

Living Ready for the Kingdom

Jesus now turned again to teach His disciples, but His words also echo into our lives today with vital, practical lessons about faith, forgiveness, service, gratitude, and readiness for His return.

Offenses and Forgiveness (Luke 17:1–4)

"Then He said to the disciples, 'It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come!'" (Luke 17:1 NKJV)

Jesus was very realistic: living in a fallen world means we will inevitably face offenses—people will mock our faith, tempt us to stumble, or even seek to damage our walk with God. But Jesus makes it clear: though offenses are inevitable, being the source of offense is deadly serious.

"It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones." (Luke 17:2 NKJV)

In other words, it is a terrible thing to cause even one young believer—or anyone childlike in faith—to stumble.

Personal Application:

Be careful how you influence others. Your life either points people toward Jesus or away from Him. Choose carefully. Our actions and words carry eternal consequences.

Jesus continued,

"Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him." (Luke 17:3 NKJV)

Notice the twofold command:

1. Rebuke if necessary — call out sin lovingly but clearly.
2. Forgive if repentance comes — no holding grudges.

"And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him." (Luke 17:4 NKJV)

Forgiveness is not based on whether you think they're sincere enough—it's based on *their* repentance and *your* obedience to God.

Personal Application:

Forgiveness is hard. That's why the apostles immediately cried out, **"Lord, increase our faith!"** (Luke 17:5 NKJV).

Forgiving repeatedly isn't natural. It's supernatural—and we need God's help and grace for it.

Faith Like a Mustard Seed (Luke 17:5–6)

Jesus replied,

"If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you." (Luke 17:6 NKJV)

Jesus wasn't speaking about the size of faith, but about its *nature*. A mustard seed is small but alive, dynamic, and powerful—it grows, it moves what seems immovable.

Personal Application:

Faith isn't about hyping yourself up. Faith is trusting God's power. Even a small amount of genuine faith, planted and nourished by God, can overcome huge obstacles.

Ask the Lord every day: *"Lord, increase my living faith."*

True Servanthood (Luke 17:7–10)

Jesus shifted the discussion toward our attitude as His servants.

He described a servant who works all day, then comes in and serves his master dinner without expecting thanks or reward. That's simply his duty.

"So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'" (Luke 17:10 NKJV)

Personal Application:

When you serve God, do it out of love, not seeking recognition. Obeying God isn't about earning points; it's simply the natural duty of someone who belongs to Him.

Our motivation must be love for our Master, not applause from people.

The Grateful Leper (Luke 17:11–19)

As Jesus traveled toward Jerusalem, He passed through a village where ten men with leprosy stood afar off and cried out:

"Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" (Luke 17:13 NKJV)

Jesus told them simply, *"Go, show yourselves to the priests."* And as they obeyed and went, they were healed.

But only **one** returned, glorifying God and falling at Jesus' feet, thanking Him—and that man was a Samaritan, a despised outsider.

Jesus asked, *"Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine?"* (Luke 17:17 NKJV)

Personal Application:

Gratitude matters to God.

He notices when we return to give thanks—and when we don't.

A grateful heart keeps us humble and joyful. After every answered prayer, every blessing, every touch of grace—be the one who returns to worship and thank Him.

The Coming of the Kingdom (Luke 17:20–37)

The Pharisees demanded to know when the kingdom of God would come.

Jesus answered:

"The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is among you." (Luke 17:20-21 NKJV)

The Kingdom had already come in the person of Jesus—the King standing in their midst!

Then Jesus turned to His disciples and warned them about the future:

- The Son of Man will return suddenly, like lightning flashing across the sky (Luke 17:24).
- But first, He must suffer and be rejected (Luke 17:25).

Before His second coming, the world will be much like the days of Noah and Lot:

- People busy with daily life—eating, drinking, marrying, building, buying and selling—oblivious to the coming judgment.
- But just as judgment fell suddenly in Noah’s day (flood) and Lot’s day (fire and brimstone), so it will fall again.

Personal Application:

The world will carry on "business as usual" right up until Jesus returns. Be ready.

Don’t be lulled to sleep by the normal rhythms of life. Live each day prepared to meet your King.

A Sudden Separation (Luke 17:34–37)

Jesus described a sudden separation:

- Two people sleeping in one bed—one taken, the other left.
- Two women grinding grain together—one taken, the other left.
- Two men working in the field—one taken, the other left.

When the disciples asked, "*Where, Lord?*" Jesus answered mysteriously:

"Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together." (Luke 17:37 NKJV)

Two main interpretations exist:

- Some believe this speaks of judgment—eagles (vultures) gathering over dead bodies.
- Others see this as a reference to the rapture—the gathering of believers to Christ.

Personal Application:

Regardless of which view you hold, the lesson is clear:

Be ready.

You don't know the day or the hour. You will either be taken to be with the Lord—or left behind for judgment.

Closing Reflection:

- Forgive freely.
- Serve humbly.
- Thank God continually.
- Live alertly, ready for His return.
- Faith, forgiveness, gratitude, and readiness—that’s the heart of a disciple living for the kingdom.