

Lesson 20 - Luke 17:1 – 18:14

Sin, Faith and Duty, Ten Lepers Healed, The Coming of the Kingdom of God, The Persistent Widow

1. Read Luke 17:1-4 and Hebrews 4:14-15.

What does Jesus understand about human nature and sin?

What should we do if we know someone who has fallen into sin?

Reflection: Do you find it difficult to constantly forgive someone who offends us?

Luke 17:1-4 He said to his disciples, "Things that cause sin will inevitably occur, but woe to the person through whom they occur. ² It would be better for him if a millstone were put around his neck and he be thrown into the sea than for him to cause one of these little ones to sin. ³ Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. ⁴ And if he wrongs you seven times in one day and returns to you seven times saying, 'I am sorry,' you should forgive him."

Hebrews 4:14-15 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin.

2. Read Luke 17:5-6, Matthew 17:19-20 and Catechism of Catholic Church #162.

Reflection: What is it about our culture that makes faith so difficult at times?

How *can* we increase our faith?

Luke 17:5-6 And the apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith." ⁶ The Lord replied, "If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you would say to [this] mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.

Matthew 17:19-20 Then the disciples approached Jesus in private and said, "Why could we not drive it out?" ²⁰ He said to them, "Because of your little faith. Amen, I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.

CCC 162 Faith is an entirely free gift that God makes to man. We can lose this priceless gift, as St. Paul indicated to St. Timothy: "Wage the good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting conscience, certain persons have made shipwreck of their faith." To live, grow and persevere in the faith until the ***end we must nourish it with the word of God; we must beg the Lord to increase our faith; it must be "working through charity," abounding in hope, and rooted in the faith of the Church.***

3. Read Luke 17:7-10. As an analogy, the Master is God, and the servants are the disciples or servants of God (which would include priests and Pharisees).

What is the proper attitude of a servant of God? Does doing one's job as a servant of God, make them entitled to special treatment or rewards?

Luke 17:7-10 "Suppose one of you has a servant plowing or looking after the sheep. And suppose the servant came in from the field. Will you say to him, 'Come along now and sit down to eat'? ⁸ No. Instead, you will say, '**Prepare my supper. Get yourself ready. Wait on me while I eat and drink.** Then after that you can eat and drink.' ⁹ Will you thank the servant because he did what he was told to do? ¹⁰ It's the same with you. Suppose you have done everything you were told to do. Then you should say, 'We are not worthy to serve you. We have only done our duty.'"

4. Read Luke 17:11-19 and footnotes.

Why did Jesus send the men to the priests?

Reflection: Why did only the Samaritan return to give thanks, what happened to the other 9?

Luke 17:11-19 Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. He traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. ¹² As he was going into a village, ten men met him. They had a skin disease. They were standing close by. ¹³ And they called out in a loud voice, "Jesus! Master! Have pity on us!" ¹⁴ Jesus saw them and said, "Go. Show yourselves to the priests." While they were on the way, they were healed. ¹⁵ When one of them saw that he was healed, he came back. He praised God in a loud voice. ¹⁶ He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him. The man was a Samaritan. ¹⁷ Jesus asked, "Weren't all ten healed? Where are the other nine? ¹⁸ Didn't anyone else return and give praise to God except this outsider?" ¹⁹ Then Jesus said to him, "Get up and go. Your faith has healed you."

5. Read Luke 17:20-37 and footnotes.

Where is the Kingdom of God according to v. 21?

To what natural phenomenon does Jesus compare the Son of Man? (v. 24)

What are we to learn from the wife of Lot? (v. 32)

6. Read Luke 18:1-8. This parable follows the discourse on the end times.

What is Jesus' advice to his disciples, what are they to do to prepare for the coming of the Son of Man?

Luke 18:1-8 Then he told them a parable about the necessity for them to pray always without becoming weary. He said, ² "There was a judge in a certain town who neither feared God nor respected any human being. ³ And a widow in that town used to come to him and say, 'Render a just decision for me against my adversary.' ⁴ For a long time the judge was unwilling, but eventually he thought, 'While it is true that I neither fear God nor respect any human being, ⁵ because this widow keeps bothering me I shall deliver a just decision for her lest she finally come and strike me.'" ⁶ The Lord said, "Pay attention to what the dishonest judge says. ⁷ Will not God then secure the rights of his chosen ones who call out to him day and night? Will he be slow to answer them? ⁸ I tell you, he will see to it that justice is done for them speedily. But when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

7. Read Luke 18:9-14 and 1 Peter 5:5. Where did the Pharisee stand in relation to others? What does he say about all of those who are around him? Where is the tax collector standing? What does the tax collector ask for? What does Jesus say about those who exalt themselves?

Luke 18:9-14 He then addressed this parable to those who were convinced of their own righteousness and despised everyone else. ¹⁰ "Two people went up to the temple area to pray; one was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee took up his position and spoke this prayer to himself, 'O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity—greedy, dishonest, adulterous—or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week, and I pay tithes on my whole income.' ¹³ But the tax collector stood off at a distance and would not even raise his eyes to heaven but beat his breast and prayed, 'O God, be merciful to me a sinner.' ¹⁴ I tell you, the latter went home justified, not the former; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted."