**Luke 17 Study**

**Acts 20: -** Paul didn’t hesitate to teach anything.

**The first half of this chapter is a teaching on forgiveness.**

Consider the audience, Jesus is teaching the disciples, he is talking to people about what it means to follow Jesus and how to follow Jesus.

The theme of Forgiveness is central to the gospel –The gospel of Luke begins with Jesus reading from the scroll of Isaiah saying that salvation will come through forgiveness and the gospel ends with Jesus commissioning the disciples to go out and to preach salvation through the forgiveness of sins.

Luke records Jesus teaching on forgiveness 6 more times than any other gospel. Luke has 18 teachings on Forgiveness.

**This chapter just shows us 4 aspects:**

1. **Our Need for Forgiveness**
2. **A Formula for Forgiveness**
3. **Our Duty of Forgiveness**
4. **We are shown the Power TO forgive**
5. **Our need for forgiveness comes from the destructive nature of SIN.**

**V1** Temptation will come. Things will happen in this life that will tempt you to sin.

Jesus just says that life is hard, challenges come, temptation is natural . But Woe to you who add to it.

We can place sin temptations on others. There is enough temptation already in the world. Don’t add to it!

*Woe – Grief will come. Grief should come to those who …*

Sin can be like electricity – Forgiveness is about putting an end to the transfer of electricity (sin) from one to the next. Grief will come to the person that brings this. We need forgiveness to stop the spread.

**V2** Especially tempting children to sin. This is the most devious.

I cant help but think about groups and schools telling kids things they shouldn’t tell their parents.

Jesus does not say, yeah lets wash these peoples feet. No he says it would be better to drown them.

**Stumbling Block –** An obstacle to faith and to holy living.

**1 Thessalonians 5:22** – Avoid the appearance of evil. Even if its not evil, don’t even make it look like it.

**Proverbs 31:4-7** your appearance matters. Drunken behavior would be a big problem.

**V3** But Jesus doesn’t say watch out and look for others who do this – he says LOOK AT YOURSELF

**“if your brother sins against you”** Don’t be a conduit that continues the sinful energy.

1. **Formula for Forgiveness – Peace Makers Principles**

**Rebuke – give a word of correction**

**Galatians 6:1 –**

**Proverbs 27:6** “Faithful are the wounds of a friend”

**Proverbs 12:15** “The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice”

**Psalm 141:5** “Let a righteous man strike me—it is a kindness; let him rebuke me—it is oil for my head; let my head not refuse it”

We see Jesus rebuking the religious leaders all the time.

***Rebuke – A warning given to prevent something from going wrong.***

Its not an attack, its not slapping back. Its not saying you messed up and I am mad at you, its “you messed up and I don’t want you to hurt others like you hurt me.”



They will know you are my disciples by your life for one another … but love requires rebuke sometimes.

**“if he repents, forgive him!”**

**V4** Even if he keeps doing it and doesn’t change, we are supposed to forgive.

Jesus is clear, that YOU MUST FORGIVE.

**God is in a hurry to forgive – think about the prodigal son.**

The only time God is in a hurry in the whole Bible. Quick to forgive.

We must be quick to repent! Both David and Saul were sinners. Both did terrible things. But David repented when Nathan confronted him. Saul never repented.

Its not our job to determine if they have really repented, its our job to forgive.

**Matthew 18:21-22 –** 7x70

**1 Corinthians 13:5** – keeps no record of wrongs

**Karl Meninger (**psychologist one of the most influential in American psychiatric medicine) said that **“If I could just convince my patients that their sins are forgiven, 50% would be cured immediately.”**

He wrote a lot about how unforgiveness actually makes people crazy.

**Ephesians 4:32** – but we do it because we have been forgiven

**What is Forgiveness?**

**Opposites:**

* **Resentment**

Bitter & indignant at the actions of another. Consumed by the sin of another.

*Schadenfreude – the joy you feel at another’s suffering.* Real Clinical term.

* **Revenge**

Seeking to harm the other. It can be immediate – lashing back out when it comes at you. Or it can be subtle, undermining their character. Revenge is seeking to return the energy of sin back at the other person. Bounce the bullet back at them.

Forgiveness is the opposite. Its not keeping the energy nor is it returning.

**Forgive –** *afiēmi*

Release, omit, tolerate, accept, to suffer on their behalf.

**“Forgiveness is to become a grave for the other person’s sin” – NT Wright**

Call out the sin – rebuke – say it has happened, and forgive, put to death the power of that sin.

**Mark 11:25** – Go and forgive them in person. Not just in your own heart. Forgiveness like love is not just a feeling – it’s a persistent action and choice. Its more than a feeling, but not less.

The Goal of forgiveness – is to keep the brother and sibling relationship.

**V5** The disciples think this is too hard. “Increase our faith!”

This is a good prayer, frankly. They realize how difficult forgiveness really is.

**V6** Just a little faith is enough to forgive as Christ forgives.

 

**V7** The word of faith movement breaks down here. We are little servants.

Jesus is appealing to the common understanding that of course a servant would put the master’s needs ahead of their own. That’s what servants do. That’s a DUH. This is the mindset of a servant.

**Forgiveness is the duty of the Jesus follower.**

**V9** its part of your duty as a servant, why would you get thanked?

**V10** We are unworthy servants. Servants are less than the master. Yet we receive praise for obedience.

Christians around the world – no matter what – have the duty of forgiving. It’s a choice but its not an option. It’s a choice we must make.

**Lightning Rods –** If sin is like electricity then Christians are like lightning rods. They are made to be struck. And they don’t light other buildings on fire. They absorb it and keep it from spreading. The tallest buildings get the lightning rods. We can connect ourselves to Christ. On our own it would destroy is but through Christ on the cross we can forgive and dissipate this energy. (Ken Sande)

**V11** this is again, a tough area where they had issues before. Jews avoided this area.

This is small faith. But Jesus performs a miracle with this small faith.

**V12 unclean people**

They are standing at a distance, following the law. So they are likely jews who were sent to live in No-mans-land outside of Samaria.

**V13** They asked to be healed. Crying out to Jesus.

**V14** Jesus immediately answered their request.

But it didn’t happen immediately – “as they went” they had to go and leave, before they were healed. It was a process. Its like they had to take a step of faith after their prayer to believe they would be healed.

**God has done this to me a lot, He waits for me to take a step before I fully see the blessing.**

**2 Kings 5:11-14**

He almost missed the miracle if his servants hadn’t just told him to give it a try. What do you have to lose?! Its interesting that he needed the servants to tell him to do that.

God has asked us to do some very simple things. Read our bible. Pray. Worship him. It doesn’t seem very sexy. But I have seen God work in amazing ways in these ordinary ways.

**V15-16** Great response to the healing. He praised God. He understood that Jesus either was God or was using the power of God.This man was a Samaritan. He worshipped God and worshipped Jesus. This guy gets it!

A Good Samaritan? Impossible.

This is the only time Leprosy is said to be “healed” the other word is always “cleansed.”

**Malachi 3:16** – A book of remembrance for those who practice thanksgiving.

**Jon Piper** – “God is often doing 1000 things in our lives and we might be aware of 3 of them.”

Jesus is disappointed that the others didn’t come back to worship. They should have known better.

This guy was called three things:

1. **Healed v15**
2. **Cleansed v17**
3. **Whole V19**

**V19** Your faith has made you well. Trust, allegiance, belief in Jesus is what led to this miracle. Mustard seed grew into a large tree.

**V20** Jesus is going to be asked a lot of questions. But its like they are asking all the wrong questions and not listening to His answers.

**Kingdom of God –**

It’s a theme we see all throughout the Bible.

1. **The Kingdom of God has a King – God**

God doesn’t rule and reign the same way humans do.

Throughout the OT God’s people struggled with this.

**1 Samuel 8:5-9** The kings we set in God’s place make claims on our lives – claiming the best of what we have and not giving us their best. We were made for God to be our king.

1. **The Kingdom of God has a Rival Kingdom**

**Luke 4:5-8** Jesus was tempted in the wilderness the 2nd time – offered the kingdoms of the world’s worship and splendor.

* Is the devil lying? Jesus doesn’t correct the Devil.

**Colossians 1:6** – Jesus could have corrected him. But he didn’t.

Jesus doesn’t dispute the power and rule of the devil on the earth – he just says that our allegiance must be with the true King.

There is a rival kingdom who has more power and authority in this world than it was meant to have.

**Ephesians 6:11-12**

We don’t live in neutral space where we can pick to follow Jesus or do our own thing. That’s not the case. We either side with the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of the Devil. We were born into a warzone. An occupied state. The Devil wanted Jesus to believe this was the way things were supposed to be.

**The pharisees thought of the Rival Kingdom as Rome vs Israel.**

Jesus had to correct their idea of a hostile takeover of the Middle East – its actually a liberation of their souls from the World the Flesh and the Devil.

“When is it coming?”

**V21** “midst” – Entos = inside you/among you

Christ, is in us. The Kingdom is Inside us

They struggled with the 1st & 2nd comings.

It wont be a nation state that is “observable”

Jesus says that its here and they are missing it.

Not because it cant be seen, but because it cant be “observed”

**Observe -** *paratērēsis*

This is a technical term – this is the only time its used in the whole Bible.

**3 General meanings in its use outside the Bible:**

1. **Astronomical Observation**

Observing and mapping the stars and planets. Trying to figure out and map out the way everything works. This will lead you to miss them. They looked for these big cosmic signs – the stars aligning in certain ways – blood moons etc. And they assigned weird pseudo-spiritual meanings to all these cosmic natural occurrences. But they didn’t know what a planet or a star actually was…they missed the point.

We can do this – seeking cosmic spiritual significance.

1. **Scientific/Medical Observation**

Looking for medical symptoms. They had an understanding of what certain diseases and illnesses caused, preconceived ideas of what the symptoms and causes would be…looking for things that fit this pattern.

We can do this with the Kingdom of God. I know what the symptoms and causes are – if its not that, its not the Kingdom. And we can miss it. The pharisees did this all the time. Didn’t consider other symptoms or signs.

When we say “this is what it would look like for God to show up in the world or in my life.”

A checklist of conditions, answers to prayer, that are disconnected to what God has actually said in Scripture. The ways we expect God.

1. **Observance of Religious Rules**

Observing the rules and practice of religions and cults.

If we make the kingdom about our observance of the rules then we can miss the kingdom.

The pharisees were pros at this.

**V22** They missed the Kingdom here in Jesus’ first coming. They were expecting a different kind of coming. The 2nd Coming. Jesus describes his 2nd one.

Jesus told them that the Kingdom of God was right in front of them and they missed it. For mostly those 3 reasons.

**V23** It will be impossible to miss the 2nd coming.

But people will try to point your attention to things that are not the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom is not a what – it’s a Who.

**Daniel 7:13-14** – the son of man

It’s the reign of Jesus. If you are looking for something different than Jesus you will miss the kingdom.

The coming of the Kingdom will be the coming of Jesus.

**V24** – a visible, physical return. There will not be a secret return or a “secret rapture” like in Left Behind. You will know when Jesus comes back to take his Church. It will be obvious and visible.

V21 Jesus said the kingdom is here now.

But here its also coming in the future – not yet until after the Cross – and his 2nd coming.

**V25** Before that happens, I have to die on the Cross.

He had to free us from the World the Flesh and the Devil through His victory on the Cross. He has to defeat this Rival Kingdom first. He will do that through the Cross.

*Christus Victor*

The Cross was the Inauguration – inaugurated Eschatology.

**V26-29 –** People will be going about their business, not aware that a giant, global event is about to take place. Jesus will come surprisingly – it wont be obvious its going to happen – but it will be obvious when it happens.

**V32** Don’t look back, don’t long for the way things were before. Don’t long for the good ol days, be happy when the coming of Christ takes place.

Just like in the flood – Christ will preserve his church. The wicked are judged.

Just like with Lot – Christ will take his people to safety and roast the wicked.

**V33** A common teaching of Jesus

**People debate over if this speaks of the rapture or not.**

If you believe that the rapture is Christ picks you up and takes you away, then this cant be about the rapture. If you believe the Rapture is meeting Christ in the air and then returning to Earth, then this can.

**V34** Families will be split. Its about individual faith.

**V35** In the middle of work

ESV Omits v36 – another example of people in the middle of work

**V37 Where?**

Jesus’ answer is pretty dark.

Eaten by vultures.

All of the people “taken” were taken to judgement. Like with Noah’s ark, Gods people are the ones “left behind” it’s the wicked who are “taken away”

- Vultures contribute to a dishonorable death. In the Old Testament, exposure to birds of prey after death was a terrible and dishonorable fate. The Israelites understood the importance of proper burial, and having one’s body exposed after death was included among the Lord’s curses in the event of continual rebellion ([Deuteronomy 28:26](https://www.bibleref.com/Deuteronomy/28/Deuteronomy-28-26.html)). Goliath and David both threatened one another with post-death exposure to birds of prey and wild animals ([1 Samuel 17:44–46](https://www.bibleref.com/1-Samuel/17/1-Samuel-17-44.html)).
- Vultures are a symbol of death and judgment.  [Proverbs 30:17](https://www.bibleref.com/Proverbs/30/Proverbs-30-17.html)

The big question at the end of this chapter is – **Who is your King?”**