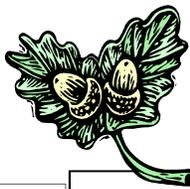


May 01, 2016



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks
Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:
Great faith is often built during great trials

POEM FOR THE WEEK:
O for a faith that will not shrink
Though pressed by every foe,
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe. —Bathurst

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:
Then the Lord said to Satan, Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil. And he still maintains his integrity, though you incited me against him to ruin him without any reason
(Job 2:3 NIV)
(from "Our Daily Bread", Aug 25, 2000)

Series: The Gift of Faith

UNIT: Fullness of Faith

NEXT WEEK

Grateful Faith
(Luke 17:11-19)

Increasing Faith

Luke 17:1-10

Aim and Application of the Lesson

The lesson helps us realize that our confidence in God should result in **Increasing Faith** as we mature as Christians. The **study's aim** is to understand that we increase in faith as we put total confidence in God's promises. The **study's application** is to increase our confidence in God in areas where we harbor doubts.

(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

Lesson Introduction and Background

In Luke 17, Jesus was on his final journey to Jerusalem and the cross that awaited him there. The trip narrative begins in Luke 9:51 and ends with the triumphal entry in chapter 19. Many teaching opportunities are recorded in this section of 10-plus chapters. Sometimes Jesus was teaching the crowds, sometimes just his 12 disciples. Today's lesson falls in the second category. This lesson focuses on the topics of forgiveness and faith. Forgiveness in particular was a much studied and discussed issue for the Jewish people of Jesus' day. Their Scriptures (our Old Testament) taught them about the necessity of asking and receiving God's forgiveness (see Psalms 32:1, 2; 79:9). The Scriptures also spoke to forgiveness between people, seen as both necessary and wise (see Proverbs 17:9). The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) was a national holy day that addressed the forgiveness of the people for another year as the high priest offered the specified sacrifices (Leviticus 16). Yet just as the relationship of the people to the Lord had been complicated by many rituals and regulations, so too had the process of forgiving others. Rather than letting forgiveness occur naturally as a loving act between people, some wanted to define its terms and limit its frequency. Thus, the act of grace that forgiveness was to represent had become something much less gracious: a response to certain criteria (conditions) that had to be met. In short, forgiveness for the Jews of Jesus' day had to be earned. Jesus taught that a world without forgiveness was a cruel and cold place. By the time of today's lesson, he had taught his disciples to pray for forgiveness from God as they forgave others (Matthew 6:12, 14, 15). But there was more yet for them to learn on this topic.

Have you ever wanted to "get even" with someone? If we are offended or mistreated, we may believe we have a right to retaliate, thus evening the score. There is a sense of entitlement here, a belief that bad behavior toward us gives us a right to pay back. Of course, if we really want to stand up for ourselves, our response will be a little greater, thereby "teaching a lesson" to our tormentor. We don't just get even; we must win. Lest we think the above is simply the schoolyard attitude of childhood, we should look at what happens in many workplaces. Petty grudges are held for years. Certain coworkers are feared or loathed because they will let no offense, no matter how tiny or unintentional, go by without a negative reaction. Such behavior can be found all the more in the online world of social media, where face-to-face behavioral etiquette doesn't seem to apply. At the core of all this is the belief that life should be fair and that we are both (1) the judges of what is fair treatment and (2) enforcers of punishment on those who step over the lines—our lines. We think ourselves to be justified in keeping behavioral scorecards in our relationships. Such score keeping can be found in extended families, marriages, and churches. It should not be. In this lesson, Jesus addresses the dynamics of relationship offenses. His solid, practical principles that applied to his disciples in the first century AD are vital yet today. These begin with an understanding of our place in the arena of relationships. This helps us see ourselves as people of faith whose service to God is far more important than keeping score with other people.

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

FAITH AND FORGIVENESS (LUKE 17:1-4)

Faith does not keep us from sin (1)

Does not keep us from sin because all have sinned (Rom 3:23)

Does not keep us from sin because no one is righteous (Eccl 7:20)

Does not keep us from sin because we cannot claim to be without sin (1 John 1:8-10)

Faith does not remove consequences of sin (2)

Because the consequence of sin is death (Rom 6:23)

Because the consequence of disobedience is punishment (Heb 2:2)

Because of the consequence of God's discipline (Heb 12:6)

Faith promotes forgiving one another (3)

Forgiving grievances (Col 3:13)

Forgiving using kindness and compassion (Eph 4:32)

Forgiving offences (Prov 19:11)

Faith requires no limit to forgiveness (4)

No limits because of love (1 Cor 13:4-8)

No limits because of wanting to win a brother back (Matt 18:15)

No limits because not judging or condemning (Luke 6:37)

FAITH AND EFFORT (LUKE 17:5-6)

Faith comes from God (5)

Faith comes from God in measures (Rom 12:3)

Faith comes from God through the manifestation of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 12:7-9)

Faith comes from God through maturing toward the fullness of Jesus (Eph 4:13)

Faith is trusting in God's power (6)

Trusting in God's power through God's justification (Rom 4:5)

Trusting in God's power through God's grace (2 Cor 12:9-11)

Trusting in God's power that works within us (Eph 3:20)

Trusting in God's power that shields us (1 Peter 1:5)

FAITH AND DUTY (LUKE 17:7-10)

Faith desires assigned duties (7-8)

Desiring duties through hardships (2 Tim 4:5)

Desiring duties voluntarily (1 Cor 9:17)

Desiring duties by offering ourselves as living sacrifices (Rom 12:1)

Faith knows our competence comes from God (9)

Competence can only come from God (2 Cor 3:5)

Competence because of God working in us (Phil 2:13)

Competence using God's strength (Phil 4:13)

Faith promotes humble service (10)

Humble service doing the work of the Lord (1 Cor 15:58)

Humble service doing what God has assigned (Heb 6:10)

Humble service doing God's will (Heb 10:36)

Humble service doing good works (Eph 2:10)