

Do you have the faith?



Parables of Jesus—Service

Faith and Duty

How Is Your Attitude?

Our 'attitude' represents what we believe about a person, place, thing or event. Attitudes are judgments.

In this passage Jesus teaches about four attitudes within the believing community, the Church.

Introduction: This passage contains four parts: a warning, instruction, exhortation and a parable about service. Each concerns some aspect of our attitudes as disciples, a topic Jesus highlights as he draws closer to Jerusalem.

A. The Warning—Offending Others 17:1-3a

1. It is impossible to NOT offend other people.
2. However, the word 'offenses' [skandalon] is more than a scandal; this refers to enticement to sin leading to apostasy.
3. The little ones are God's special objects of His care—you and I.

B. The Instruction—Forgiving Others 17:3b-4

1. Equally important (to not offending others) is to forgive others.
2. Sin is to be rebuked—but the sinner's repentance should produce the church's forgiveness.
3. Accountability for keeping relationships working comes from those involved in the events.
4. 'Seven times a day,' is figurative for as many times as a person repents—we should forgive them.

C. The Exhortation—Speaking Faith 17:5-6

1. Here the apostles had a hard time grasping the concept of 'forgiveness' and ask that Jesus would increase their faith.
2. In Mark 9 a father asks Jesus to increase his faith for healing and in Matt 17 rebukes the disciples unbelief and uses the mustard seed illustration.
3. It takes faith to believe in healing and faith to believe in forgiveness.
4. The key here is NOT the quantity of faith—but the presence of faith. Great faith was not required—simple mustard seed faith.
5. "Say to the mulberry tree,' continues the figure of the mustard seed to mean we can 'speak' in faith—forgiveness.

D. The Parable—Serving God 17:7-10

1. Does this parable seem harsh to you?
2. The key here is that 'obedience' is NOT a matter of merit (though God does honor it), but of duty.
3. We do not have the right to pick and choose what to obey.
4. Our Attitude: A servant [doulos] serves with no strings attached and without a 'reward' expectation.
5. God's Attitude: *Luke 12:37* Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them.

*Through **FAITH** God gives us the capacity [grace] to NOT offend others, to forgive others, and to serve God.*

Luke 17:1-10

:1 Then He said to the disciples, "It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do 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 should offend one of these little ones.

:3 Take heed to yourselves.

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If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.

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

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

:6 So the Lord said, "If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.

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:7 And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come at once and sit down to eat'?

:8 But will he not rather say to him, 'Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink'?

:9 Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not.

:10 So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable [unworthy] servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'"