

## Commentary on Luke chapter 17, by Chuck Smith 10.2.22

Pastor John Donovan, cell phone 508-380-0471

Pastor Terry Gerlarneau, cell phone 603-455-4399

Web site [todbc.org](http://todbc.org) email us at [opendoorbiblechurch@todbc.org](mailto:opendoorbiblechurch@todbc.org)

### October memory verse **Matthew 1:21**

And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins."

## Commentary on Luke chapter 17, by Chuck Smith 10.2.22

Then said he unto his disciples, It is impossible but that offenses will come ([Luk 17:1](#)):

You cannot help if you're living in this world, you're going to have offenses come your way. There are going to be people who will seek to put stumbling stones in your path. And that's what the word *offense* here; it's a stone of stumbling. It's impossible to live your life without having these things happen. These offenses, as people challenge your faith, as people ridicule you for your walk with Jesus Christ, it's gonna happen.

but woe unto him, through whom they come! ([Luk 17:1](#))

You can't live your life unscathed. You can't live your life without having stumbling stones placed in your path, but woe to the person who put the stumbling stone there.

It was better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he was cast into the sea, than he should offend one of these little ones ([Luk 17:2](#)).

It is a very serious thing to tamper with someone's faith in Jesus Christ. To seek to put a stumbling stone or a block in their faith of Jesus Christ.

Jesus said much the same thing at another occasion in which He took a little child and was using a child for an example. And those that would try to rob a child of that pure, simplistic faith in Jesus. Quite often these scholarly theologians accuse me of preaching a simplistic gospel. Thank God for the charge, I hope it's true. I hope that I'll always preach a simplistic gospel. Because to me, the problem is that man has tried to make it so complex when God has made the believing in Jesus so simple that even a child can believe and be saved. And Jesus said unless you become as a little child you won't be able to come in to the kingdom of Heaven. That's pretty simplistic and I hope to keep it that way.

I love the spunk that Jesus has. He's gonna take one of these big ole millstones, and I've seen them the size of the pulpit here, tie it around the guy's neck and toss him in the Sea of Galilee. Better for him if that had happened to him than he should offend one of the little ones.

## Commentary on Luke chapter 17, by Chuck Smith 10.2.22

So take heed to yourselves ([Luk 17:3](#)):

Be careful that you're not a stumbling stone. Be careful that you don't stumble your brother. Take heed to yourself if your brother trespass against thee. Rebuke him. There is a place for rebuke.

If your brother trespass against you, rebuke him ([Luk 17:3](#));

The Bible tells us that we should reprove, that we should rebuke. And if he repents forgive him. So your brother trespass against you, rebuke him, and say, "Hey, that isn't right, you shouldn't have done that." "Oh, I'm sorry. Forgive me?" "Yes, I forgive you." Should be just like that.

if he repents, forgive him ([Luk 17:3](#)).

Now it doesn't say anything if he doesn't repent, does it? Do you have to forgive him if he doesn't repent? I don't think so. You say, "Oop, oh wait a minute." Oh, let me ask you a question. Does God forgive a man without repentance? I don't know of a single instance where God forgave a person without repentance. In fact, Jesus said unless you repent you're gonna perish. So repentance is necessary for forgiveness. It's an absolute necessary qualification for forgiveness. If I'm to be forgiven, I must repent. God will not forgive you if you don't repent, therefore, God does not require that you forgive outside of repentance. But if they do repent, then you... it's... the ball is in your park and you've got to forgive.

And even if he trespasses against you seven times in the same day, and seven times in the same day he turns to you again, and says, I repent; thou shalt forgive him ([Luk 17:4](#)).

Thank you, Lord, I needed that. That's so hard, isn't it? You would be prone to think that the person wasn't sincere. Just taking advantage of you. If seven times he does some rotten deed and then quickly says, "Oh, I repent, I repent," and yet, if he repents seven times the same day, I'm to forgive him. I can't do that unless the Lord helps me. And the apostles, no doubt, felt the same thing, because when Jesus said this, they said, "Oh,"

Lord, increase our faith ([Luk 17:5](#)).

Help me, Lord. Can't handle that one.

And so the Lord said, If you had faith as a grain of mustard seed ([Luk 17:6](#)),

Now I think that we oftentimes make a mistake in this, thinking of faith in quantity and we think oh a mustard seed is so tiny, just a little tiny tiny bit of faith. And we think of it in quantity or in size. But He didn't say if you had as much faith as the size of a grain of mustard seed, did He? He isn't referring to size at all, if you had faith as a grain of

## Commentary on Luke chapter 17, by Chuck Smith 10.2.22

mustard seed. I didn't know mustard seeds had faith. But if you had faith as a grain of mustard seed,

you might say to this sycamine tree ([Luk 17:6](#)),

Or mulberry tree, whatever it might have been.

Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it would obey you ([Luk 17:6](#)).

Now, whenever I read something like that, I wonder, "Lord, how much faith do I have?" But faith as a grain of mustard seed. Now in another place He said, "If your faith as a grain of mustard seed you can say to yon mountain be thou removed into the sea and it would happen."

Let me suggest to you that a mustard seed is quite small. And when it is planted in the ground and covered with dirt and there germinates. As that mustard plant begins to grow from the little seed, it begins to move, in a sense, especially to its size the mountains of dirt above it that it might break forth and grow up into a mustard bush. So faith as a grain of mustard seed. There is that life principle there that can move mountains. Another place the disciples said, "Lord, increase our faith," and perhaps He's just showing them how little they really do have, and if this be a standard then I must take my place with them. I do wish that the Lord would increase my faith.

Now this business of faith, though, becomes a very tough issue, because so many times we find ourselves trying to generate faith. Have you ever been in the position of trying to generate faith? You know, you go trying to get the turbines turning and get things rolling. But you can't generate faith. Now a lot of times we are made to feel very guilty... "Well, brother, if you just had enough faith. Surely you wouldn't be in the mess that you're in if you just had enough faith. You wouldn't be as sick as you are if you just had enough faith." Now, if at any time a person needs comfort and help is when they're sick and they're weak and they're down. And it's no help to tell a person, "Well, if you just had enough faith you wouldn't be in this condition, brother." That's no help at all. You're as bad as those guys who came to comfort Job. You're kicking a guy when he's down.

I cannot generate faith; I cannot produce faith. Faith is a gift of God. It is listed in I Corinthians chapter 12 as one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Now it is glorious when God plants that faith in your heart, but if He doesn't I don't know what you can do about it. So I think it's proper with the disciples just say, "Lord, increase my faith."

Now the Lord is talking to them about what it is to be a servant. You're the servant of the Lord. He's called these disciples to be a servant. And He's talking to them a little about what a servant... what it entails being a servant. Let's leave it there.

## Commentary on Luke chapter 17, by Chuck Smith 10.2.22

But which of you, who has a servant plowing or feeding your cattle, will say to him by and by, when he's come in from the field, Go and sit down and eat your dinner? But will you not rather say unto him, Prepare my supper, gird yourself, and serve me, until I have eaten and drunken; and afterward you can eat and drink? Now does he thank that servant because he did those things which were commanded him? ([Luk 17:7-9](#))

And Jesus said, "No way."

I trow not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we haven't done any more than what was our duty to do ([Luk 17:9-10](#)).

My attitude after I come in from serving the Lord, and the Lord gives me another task to do, and I'm so tired I feel oh I can't move. But I go to the hospital, I make the call, I pray for them and encourage them. And I'm about fall asleep driving home. Catch myself a couple of times almost running off the road. And I'm trudging upstairs to bed and, "Oh, Lord, You ought to really lay a heavy one on me now. Look how good I am, look what I've done for You. Surely, Lord, You ought to bless me now. I'm so good." Lord says, "No, no." Say, I'm an unprofitable servant. I've only done that which was my duty to do. I'm a servant. What is my duty? To obey my master. Not to be looking for glory, not to be looking for thanks, not to be looking for pats on the back.

They tell me that I'm a difficult one to work for. Because I don't pat people on the back. Now I know that's difficult in marriage, and God help me, I'm trying. I know it is a failing of mine, because my wife isn't my servant. She's my wife. And it is a great failing of mine not to give her more recognition for those good traits, those beautiful traits that she has. I just, you know, expect it and, but I don't give her recognition and don't say, "Oh, sweetheart, that was the most delicious dinner. You seasoned that roast just perfectly, oh that was good." I just don't say those things. I wish I could, I wish I did, but I don't. But if she burns the carrots, I say, "Oh you burned the carrots, huh?" No one makes it so stupid that we can't learn, but yet, as a position of a servant I shouldn't really be looking for these little perks. I've only done what is my duty to do.

Now it came to pass, as he was on his way to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood a far off ([Luk 17:11-12](#)):

Which, of course, was the law of the land. If you were a leper you had to cry, "Unclean," and could not allow anyone to approach you.

And they lifted up their voices ([Luk 17:13](#)),

They cried, they yelled.

## Commentary on Luke chapter 17, by Chuck Smith 10.2.22

they said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when he saw them, he said to them, Go your way and show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, as they went, they were cleansed ([Luk 17:13-14](#)).

Again, I like this because it shows us the variety with which Jesus worked His works among men. He was never in a pattern. He didn't do things by set patterns because He didn't want us to get set into rituals or into patterns. He wanted us to just be free to the working of God in different ways. In another case a leper came and said, "Lord, if You will, You can make me clean." And Jesus touched him and said, "I will. Be thou clean. Go show yourself to the priest." And immediately his leprosy left him.

Now here they stood afar off. It doesn't say anything about Jesus touching them. They just cried out and Jesus called back and said, "Go show yourself to the priest." Now this was the necessary thing, this is the law of the leper and the day of his cleansing, [Leviticus 13](#). He is to go to the priest and he's to show himself to the priest to examine him. If he finds no new skin blotches and so forth, he puts him in the house and he sits there for seven days. Comes back again before the priest, and he looks over him again, and there's no new eruptions or blotches then the man is proclaimed cleaned by the priest. And he goes out and gets a couple of doves and he brings one in. The priest kills the dove, pours the blood in water basin, he takes the other dove and dips it in this bloody water and turns it free. And the bloody water dove flies away with the blood sprinkling down and the guy is cleansed of his leprosy and he's able to go back into the community. So that was the first step back to restoration, go show yourself to the priest.

So by faith, as they started towards the priest. Now doesn't say they were cleansed immediately, but as they went they were cleansed. They started out in faith towards the priest, and as they were going, some guy said, "Look, wow, it's gone, unreal."

And one of them, returned when he saw that he was healed, he turned back, and with a loud voice he glorified God. And he fell down on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan ([Luk 17:15-16](#)).

Now the Jews had no dealings with a Samaritan nor the Samaritans with the Jews. But misery had made common brothers of these men. But it's significant that out of the ten only one gave thanks.

And Jesus said unto him, Were there not ten who were cleansed? where are the nine? ([Luk 17:17](#))

This indicates that the Lord is looking for thanks when He has worked in a person's life. He's looking for that response, and He misses it when He is... when it is not there. Weren't there ten that were cleansed? Where are the nine? And He said unto him,

There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And he said to him, Arise, go your way: your faith has made you whole ([Luk 17:18-19](#)).

## Commentary on Luke chapter 17, by Chuck Smith 10.2.22

He received more than just the healing of his leprosy. He received salvation.

And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come ([Luk 17:20](#)),

He's heading now towards Jerusalem. When's the kingdom of God gonna come? When He gets to Jerusalem? You gonna do it?

and he answered and said unto them, The kingdom of God does not come with observation ([Luk 17:20](#)):

The word there in the Greek is a word that means with outward manifestation or an outward show. You're not gonna see an outward display of the kingdom at this time.

Neither shall they say, Lo here! Or, lo there! For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you, among you ([Luk 17:21](#)).

"Within you" is a poor translation here. It's really, "the kingdom of God is among you." It would be wrong to say that the kingdom of God was in the Pharisees. The kingdom of God is in the life of every man who has submitted to the King, or to God as King. But with Jesus, there the kingdom of God was among them. He was a demonstration of a man submitted to the authority of God.

And he said unto his disciples, The days will come, when you shall desire to see one of the days the Son of man, and you will not see it. And they shall say unto you, Look it's here; look it's there: now don't go after them, or follow them. For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part of the heaven, shines to another part under the heaven; so shall the Son of man be in his day ([Luk 17:22-24](#)).

Oh, the kingdom of God is coming, it's over here, let's go over and see the kingdom, it came secretly. No, it's gonna be like lightening, everybody is gonna see it when it happens.

But before He comes in this glory,

He first must suffer many things, and be rejected by this generation. And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it also be in the days of the Son of man. For they were eating, they were drinking, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all ([Luk 17:25-29](#)).

What is Jesus saying? The kingdom of heaven when it comes, it'll be as in the days of Noah. It will be in the days of Lot. People will be going on with business as usual,

## Commentary on Luke chapter 17, by Chuck Smith 10.2.22

eating, drinking, marrying wives, buying, selling, planting, building; business as usual. Now, verse 29 I feel is significant, "But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all." I do not believe that God's judgment will come upon the earth until the church is taken out. I do not believe that the church is going to face the wrath of God, the Great Judgment period mentioned in the Bible, or the Great Tribulation period. But I believe that Lot is a classic sign of God's ability to deliver the righteous while reserving the ungodly for the day of judgment as Peter tells us in his second epistle.

Even thus shall it be in a day that the Son of man is revealed. In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. For remember Lot's wife ([Luk 17:30-32](#)).

Who, of course, in turning back turned to a pillar of salt. Get out of there, escape.

Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it. I tell you, in that night there'll be two in one bed; the one will be taken, the other will be left. Two shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, the other left. Two shall be in the field; one shall be taken, the other left. And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, there will the eagles be gathered together ([Luk 17:33-37](#)).

Now this last portion is difficult of interpretation. And there are two basic interpretations. There are those who interpret this as the person who is taken is the one in, who is in trouble, because he is taken to the judgment. One is taken, where Lord? Wherever the body is there will the eagles be gathered together. And so they say they are taken to be put into the great battle of Armageddon where the birds are going to come and feast upon the body of the people. One interpretation. The other interpretation is that this actually is a reference to the rapture of the church. Taken up to escape the Great Tribulation period. So you can see that the two interpretations are exactly opposite. For in the second interpretation the one who is taken is blessed, because he won't have to be in the Great Tribulation. The problem with the first interpretation is eagles are not a bird of prey, that is, upon the human bodies. They do prey upon livestock, live animals. But they are not as the vultures who eat human flesh. They do not eat the carcasses of people. So to interpret the aetos, which is eagles, as vultures is wrong, but yet, those who make the first interpretation are always translating aetos, as vultures. But that is not a true translation of the Greek aetos, which is eagles. There is another word for the vultures that feed upon the flesh of men at the great battle of Armageddon. What is being referred to wherever the body is there will the eagles be gathered together. There are those who see that as the body of Jesus Christ, wherever the body of Christ is there will the eagles, His victorious saints, be gathered together. And so you have two interpretations. You have a choice between the two. They are diametrically opposed. Both can't be right, and when you get into a place like that I just find that it's probably best to file it away and say, "Well, I'll just wait for further information."

## **Commentary on Luke chapter 17, by Chuck Smith 10.2.22**

Shall we pray. Father, we thank You for Your Word, a lamp unto our feet, a light into our path to guide us as we walk with Thee. And Lord, we pray that we might walk in the light of Thy truth, the path illumined by Your Holy Spirit. Thank You, Lord, for Your truth that has set us free. Bless now, Lord, and may we grow in grace and in our knowledge of You. And Lord, we would with Your disciples pray, increase our faith. Work in our lives, Lord. In Jesus' name. Amen.

May the Lord be with you, bless you. We praise the Lord for His goodness to us. The opportunity of just growing in our walk and in our fellowship. And may you be enriched this week as the love of Christ works in your life and works through your life. And let your light so shine before men, that when they see your good works they'll glorify your Father which is in heaven.