

Luke 17:1–19 Expository Bible Study

Historical Context

Luke 17 continues Jesus' journey toward Jerusalem (Luke 9:51–19:27). Jesus teaches His disciples about kingdom ethics: avoiding causing others to stumble, radical forgiveness, faith expressed in humble obedience, and grateful worship. Matthew Henry emphasizes that believers must guard both their own souls and the consciences of others. Craig Keener notes that these teachings prepare disciples for Kingdom ministry through humility rather than worldly power.

1. Luke 17:1–4 — Stumbling Blocks and Forgiveness

Jesus warns against causing little ones to stumble and commands continual forgiveness of the repentant. OT: Leviticus 19:17–18; Ezekiel 33; Proverbs 6:16–19. Matthew Henry highlights the seriousness of influencing others toward sin. Wiersbe observes that forgiveness reflects the Father's heart.

2. Luke 17:5–10 — Faith and Humble Service

The apostles ask for greater faith. Jesus answers that genuine faith—even like a mustard seed—is effective when exercised. He then teaches that servants obey without seeking applause. OT: Habakkuk 2:4; Zechariah 4:6. Sam Storms frequently emphasizes that faith trusts God's power rather than human ability; Keener notes the hyperbolic imagery points to God's limitless power.

3. Luke 17:11–19 — The Ten Lepers

Ten lepers cry for mercy. All are cleansed as they obey Jesus, but only the Samaritan returns to worship and give thanks. OT: Leviticus 13–14; 2 Kings 5 (Naaman); Psalm 103; Isaiah 35. Matthew Henry distinguishes physical healing from saving faith; Keener notes the Samaritan models true covenant gratitude.

Three Application Points

1. Guard others from stumbling by pursuing holiness, speaking truth in love, and practicing continual forgiveness.
2. Exercise the faith you already have through humble obedience rather than waiting for extraordinary experiences.
3. Don't merely receive God's gifts—return to worship the Giver with gratitude.

Discussion Questions

- Where might my actions become a stumbling block to someone else?
- What does Jesus teach about the relationship between faith and obedience?
- Why is the grateful Samaritan the true model disciple?

Christ-Centered Summary

Jesus reveals that Kingdom disciples are marked by holiness, forgiveness, humble faith, obedient service, and grateful worship. The Samaritan foreshadows the inclusion of the nations and reminds believers that salvation culminates in returning to Jesus in thankful worship.