THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

A Message of Hope and Fulfillment For Those Longing For God

Faith Like a Mustard Seed

Luke 17: 1-10

Luke opens this seventeenth chapter with a variety of lessons given to the disciples. It is difficult to find a common theme, a fact recognized by many commentators, and therefore it is better to take each theme or lesson as standing alone.

I. An Overview of the Themes

- A. Stumbling blocks (verses 1-2)
- B. Sin and forgiveness (verses 3-4)
- C. Faith like a mustard seed (verses 5-6)
- D. Service (verses 7-10)

II. A Closer Look

- A. Understanding sin, innocence, and the unique nature of causing children to sin
 - 1. There are no **sinless** children
 - 2. There is a type of childhood *innocence*
 - 3. Children are very vulnerable to authority figures and to being led into sin unaware
- B. Sin and forgiveness among disciples
 - 1. We have a duty to challenge one another to live Godly lives
 - 2. We must also be generous and understanding in extending forgiveness
- C. Faith and a mustard seed
 - 1. The desire: increase our faith
 - 2. The response: use the little that you have
 - a. It isn't the size of the faith—it's the size of the God that counts
 - b. Tiny mustard seeds become large shrubs
 - c. Faith will grow with use
- D. Service and expectations
 - Faithful service to God is reasonably expected
 - 2. God does not reward or bless on the basis of performance
 - 3. Our relationship with God and His care and provision for us is based on His love
 - 4. Absolute devotion to His will, on the other hand, is merely what is reasonable

III. Expectations of Disciples

- A. An attitude toward sin that exercises great care toward one another , and especially toward children
- B. A growing faith that is routinely exercised
- C. An attitude toward reasonable service and appropriate expectations

Conclusion: What *course corrections* do you need to make in your life? What is God saying to you this morning? How can you trust Him more to produce these attributes in your life?

He said to His disciples. "It is inevitable that stumbling blocks come, but woe to him through whom come! they Ιt would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea, than that he would cause one of these little ones to stumble. Be on your guard! your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you seven times a day, and returns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' forgive him." The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" And Lord said, "If you had faith like a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and be planted in the sea'; and it would obev "Which you. of you, having a slave plowing or tending

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Why are children more susceptible to being led into sin than adults?
- 2. Explain the myth of innocent children and the inherent sin nature.
- 3. What does genuine repentance look like?
- 4. If two people have wounded each other and both are at fault, explain why confession and repentance to the other person should not include a recitation of their failure.
- 5. How many chances should we give another person to "get it right"?
- 6. How big is faith like a mustard seed? Explain Jesus' point.
- 7. What is our reasonable service of worship?
- 8. On what basis does God bless us and answer prayer? Upon what premise do we base our service to God?

NOTES

sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come immediately and down to eat'? But will he not say to him, 'Prepare something for me to eat, and properly clothe yourself and serve me while I eat and drink; and afterward you may eat and drink'? He does not thank the slave because he did the things which were commanded, does he? So you too, when you do all the things which are commanded you, say, 'We are unworthy slaves; we have done only that which we ought to have done."

Luke 17: 1-10 NASB

"And if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a large millstone tied around his neck.

Mark 9: 42 NIV

"But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

Matthew 18: 6 NIV

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