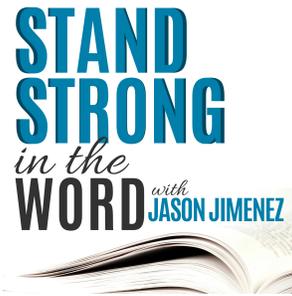


#81 “INCREASE MY FAITH, LORD!”
LUKE 17:1-10

As Jesus went off to Perea (Jn. 10:40-42), and while there, He taught several lessons on the kingdom of heaven (Lk. 14) parables about lost items (Lk. 15), the dishonest servant (Lk. 16:1-13), and coming judgment (Lk. 16:19-31).

STUMBLING BLOCKS & FORGIVENESS
17:1-4

1. **And he said to his disciples, “Temptations to sin are sure to come, but woe to the one through whom they come!** After giving a descriptive account of the eternal destiny that awaited the rich man in Lk. 16:19-31, Jesus turns to His disciples to warn them about the temptation to sin. This is Jesus’ first command: to not fall into temptation.
2. ² **It would be better for him if a millstone** (large stone used to grind grain in a mill) **were hung around his neck and he were cast into the sea than that he should cause** (*skandalon*; be a stumbling block) **one of these little ones** (new; immature believer) **to sin.** Not long ago, Jesus’ disciples came to Him and asked who is the greatest. Jesus answered them, “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea (see Matt. 18:1-6).” In both Matthew and Luke, Jesus reminds His disciples to live a life that doesn’t lead others to sin. But to receive them in His love, and carry a great fear of what will happen if you cause others to stumble.
 - A. **Cause one of these little ones to sin**—David Guzik describes what offenses these could be: “But among brothers in Jesus, a *skandalon* is bad. It can be false counsel (Matthew 16:23), and it can be leading a brother into sin by your “liberty” (Romans 14:13). Division and false teaching brings a *skandalon* among God’s people (Romans 16:17).
 - 1) Romans 14:13, “Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother.”
3. ³ **Pay attention** (state of readiness; to respond) **to yourselves! If your brother sins, rebuke** (to disapprove; to denounce) **him, and if he repents, forgive** (to pardon; to remove guilt) **him, ⁴ and if he sins against you seven times in the day, and turns to you**



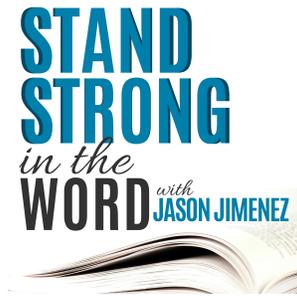
seven times, saying, ‘I repent,’ you must forgive him.” The second command of Jesus is forgiveness. Jesus warned His disciples to be ready to respond to others who wrong you with forgiveness. Be careful not to cause others to sin; and watch that you forgive those who sin against you.

- A. Luke 6:37-38, “Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.”

INCREASED FAITH 17:5-10

1. ⁵**The apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith!”** After hearing this, the disciples immediately asked Jesus to help increase their faith. It takes faith in God to be able to resist temptation, as well as to forgive.
2. ⁶**And the Lord said, “If you had faith like a grain of mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you.** Prior to this, Jesus had given a parable about the mustard seed (see Matt. 13:31-32). Now, He speaks of having faith (like a mustard seed) strong enough to uproot a mulberry tree. This is the kind of faith needed to uproot any bitterness, unforgiveness, or doubt in your life. Great works requires great faith!
 - A. **mustard seed.** “Scholars do not all agree about which plant is meant by the mustard plant, but ancient sources agree in describing the mustard seed as proverbially small. mulberry tree. Scholars usually identify the tree here as the black mulberry; its wide root system reportedly made it hard to uproot.”¹
3. ⁷**“Will any one of you who has a servant plowing or keeping sheep say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘Come at once and recline at table’? ⁸Will he not rather say to him, ‘Prepare supper for me, and dress properly, and serve me while I eat and drink, and afterward you will eat and drink’? ⁹Does he thank the servant because he did what was commanded? ¹⁰So you also, when you have done all that you were commanded, say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.’”** Jesus brings up the example of a servant to drive home His message. Since He is the Master, and His disciples are like slaves—they are to obey Him. Disciples of Christ

¹ Zondervan, NIV, Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible, eBook: Bringing to Life the Ancient World of Scripture (Kindle Locations 233967-233969). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.



not only need an increase of faith, but they need an increase of obedience to serve the Lord and love others.

- A. “The introductory word *but* indicates that Jesus was now going to balance one lesson with another. There was a danger that the Twelve might get so carried away with transplanting trees that they would ignore the everyday responsibilities of life! Faith that does not result in faithfulness will not accomplish God’s work. It is good to have faith to do the *difficult* (Luke 17:1–3) and the *impossible* (Luke 17:4–6), but it is essential that we have faith to do even the *routine tasks* our Master has committed to us. Privileges must always be balanced with responsibilities.”²

² Warren W. Wiersbe, [*The Bible Exposition Commentary*](#), vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 244.