

Luke 17:1-10

4 Marks of Following Jesus

Image Church // The Gospel of Luke: Inverted Kingdom Wk. 27

Introduction

Good morning Image Family I hope you're doing well...

- If you're **NEW** with us I want to invite you to stop by the **Connection Center** we want to meet you and we have a gift for you...
- If you've been around and want to **JOIN IN** on what we're doing- the **Connection Center** is the place to do that- it's the one stop shop that we have created to best engage with those of you that are new or want to get involved!

Excited about Osborne High School this week!

Hey real quick- I want to put this on your radar- If you're a **Covenant Member**, we're going to be having a **Covenant Members Gathering** here on October 14th- You're not going to want to miss this- First one sense before COVID- Going to be a special time and we're going to be rolling out some exciting things!

Not a Covenant Member and want to become one- we have a **Membership Class coming up in the next month**- be on the lookout for more info...

Alright, if you have your bibles go ahead and grab them and turn to **Luke 17**...

Remember, Jesus is on His way to Jerusalem...

And there's been **3 groups of people** that Jesus has interacted with on this journey: Religious elite, sinners, disciples...

Note: The only difference between the *religious* and the *sinners* is- the religious used God as a means to build themselves up, the sinner lived as if there was no God...

Well in **Chapter 15**- Jesus has all 3 groups of people around Him... And He makes an appeal to both the religious and the *sinners* through The parable of the lost sheep, lost coin and lost son...

Then at we see at the beginning of **Chapter 16** Jesus turns to His disciples and begins to instruct them...

Well, it turns out the religious elite we're listening in on what Jesus had to say to His disciples, because they started scoffing at Him because they didn't like what he was teaching...

And so, Jesus responds strongly to their scoffing calling out their hearts, holding up who He is, pointing to the authority he has, and then He finishes with a very challenging parable that acts as a yet another warning confronting their depravity and showing the long-term impact it will have for them...

We also saw in this the reality of the inverted Kingdom, that points to hope for those who humble themselves in faith...

Then we get to **chapter 17** where Jesus yet again turns again to His disciples...

*Which by the way let me say this- **don't miss the model for discipleship that Jesus shows us**...*

Jesus is never one-on-one with anyone simply studying... There's nothing wrong with that, but that's not how Jesus models discipleship...

It is life together, mission together and stopping along the way holding up his Words and engaging in them together, in order to help equip and explain the realities of God's Kingdom...

This is what discipleship is, this is what it looks like- the question is do you have this space in your life?

This is why CG's are so important for us- this is the space where this happens in the life of our church...

So, Jesus turns to His disciples here in **Chapter 17** after coming off of telling a parable about a man who didn't follow the ways of Jesus...

Now, He's now going to turn to His disciples and hold up **4 marks of what it looks like to follow Jesus...**

This section is very proverbial in nature... Keep in mind as Luke writes this- He's not giving a second-by-second recording of every detail that's happening, he's giving us snapshots of exactly what we need in order to get a grasp of the life and ministry of Jesus and the implications this has on our life...

It's very helpful to understand that as you read through the gospel of Luke...

We're going to pick up in verse 1... And we will walk through these 4 marks that Jesus holds up for His followers...

And here's how I want to encourage you to position yourself as we work through this- I want you to examine each of these areas in your own life looking at where you need to press in deeper- it may be one of these, multiple or all of these places...

- The way you press deeper is by applying the gospel to your life

Now there may be some of you listening today and you're not a Christian- my hope is that you would see these marks and understand how they are not burdens but benefits to your life in light of who Jesus is and what He extends to you... *Let's jump in...*

Luke 17:1-19

1 He said to his disciples, "Offenses will certainly come,

This word **Offenses** here is important, it means a trap... It could be an enticement, or a lure... Regardless, it's anything that leads to or causes or a person to sin¹ ...²

And then, Jesus says this: **but woe to the one through whom they come!** So, Jesus says, enticements will come, there will be things that cause people to sin... But woe to the person who's the agent of these things... Woe to the one who leads a people to sin...

Verse 2 **It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea than for him to cause one of these little ones to stumble. 3 Be on your guard.**

The **Little ones** in this context are most likely the new followers that are probably around Jesus as He says this...

And Jesus gives a really strong warning here that we need to feel the weight of... Where He says that death is better than to causing a new follower stumble... We are to be careful with new followers!

- **Stumble:** trip, falling away... Could be Apostacy...

Now it's important to understand there's **explicit** and **implicit** things present here... The **explicit** is stated here and it's the most extreme case... The **implicit** here would be things less than the extreme case, but still in line with the points Jesus is making...

For example, I don't think this warning is limited for only new followers, I think it also stands against leading anyone away from the truths of Jesus...³

Another **implicit** would be that I don't think the idea of causing someone to stumble is only limited to apostacy, I think it is also fair to **imply** that any teaching that leads to sin is a serious matter...

¹ Preventing righteous action to promoting sinful behavior

² Liefeld, W. L. (1984). Luke. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke* (Vol. 8, p. 994)..

³ Bock, D. L. (1996). *Luke: 9:51-24:53* (Vol. 2, p. 1386).

One other thing to note is that Jesus doesn't qualify where/who the teaching will come from- either way the point is this for His followers...

They are to be on guard, and I think this is a **twofold warning**, they are to be on guard against what they **listen to** as to not be lead away from the truths surrounding who Jesus is...

And **what they teach** as to not lead others away from the truths surrounding who Jesus is...

So, here's the 1st mark of a follower of Jesus...

Mark #1: A follower of Jesus is on guard surrounding the centrality of Jesus (v.3)

Let me unpack this, I want to cover this on all fronts so let me start out and work in on this to try and be faithful to the full scope I believe that exists here...

What Jesus is saying is so important, because we live in a culture that is full of teaching that pulls us away from Jesus- either in doctrine or holding up desires...

It's why Paul would warn again about being on guard...

- To His letter to Timothy in **1 Timothy 6:20** Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding irreverent and empty speech and contradictions from what is falsely called knowledge.
- Paul to the church in Colossae in **Colossians 2:8** Be careful that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit based on human tradition, based on the elements of the world, rather than Christ.

I have watched this happen to countless individuals...

- Married couple of 20+ years- husband walk away from wife and faith... on multiple occasions...
- Seen a wife walk away from husband and faith...

- Young professionals are walking away for the life they want to live, the money and their career...
- People are deconstructing their faith...
- Did you know the #1 convert to Mormonism is Southern Baptists??

We are constantly being hit with teaching that is counter to Jesus...

And this is no surprise, Jesus said it would come, but this is why we have to be on guard... Or we may end up doing the same thing as many have- succumbing to the teaching and ideologies of the world...

And what I want you to see is here in Jesus' call to His followers to be on guard is that it's a communal call here to be on guard... This is not something to be done alone...

Y'all listen this is why the local church is so important... Our role together is to be on guard together against teaching that pulls us away from the truths of God...

This is why it's imperative that you're part of a church that has **biblical integrity**, that lives our biblical community with sounds pastors and elders who can come along side you to shepherd your heart...

Hebrews 3:12 would say it like this: Watch out, brothers and sisters, so that there won't be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. **13** But encourage each other daily, while it is still called **today**, so that none of you is hardened by sin's deception.

Here's what I want you to see your engagement in the church matters...

- Corporate gathering – being fed by the Word encouraged by singing the word and the elements of baptism and communion...
- Communal gathering – being fed by the Word opening up your life to guard hiding and blind spots...
- Some of you are missing the importance of this in your life...

Something else: your personal devotion to the Word and prayer also matters keeping your heart oriented around Jesus **and** it also helps equip you to participate in guarding the centrality of Jesus with others that are part of the church...

Some of you are being led astray in certain areas of your life because you're not positioning yourself to be on guard...

- **Where have you let your guard down?**

Example: military squad sent to guard a post- isolate, don't communicate, set their weapons down... *Not going to work...*

But we do this all the time... We don't engage the church that Jesus established to help us guard- we don't read His words His given us as a weapon of defense and we don't pray which is like our *wartime walkie-talkie...*

All of these things are given to orient us around the truths of Jesus so that we be on guard... When teaching or ideologies come, we can combat them together by leaning into the tools God's given us...

- Then we can see Jesus is better and more worth it than what we're hearing...

Also, remember I told you that the application is two-fold- one is guarding against what you are hearing...

But the other side of this is also guarding against what you're saying/teaching others as well... Lest you cause someone to sin...

Well, the beauty is that gathering communally and Corporate, and being devoted to the Word and prayer not only guards against being pulled away but it also helps guard against you leading others away...

But I need you to understand Christian, that your **biblical literacy** matters, and your **gospel fluency** matters! Some of you are neglecting this...

I want you to know that I feel the weight of the reality that I am shaping your biblical literacy... What I do every week is incredibly weighty and bathed in prayer...

And on one hand that's why **1 Timothy 5:17** says the role of preaching and teaching is especially due double honor...

But before you get too excited, it's also why **James 3:1** says: *Not many should become teachers, my brothers, because you know that we will receive a stricter judgment.*

I can tell you every week I feel the weight of this... It's why I spend 15-20- hours a week laboring over the Word so that I will divide it rightly...

My hope is that I can help lead the way in us being on guard together when it comes to the centrality of Jesus and His Kingdom!

Let's keep reading and see what Jesus says next...

If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. 4 And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and comes back to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' you must forgive him."

I want you to notice that Jesus cares about our interaction with one another, especially within the context of the church... Notice the word **brother** there- that's familial language...

Now there's **4 elements here** that I want to flesh out and then we will land on Jesus' point... There's a **sin**, a **rebuke**, **repentance**, and **forgiveness**... Let's talk about these things...

The first thing to notice is that the **sin** happens first before the rebuke, but this is important because we live in a culture where people love to take on the role of rebuking- These are the **call-out** people...

And a lot of times the problem is they're not actually rebuking; they're just being critical and that's a problem...

See, for a rebuke to be a rebuke, you have to be able to articulate the sin that you're rebuking...

Now, on the other hand we have people who can't receive a rebuke- someone comes to you and presents a sin and you can't do what the second part of this that Jesus lays out and that is **repentance**...

When you **repent** to a brother or sister, this is more than feeling bad for what we did- this is owning our sin, **horizontally and vertically**...

Horizontally we need to see what it did to the person we sinned against, and **vertically** we need to see that it was not in line with how the gospel calls us to treat our brother or sister...

It is a shift in our mind and heart where we see our sin and we turn from our sin to Jesus, and we reposition ourselves spiritually and relationally...

And when this happens the call for the one who has been sinned against is to forgive...

So, you have 4 elements here: **sin**, a **rebuke**, **repentance**, and **forgiveness**... And forgiveness is where Jesus' emphasis is...

So here's the second Mark of a follower of Jesus...

Mark #2: A follower of Jesus forgives (v. 3b-4)

What is forgiveness?

To **forgive** is to say: I don't hold your sin against you anymore... It is the removal of offenses or hostility that caused disruption and alienation in the relationship. It is coming to a place of peace and forgiveness (***Ephesians 2:14-15***).

How often do we extend this? Unlimited according to Jesus...

Really this is a picture of what it means to embrace the **gospel**...

*Jesus prays this in **Matthew 6:12** And forgive us our debts,*

as we also have forgiven our debtors

Matthew 6:14-15 For if you forgive others their offenses, your heavenly Father will forgive you as well. **15** But if you don't forgive others, your Father will not forgive your offenses.

GOSPEL

One other thing- I don't want to go too deep here- Jesus is setting the baseline, there is a lot more to this depending on situation...

- ***You can have forgiveness and safety at the same time...***

The call is not to be in immediate proximity... ***the call is peace where there was hostility***... (Eph. 2:14-15)...

You can also extend you end of forgiveness without having received repentance...

- This is letting go of the offense- now this doesn't mean to overlook or dismiss the hurt and the pain...

Who do you need to extend forgiveness to?

- Maybe you have done it verbally but not in your heart...
- Remember, this is what it means to fight out flesh and embrace the gospel...

Let's keep reading ... Verse 5

5 The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith."

6 "If you have faith the size of a mustard seed," the Lord said, "you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you."

Hers's the 3rd mark of a follower of Jesus...

Mark #3: A follower of Jesus has genuine Faith (v. 6)

I love this and I have been thinking about it a lot...

First, ***Faith is not something you work for***, faith come beholding God and opening up your mind and hear to the realities of who He is...

Fake big faith revealed in our heart... We say that we believe but down deep we really doubt...

Better to have a mustard seed amount of faith that is real...

Our problem is we don't allow ourselves to have faith because we don't want to risk being let down...

Love this, the tree is ready to be uprooted, before the faith is every put into play...

Where in your life to you need to have genuine faith??

Let's keep reading... **Verse 7** "Which one of you having a servant tending sheep or plowing will say to him when he comes in from the field, 'Come at once and sit down to eat'? **8** Instead, will he not tell him, 'Prepare something for me to eat, get ready, and serve me while I eat and drink; later you can eat and drink'? **9** Does he thank that servant because he did what was commanded? **10** In the same way, when you have done all that you were commanded, you should say, 'We are unworthy servants; we've only done our duty.' "

Last mark that Jesus holds up of a follower of Him...

Mark #4: A follower of Jesus has a servant's heart (v. 10)

Serving is not something you do every-once-and-awhile, it is a way of life...

It's not a thing you do, it is a heart position you have... And when you have it, it will lead to service...

And then you begin to have eyes to see and a heart that understands...

Jesus is the example of servant hood to the greatest degree- therefor what we do is simply expected as we embrace him and model him...

And we begin to understand that in light of His Kingship- obedience is just expected... this is hard, we want to create varsity level status- but Jesus is not impressed...

This also breaks down your pride

Do you understand the reality of this?

Is it evident by the way that you live your life that you are a servant of the King? Do people see a sense of loyalty and commitment to the King that supersedes anything else?

What are ways you're acting as a servant to others in the same way that Christ served us?

What are marks of obedience in your life?

Conclusion [VAMP]

Mark #1: A follower of Jesus guards against false teaching

Mark #2: A follower of Jesus forgives

Mark #3: A follower of Jesus has genuine Faith

Mark #4: A follower of Jesus has a servant's heart

Pray...