

# Luke 17 - Guard Your Heart

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## Guard your heart

Proverbs 4:23 NIV Above all else, guard your heart, for ***everything you do flows from it.***

## An Unforgiving Heart

Luke 17:1-NIV Jesus said to his disciples: "**Things that cause people to stumble are bound to come**, but woe to anyone through whom they come. (2) ***It would be better for them to be thrown into the sea*** with a millstone tied around their neck than to cause one of these little ones to stumble. [KJV **It is impossible but that offences will come**]: (3) So watch yourselves. "If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them. (4) Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying 'I repent,' ***you must forgive them.***" (5) The apostles said to the Lord, "***Increase our faith!***" (6) He replied, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you. (7) "Suppose one of you has a servant plowing or looking after the sheep. Will he say to the servant when he comes in from the field, 'Come along now and sit down to eat'? (8) Won't he rather say, 'Prepare my supper, get yourself ready and wait on me while I eat and drink; after that you may eat and drink'? (9) Will he thank the servant because he did what he was told to do? (10) So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.'"

## Offenses are inevitable

- So **what is the wisdom Jesus gives** us regarding this?

## Jesus said, "Woe to anyone through whom they come" - this is for the offender

- It would be better for them to be thrown into the sea with a millstone
- Offense or Stumbling Block = GK Skandalon - the stick or snare that trips the trap

## Jesus said, "You must forgive them" - this is for the offended

### **Remember how great His forgiveness was of you**

- Colossians 3:12-15 NIV Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. (13) Bear with each other and **forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.** (14) And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

### **Remember there is a constant need of God's forgiveness**

- Matthew 6:14-15 NIV For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. (15) But **if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.**

## Jesus taught - this is our duty as servants of God

**Realize that forgiveness is a duty - so it is a DECISION - NOT a feeling (vs 10)**

### **Practical steps you can take to move toward forgiveness of others**

- Romans 12:14-21 NIV **Bless those who persecute you**; bless and do not curse. (15) Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. (16) Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. (17) **Do not repay anyone evil for evil.** Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. (18) If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. (19) **Do not take revenge**, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. (20) On the contrary: **"If your enemy is hungry, feed him**; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." (21) **Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.**
1. You speak well of the person
  2. Give up the "right" to get even
  3. Serve the person
  4. Do not remain passive -"overcome by evil" - take initiative "overcome evil with good"

## **An Ungrateful Heart**

(11) Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. (12) As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance (13) and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!" (14) When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed. (15) One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. (16) He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him--and he was a Samaritan. (17) Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? (18) Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?" (19) Then he said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."

1. The LORD notices our thankfulness or lack thereof
2. Guard against taking His goodness for granted
3. Guard against holding him hostage to our desires - they asked for pity - then forgot about him

### **Give thanks to the LORD - for HE is GOOD**

- Psalms 136:1 NIV Give thanks to the LORD, ***for he is good. His love endures forever.***

### **Let us never forget the good things the LORD has worked in our lives**

- Deuteronomy 6:10-12 NIV (10) When the LORD your God brings you into the land he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you--a land with large, flourishing cities you did not build, (11) houses filled with all kinds of good things you did not provide, wells you did not dig, and vineyards and olive groves you did not plant--then when you eat and are satisfied, (12) ***be careful that you do not forget the LORD,***

who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

## An Unperceiving Heart

(20) Once, on being **asked by the Pharisees** when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, "The coming of the kingdom of God is not something that can be observed, (21) nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is in your midst." (22) **Then he said to his disciples**, "The time is coming when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, but you will not see it. (23) People will tell you, 'There he is!' or 'Here he is!' Do not go running off after them. (24) For **the Son of Man in his day will be like the lightning**, which flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other. (25) But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.

### The Pharisees [seeing - not perceiving - hearing not understanding]

- They were looking for the kingdom to come (through Messiah as a military leader)
- Jesus was in their midst - and the kingdom is the rule of God within - but they failed to recognize that or acknowledge Him

Mat 13:14-15 NIV In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: "You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. 15 For this people's heart has become calloused; ...

### To the disciples - a time is coming when you will long to see one of the days of the son of man - but you will not see it

- First he must be rejected by this generation
- The disciples would face persecution and martyrdom - and would long to see him but wouldn't because he had gone to heaven
- There would be false Christs arise - "There he is" or "Here he is" - don't believe it, **when he comes** EVERYONE will see it (Rev 1:7 NIV he is coming...every eye will see him)

### Finally a warning to all - Will we fail to "see" or recognize the day of His coming?

(26) "Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man. (27) People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all. (28) "It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. (29) But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all. (30) "It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed. (31) On that day no one who is on the housetop, with possessions inside, should go down to get them. Likewise, no one in the field should go back for anything. (32) **Remember Lot's wife!** (33) Whoever tries to keep their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life will preserve it. (34) I tell you, on that night two people will be in one bed; one will be taken and the other left. (35) Two women will be grinding grain together; one will be taken and the other left." (37) "Where, Lord?" they asked. He replied, "Where there is a dead body, there the vultures will gather."

### **In the days of Noah and Lot - it was life as usual**

- Eating, drinking, marrying, buying, selling, planting, building
- But people were not spiritually perceptive - [frog in a kettle]
- **The righteous Lot's soul was vexed** ... His wife looked back ... He had to be dragged out of the city to be spared ... He had no influence with his sons-in-law
- **The lost heard Noah - a preacher of righteousness** - but no one paid attention

### The message is clear:

#### **The day of the LORD will come as a surprise...will we be ready?**

#### **It will be a worldwide event** - (remember every eye will see him)

- 2 in bed - the night-time part of the globe
- 2 in the field - the day-time part of the globe

#### **There will be a separation of people - some taken some left**

#### **Where Lord?**

Where there is a dead body is vultures will gather - you can tell by the sign

- You don't need to "see" the carcass to know there is one. The vultures are a sign which point the way. It may simply mean "look for the signs"
- Similar to the saying, "you can tell the weather by the color of the sky - why can't you discern the times?"

#### **Will I be ready?**

- Luke 21:34-36 NIV "Be careful, **or your hearts will be weighed down** with carousing, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you suddenly like a trap. (35) For it will come on all those who live on the face of the whole earth. (36) Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man."