

Luke 17:1-19

In Luke 17 Jesus is teaching his disciples and interacting with their questions. As they are walking and talking, his instructions and warnings are interrupted by a group of lepers. Through this teaching and encounter we see 5 characteristics of the Christian life. Let's read through the text and we will come back to look at each one in more depth...READ

1. Falling v1-3
2. Forgiving v4
3. Faith v5-6
4. Faithfulness v7-10
5. Gratefulness v11-19

There are 5 characteristics of the Christian life that surface in this text.

1. Falling v1-3

It may sound odd, but part of the Christian life is falling. We aren't perfect.

1. We strive for perfection, but we fall short.
2. Part of what sets the Christian sinner apart from the non Christian sinner is, we fall and repent.

Jesus does not ignore this reality. Instead he deals with it with a warning, a woe and a command to watch.

A. Warning v1a

He said to His disciples, "It is inevitable that stumbling blocks come,

1. Life is not a rose garden...it is full of stumbling blocks

- a. The world, the flesh, the devil and all of his schemes
- b. Temptation, tests, and trials.

2. James 1:2-4 *Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. 4 And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*

3. These things are inevitable so be ready. Be warned.

B. Woe v1b-2

but woe to him through whom they come! 2 It 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.

1. We have the warning...trials, tests, and temptations will come...but now we have a woe! Woe to the one through whom they come!
2. That word woe is a word that is meant to denounce someone...not a positive
3. Matthew 18:5-9

4. Woe to the one through whom these temptations come! Don't be the one who leads others astray...especially little ones (physical children or spiritual children)...by being the source of unnecessary tests, trials, or temptations to sin...Or Jesus will denounce you..."woe to him."

C. Watch v3

3 Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.

This is so good...be warned "you can easily fall into temptations, trials, and tests"...be sure you aren't one who would cause others to fall! And, in the meantime, be on guard!

1. You be on your guard for yourself...and for your brothers!
2. Galatians 6:1 *Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.*
3. Matthew 18:15-18

So Jesus gives us a warning about falling, pronounces woe on the source of that temptation, and challenges us to watch out for ourselves and our brethren...because falling is part of life.

2. Forgiving v4

4 And if he sins against you seven times a day, and returns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' forgive him."

1. Jesus demands generous forgiveness.
 - a. He doesn't have to prove himself...he just needs to "say"
 - b. And when he says "I repent" you forgive...nothing more, nothing less
 - c. And what happens if he turns on you again? Up to 7 times a day, You forgive
2. Generous forgiving!
 - a. We know that Jesus did not just mean 7 times
 - b. The number seven represents spiritual perfection.
 - c. When Jesus says 7 He means, perfectly...completely...not just 7 times
 - d. We see this clearly in Matthew 18.
3. Matthew 18:21-35

3. Faith v5-6

5 The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" 6 And the 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 obey you.

1. Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

- a. In other words faith is confidence in something you literally wait for expectantly
- b. It is a conviction in the trustworthiness of something you yet see
- c. Faith is not a feeling...getting worked up or excited....it is a confidence in the assurances and promises of Scripture.

2. Hebrews 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

- a. **That He is**...the God fo the Bible is: Attributes of the biblical God
- b. **That He rewards**...not drudgery...but rewards!

4. Faithfulness v7-10

7 "Which of you, having a slave plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come immediately and sit down to eat'? 8 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'? 9 He does not thank the slave because he did the things which were commanded, does he? 10 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.'"

We live in a time and day when we think that God owes us something.

1. I went to church this week...I even gave a tithe!
2. I prayed this week and read my Bible
3. I have been a good boy or a good girl....aren't you proud of me?
4. Everything should work out smoothly for me shouldn't it?

What do we learn from the whole of Scripture?

1. You are incapable of doing anything that pleases God.

- a. You can be the best person in town who does all the right things and that is not sufficient.
- b. Isaiah 64:6 For all of us have become like one who is unclean, And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment

2. You are made capable of doing things that please God.

- a. Anything that you do that does please God, He does in you and through you
- b. Philippians 2:13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure
- c. The cycle...that which you do that is acceptable is ONLY what HE does through you
- d. So you aren't earning any points...you are racking up debt!

Be faithful and recognize that the greatest reward is doing what you ought to do for Him!

5. Gratefulness v11-19

11 While He was on the way to Jerusalem, He was passing between Samaria and Galilee. 12 As He entered a village, ten leprous men who stood at a distance met Him; 13 and they raised their voices, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" 14 When He saw them, He said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they were going, they were cleansed. 15 Now one of them, when he saw that he had been healed, turned back, glorifying God with a loud voice, 16 and he fell on his face at His feet, giving thanks to Him. And he was a Samaritan. 17 Then Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But the nine--where are they? 18 Was no one found who returned to give glory to God, except this foreigner?" 19 And He said to him, "Stand up and go; your faith has made you well."

Gratefulness is expressed in this text...

1. We learn that **gratefulness is expressed in our voices and it is felt in our hearts**
2. Look at how the grateful leper responded

a. He glorified God loudly: gratefulness was expressed in his voice

1. There is a place for loud worship!

2. Psalm 150 *Praise the LORD! Praise God in His sanctuary; Praise Him in His mighty expanse. 2 Praise Him for His mighty deeds; Praise Him according to His excellent greatness. 3 Praise Him with trumpet sound; Praise Him with harp and lyre. 4 Praise Him with timbrel and dancing; Praise Him with stringed instruments and pipe. 5 Praise Him with loud cymbals; Praise Him with resounding cymbals. 6 Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD!*

b. He gave thanks to Jesus humbly: gratefulness was felt in his heart.

1. We have every reason to worship quietly, reverently, and humbly

2. Psalm 51:17 *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.*

Worship is a two sided coin

1. It is expressed in our voices..loud and it is felt in our hearts...humbly
2. It is Spirit and Truth

Conclusion: What is the Christian life like?

1. It is a life that includes falling...not matter how good we look on the outside...and repenting
2. It is a life of forgiving those who don't deserve it and who let us down
3. It is life of faith or confidence in the truth and promises of Scripture when everything else seen in life casts a shadow of doubt.
4. It is a life of faithfulness...even if there is no success or immediate gratification
5. It is a life of gratefulness. In everything giving thanks because we don't deserve anything from His hand, much less all He gives.

Is this characteristic of your life? GOSPEL