'm more spoiled here because God has changed the attitude here since I first came.

So what is trust? So I need, so if I have faith, so what does that mean?

If I just have a tiny bit of faith, I can uproot my independent spirit. If I have a tiny bit of faith, I can uproot my unforgivables, my, you know, my grudge, my anger.

Anybody have some deep-rooted anger? Yeah, I know you. I know you. Yeah, you do. Yeah, you do. You've been hurt deep. You've been betrayed.

[38 : 26] Right? Can you forgive that? I know some of you, you work at it. So I need faith for that.

It's not just that I decide to do it. I need faith for that because it comes back, right? I mean, it's like, oh, I got rid of that.

I'm good. Right? And then something happens and it's like right in your face again. So you need faith. So what does that mean to have faith?

What does that mean? How does faith do that? Is it faith in faith? Faith in God.

Yeah. Yeah. I used to listen to a guy, one of these word of faith guys. I mentioned him before. Frederick K.C. Price. Man, he could preach.

[39 : 22] Oh, my gosh, he could preach. He was brilliant. That's why you like to watch him. I knew he was teaching error, but he was brilliant. So I wanted to kind of see how he did it so I could, if I could figure him out, I could figure them all out.

But he would say, you know, he had Rolls Royce faith because he had a Rolls Royce. He also had a personal plan. He was the richest man in the congregation because, you know, calmed them into giving him money.

He's one of the faith guys, right? You'll be richer, but you got to give to the church first. You got to give to me and then it will bless. Somehow he was the only one that was, anyway.

He would say, I have Rolls Royce faith and you have Volkswagen faith. Which, you know, the old Volkswagen. Rick, not the new. The old one, Jenny, not the, you know, the old bug, right?

No, the old one. The new ones are cool. Well, the old ones are cool too, but, but you know, it's not, they were not worth, you know, anyway, anyway.

[40 : 32] But when he talked about faith, it was faith and faith. It was about how you said it. You had to speak it out because he would even say, Jesus, see, look, Jesus said in verse six, see, if you had faith like the rain of wood, you could say to the mulberry.

I remember he had a whole sermon just on that. You could say the mulberry tree. So you have to say it. Like, what is it, magic? What is it, potion?

What's going on here? Did I hear a doorbell? Somebody get the door? Anyway, so, so it's not that.

It's not about that. Thank you, brother. It's faith in God. It's faith in Jesus. It's Jesus who moves it, not me. If you got faith, faith in what?

Faith in Jesus, in his words, in his power, in his promise. You can move anything. And he says, I have responsibility to reprove and forgive.

[41 : 46] I say, okay, Jesus, I trust you with this. Here I go. Here I go. Please help. Please help. Please help. Make sense?

It's not faith in me. Oh, Lord, it's not faith in me. I'm worried about me. It's faith in him to give me the words, to give me the grace, to give me the whatever.

And, you know, I've gone into situations where I just, I didn't have a clue. What to say. What to do. And I say, okay, Lord. You're going to have to give me the words, because I don't know. And you know what?

There's always words. Sometimes there's not. So it just means, okay, shut up. But often there's words. It's like, did that come out of my mouth? I mean, the other person was really helped.

I'm like, I didn't come with that. It's just, anyway. You understand that? I mean, things get uprooted and moved when we trust him.

[42 : 57] But it's an active faith. It's not a passive faith. It's an active, I activate it. Do you know what that means? It doesn't mean, oh, I just trust God.

It means I'm talking to God and activating my faith. I'm relying on him. It's a living relationship, right? That's what it is. If I just go without talking, yeah, I don't think so.

So the New Testament continually reminds us of our vital relationship to one another. Galatians 5, I think, is one of the best expressions of what Jesus is talking about here in terms of reproving and forgiving our brother.

Paul says it this way in Galatians 6. Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression. Notice how he says that, right? If anyone's caught, they're stuck.

Maybe it's because that seven times a day thing. They're stuck in it. They've been enslaved in it somehow. They're stuck, so they need help.

[44 : 07] So if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual, what does that mean? That mean you're more, you know, just means you who walk by the Spirit, okay?

You who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Well, how do I do that? Well, keep watch on yourself. Exact same phrase Jesus says in Luke 17.

Pay attention to yourselves. Keep watch on yourself. As you go to your brother, watch yourself. Okay? Be aware of yourself. Lest you too be tempted.

Tempted how? I don't know. However you're tempted. To lord it over them. To judge them. To condemn them. To be too harsh with them. To be too soft with them.

I don't know what you're, you know, I don't know. But watch yourself. Be aware. Bear one another's burdens. And so fulfill the law of Christ.

[45 : 06] There it is. What's the law of Christ? Love one another as I have loved you. That's the law. That's the law that replaces the law.

There were 10. Now there's one. And the one includes the 10. Okay? Paul says that.

If you do what Jesus says, you don't have to worry about the others. You won't covet. You won't steal. You're right. You're going to love. So, and if you love one another, that means you love God.

So, you fulfill the two greatest commandments, which fulfills all the other commandments. Bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ. That's our responsibility to one another.

For if anyone thinks he is something when he's nothing, he deceives himself. No one's above this. You can't opt out of this. You can't isolate. You can't say, I'm not good at reproving and rebuking or helping people.

[46 : 08] No. Let each one test his own work and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor.

For each one will have to bear his own load. So, we bear our own load. We're responsible for what we're responsible for. But we also are responsible to help our brother who is weak.

So, by faith, we each have an obligation for one another's sanctification to not cause them to stumble, to rebuke them when they sin, to forgive them when they repent. To do this, though, we need active faith to rely and trust in Christ for strength and wisdom.

So, let's look at the second part of this. Two stories here. Verses 7 to 10 and then 11 to 19. The story of the unworthy slave and then the story of the ten lepers.

What is that about? I think Jesus is still talking about responsibility, but responsibility in terms of attitude. What is our attitude toward God?

[47 : 17] So, like the other section, it ends with a focus on faith, right? So, faith in verse 5 and 6. Faith. And now we look at the end of this section, verse 19.

It's the faith of the one leper who is declared having been saved. Not just healed. Saved.

Jesus changes the word. Not just cleansed. Not just healed, but saved. And in the New Testament, that word means something. So, saving faith.

So, here's what I would summarize this section as. Our responsibility is by saving faith. Because of our saving faith, we feel our full debt to God and are grateful for His undeserved mercy.

But attitude. Okay, there's a lot there. I'm trying to capture both of these scenes here. Saving faith, which is what He declares at the end.

[48 : 16] And feels our full debt to God. And are grateful for His undeserved mercy.

But attitude. I feel what I owe Him. That's the first story. And I'm grateful for the mercy that He's given to me that I did not deserve. Okay, this is attitude.

Okay, so, the unworthy slaves. Right? So, here we go. Are you offended by this story? Because if you live in this culture in this century, you should be offended by this. Because everything in our culture would hate this.

So, Jesus says, will any one of you. He's asking His disciples this. Will any one of you who has a servant. That's not the word Jesus used. He used the word bond slave.

Bond slave. Will any, and by the way, none of the disciples were rich enough to have a bond slave. But, will any of you who has a bond slave, plowing or keeping sheep, say to Him when He has come in from the field, Hey, come on, come on and have dinner with us.

[49 : 23] The answer Jesus expects is, no, of course not. Will He not rather say to him, prepare supper for me and dress properly and serve me while I eat and drink.

And afterwards, you will eat and drink. You're talking to a bond slave. What did you say to you, if you lived in the first century? Don't think from our perspective or our culture.

We have been desensitized. We have been distanced from what most of the world has known for centuries. The reality of slavery.

Okay? Our country started that way. We're still fighting it, aren't we? But many of us would be like, no, He comes in from the field.

Hey, come on, sit down and eat with it. Right? I think most of us would say, yeah. But we don't own bond slaves. And we don't live 100 to 2,000 years ago.

[50 : 27] Because you wouldn't think like we think today. That's why it was so hard for our founding fathers to let go of their slaves. We think, what was wrong with these guys?

George Washington was a good man. Why didn't He let them go? He did when He died. He did. Well, He was so destitute by serving the country that He couldn't.

Anyway. He gave up so much. But He didn't give. That was a big question. And I was reading a biography about Abe Lincoln. Okay? Setting the sleeves.

He did not think that way all along. He did not think that. It took Him a long time to come to grasp this kind of thinking.

It was totally foreign. So I want you to understand, as we read these verses, Jesus is not saying really anything about slavery other than the attitude should be ours.

[51 : 29] Does He thank the servant because He did what He was commanded? Verse 9. No? Now, verse 10. Here's the punchline. So you also, when you have done all that you were commanded, you say, this is what you say, disciples.

We are unworthy bond slaves. We have only done what was our duty. Or literally, we have only done what we owed.

We owed that. I'm in bonds to Him. Now, by these words, Jesus is not endorsing slavery.

What He's using the example of the slave as an example of our attitude toward the Father. That's our attitude toward the Father.

Okay? Can we say, before the Father, I am unworthy. I'm unworthy of His praise.

[52 : 43] I'm unworthy of His thanks. I'm unworthy of His grace, of His mercy. I'm unworthy of His reward. Now, though I'm unworthy, what will He do?

He's a Father that's still gracious. He's a Father that still rewards, though I'm unworthy of it. But my attitude should be this.

God, my Father, does not owe me a thing. He owes me nothing. And what I do for Him, I owe Him everything.

That's my attitude. And because He's the kind of Father that He is, and Jesus is the kind of Master that He is, He will still bless me.

I don't deserve it, but He'll still reward me. He'll still bless me. Is that sinking? Sinking? Sinking? So then you come to the next story.

[53 : 54] It's a story that echoes the same attitude about undeserved mercy. But here it's expressed in praise. We have in the first verses the story of the, you know, He's on His way to Jerusalem.

He's met by ten lepers. They stand at a distance, obviously. They are social outcasts. By the way, when you're branded as a leper, that's pretty much a lifetime branding.

Leprosy was not cured then. If you had a minor skin disease, that could be cured. That you go to the priest and you keep, you know, oh, okay, you're getting better.

Okay, you're fine. But if you're branded as a leper, you're done. You're done. You're excluded. We've talked about this when we looked at the leper in the earlier story.

But you're dependent on others to provide you with food because you can't go in the marketplace. You can't go home anymore. So here's ten.

[54 : 58] They're obviously living together. You know, that's all they can do. And the kind that we're talking about, biblical leprosy, is not like what's defined today, Hansen's disease.

It's not the same thing. So they're standing at a distance. They're crying out for mercy. Somehow they knew about Jesus, and so they're lifting up their voices.

Jesus, Master. Interesting, they call him Master. Have mercy on us. So he does. Verse 14, he saw them. He said to them, go show yourselves to the priests.

And as they went, they were cleansed. There's an element of faith in these ten because they go. Before they're cleansed, they start going. They obey him. They start going, and as they're on their way, they're cleansed.

They're walking in faith. They're cleansed. There's an element of faith in these. The distinction is then the next verse, verse 15. One of them, one of them, when he saw he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice.

[56 : 06] He can't contain himself. And he fell on his, he has to momentarily disobey Jesus and come back and say thanks first. He has to.

He has to come back and praise, praise God with a loud voice, fall on his face before, at Jesus' feet, and give him thanks. He has to do it. There's nothing else he can, he's got to do it.

He's just, his heart is so full. And so then Jesus asks some questions, right? And Jesus says, verse 17, weren't there ten?

Where's the other nine? Why is there only one that comes to give glory to God? Why is there only one? It's like flabbergasting to Jesus if he can be flabbergasted.

He's probably saying it more for others than, why aren't the other ones coming? This is the one that did what was right.

[57 : 08] He has the right attitude. He has the right focus. He has the right response. He has asked for mercy. He's been granted mercy. mercy. What's going on in the minds of the other nine?

How can they, so one discovers, they must all have discovered, you know, as they walk on, hey, hey, hey, hey. I mean, it's visible.

Life changing. So what's the other nine? Oh, understand, they're probably anxious to get back to family. They're probably anxious to restore relationship, anxious to get to the priest so they go back to their social life and all that.

But is that all they're thinking? Have they already forgotten the one? Have they already forgotten? Are they, are there people who experience grace from God and never say thank you?

Yeah. Romans 1. The world is full of people. They know, but they won't give him thanks.

- [58 : 30] They know. They know. They know. But they won't give him thanks. Why?
It's why the candles go dark. So he turns to the one, right? Verse 19. Turns to the one, says, rise, go your way.
Your faith has made you. Well, he distinguishes the one. Your faith has saved you.
And I, and I believe Jesus is intentional in the words that he uses. Right? So we see back in verse, the end of verse 14, as they went, they were cleansed.
So we have one word for their healing called cleansed because they were unclean. They're cleansed. Then verse 15, Luke uses the word. He saw that he was healed.
- [59 : 30] So we have two different words going on for their, this miracle, cleansed and healed. Then Jesus says, rise and go your way. Your faith has, he doesn't say your faith has cleansed you.
He doesn't say your faith has healed you. He says your faith has saved you. Now, the translators who translate that word as, in verse 19, made you well, that's, that's, that, that is a translation of the word.
It's simply wrong. It doesn't make any sense. Well, yeah, it's made them well, but Jesus uses a word that implies, oh, it's made you really well.
Because this, the other guys had faith. They turned, they obeyed him and they were cleansed. They had some faith, but it wasn't faith that saved them. It was only faith that cleansed them.
This man had faith that saved him. You might say, how, how can that be? Did he know that he was a sinner? Did he know Jesus would die for his sin? No, but he had the root element of that faith that saves every person.
- [60 : 47] He has that faith in the word of Jesus. And it's, and then it causes a response to, of, of his heart to express to the Lord. That's what saving faith is.
It recognizes God for who he is. It takes him at his word. And then it responds. So we are saved by, we believe, we repent and believe, right?
We act and we believe. Those are two sides of the same act. Here's a man who, and we even have repentance language.
Verse 15, when he saw that he was healed, he turned back. That's the, repenting is about turning. He turned back. He's got to come back to Jesus. And expresses gratitude for undeserved mercy.
No. I think he's not just healed. He's not just cleansed, but he's cleansed of all his sin. Maybe, maybe, maybe it's his sin that got him into the state that he was.
- [61 : 56] I don't know. But he feels he owes Jesus. He can't go on with his life without telling Jesus what he thinks. He can't go on with his life.
I'm sure he had family to go back to, too. I'm sure he was hoping someday to go back to society and be able to go in the temple again and to be able to go in the synagogue again and to not just have to live in the outskirts of towns.
But he had to go back to talk to Jesus. And to tell him how grateful he was. So the question is, Dan, I think already quoted from this psalm we're going to read in a minute.
Psalm 102. Is thankfulness to God a norm in your life? Are there times that you take him for granted?
Are there times that you take him for granted? I'm ashamed to say yeah. Times he's shown mercy and you just keep walking.
- [63 : 10] You know? Here's what Psalm 103 says. Bless the Lord, O my soul. My soul. That's where the real affection comes from, right? Not just my mind.

Not my heart. But my soul. Bless the Lord, O my soul. And all that is within me. Bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul. And forget not.

Forget not. Don't forget. All his benefits. Oh, what are his benefits? Well, he forgives all your iniquity. He heals all your diseases. He redeems your life from the pit.

He crowns you with steadfast love and mercy. He satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle. The Lord works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed.

He has made known his ways to Moses. He acts, his acts to the people of Israel. The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

[64 : 10] He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever. I love this verse. He does not deal with us according to our sins.

Nor repay us according to our iniquities. Oh, because you know where that would be. Four. Why?

For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him. That's how great his love is. And as far as the east is the west, so far does he remove our transgressions.

How far is that, by the way? East and west. Anybody measured that? Do I do that when I forgive people?

Do I remove their transgressions as far as the east from the west? That's what he does for me. Oh, my. Is my love for my brothers and sisters as high as the heaven is from the earth?

[65 : 22] Oh, my. He's working on me to conform me to the image of his son.

So we read that and we think, how can we not bless him? How can I not thank him? How can I not glorify him and worship him? Because I owe him all.

And this attitude of owing him all is a mark of saving faith. Because saving faith has no boasting, no entitlement. It does not take the Lord for granted.

Our salvation is from an unpayable debt given to an undeserving sinner.

And it's a salvation by faith alone and Christ alone, through grace alone, apart from any effort of my own. We owe him everything.

[66 : 26] And he gives us specific responsibilities. One is to love and take care of and be responsible for my brothers and sisters. And the other is the attitude I have toward him.

That nothing does he owe me. And all do I owe him. When we have done all that is commanded, let us say we are unworthy slaves.

Happy to be a slave for him. Unworthy slaves. Undeserving of praise. We have only done what we owed him.

Let us pray. Our Father. Our Father. Teach us, O Lord, the way of your statutes and we will keep it to the end.

Cause us to understand so that we might keep your word and observe it with all our heart. Make us walk in the path of your commandments for we delight in it.

[67 : 45] Incline our heart to your testimonies and not to selfish gain. Turn away our eyes from looking at empty things.

And revive us in your ways. This we pray in Christ's name. Amen. Amen.