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## Rice Memorial MBC

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## Increasing Faith

Definitions in **bold letters** are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance  
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or Roget's Thesaurus – **May 1, 2016**

## Luke 17:1-10

**Introduction:** Some people believe faith is increased by “believing God” for a pair of socks. Then when he grants that, now we have the faith to believe him for a pair of shoes. From there, it's believed we now have the faith to believe him for clothes, then a car, and so forth, until finally ONE DAY, our faith has increased to the point where we can believe God to solve whatever problem that comes our way!

And then there are those that believe, and teach, IF we want God to increase our faith”, just simply PRAY to him, and ASK him to give us more faith! Well, without the help of the Holy Spirit to lead us and reveal the scriptures that tell us how God does increase faith, PRAYING for it to happen does SEEM logical. As it is, none of those ways is how God increases our faith. But, Jesus uses the perfect parable to reveal the SECRET to how our faith is “INCREASED.”

**Luke 17:1**, Then said he unto the **disciples**, It is **impossible** but that **OFFENCES WILL come:** but **WOE** unto him, through whom they come!

**Offences defined 4625. skandalon pronounced skan'-dal-on ("scandal;" probably from a derivative of 2578; a trap-stick (bent sapling), i.e. SNARE (figuratively, CAUSE of displeasure or SIN):-- occasion to FALL (of stumbling), stumblingblock.**

**Thought 1.** First, let's look at WHY it's impossible that “offences WILL come.” The bottom line for the cause is either NO FEAR (reverence) for God, or improper reverence for him. No reverence is speaking of the WORLD. God's people have reverence for him, which is how they came to be “OF him.” This was true in the past, before Jesus died, and it's also true after he rose from the dead.

When we look at the definitions of “offences”, and the punishment that Jesus said would be upon those who cause the “FALL” or stumbling of a person, he's speaking about their “FAITH” in God, which will affect the salvation of their souls!

**Psalms 36:1**, The transgression of the **WICKED** saith within my heart (MIND), that there is **NO FEAR** of God **before** his eyes.

**Matthew 8:7**, Woe unto the **WORLD** because of **offences (CAUSE of displeasure or SIN):-- occasion to FALL, stumblingblock!** for it **must needs (necessary [UNAVOIDABLE]) be (also)** that offences come; but WOE to that man by whom the **offence (occasion to FALL)** cometh!

**John 15:18-21**, If the **WORLD** hate you, ye know it **hated** me **before** it **hated** you. If ye were OF the **world**, the **world** would love his own: but because ye are not of the **world**, but I have chosen you out of the **world**, therefore (*for this reason*) the **world** hateth you. **Remember** the word that I said unto you, The servant is

not greater than his lord. If (since) they have **PERSECUTED** me, they **WILL** also **PERSECUTE** you... But ALL these things will they do unto you for my **name's** sake, because they **know NOT** him that **sent me**.

**Persecute defined 1377, to PURSUE (lit. or fig.).**

Persecute, 1. to pursue in a manner to injure, vex or afflict; to harass with unjust punishment or penalties for supposed offenses; 2. to afflict, harass, or destroy (KILL) for adherence to a particular creed (belief) or system of religious principles...

**John 16:1**, These things have I spoken unto you, that YE should not be **OFFENDED (fig. STUMBLE [tran.] or entice to sin, APOSTASY [a total desertion, or departure from one's FAITH])**.

**Luke 8:13**, They on the **rock** are they, which, when they hear, **receive** the word with joy; and these have no root, which **for a WHILE BELIEVE**, and in time of **temptation (experience of evil) fall away (desert (leave permanently), DEPART)**.

**2 Timothy 2:15-18**, Study to shew thyself approved **unto God**, a workman that needeth not to be **ashamed**, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a **canker (ulcer ("gangrene"))**: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the **TRUTH** have **ERRED**, saying that the resurrection is past already; and **OVERTHROW the FAITH of SOME**.

**James 3:1-3**, My brethren, be not many **masters (instructor: teacher)**, knowing that WE shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we **OFFEND** all. If any **man** offend **not in word (something SAID including the thought, doctrine)**, the same is a **PERFECT** man, and able also to **bridle (to curb [to restrain, to guide])** the whole body.

**Luke 17:2**, *It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should OFFEND (entice to sin, APOSTASY [a total desertion, or departure from one's FAITH]) one of these little ones.*

**NOTE:** (This commentary is from Mark 9: 42 where Jesus these same words) **it is better for him that a mill stone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea; and drowned there:** the allusion is to the drowning of malefactors (one subject to public prosecution and punishment; a criminal), by tying a stone, or any heavy thing about their necks, and casting them into the sea. Casaubon, and others, have shown out of Heathen writers, that this has been a practice of some nations, particularly the Grecians...  
(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/mark-9.html>)

**Luke 17:3**, **Take heed** to yourselves: *If thy brother trespass against thee, REBUKE him; and if he REPENT, FORGIVE him.*

**Rebuke defined 2008, i.e. censure** (to FIND fault with and condemn [PROVE to be guilty] as wrong) **or admonish** [to advise somebody to do or, more often, not to do something].

**Thought 1.** Notice, rebuke means to "PROVE" the person is wrong. As we know, this is done by the correct use of God's word, which when honestly looked at not only confirms the action as wrong, but also, enlightens the MIND to grow up the person in this area so that, out reverence for God, they will lay it aside, changing their ways.

**Proverbs 16:6**, By **MERCY (good deed, lovingkindness, pity)** and **TRUTH iniquity** is **PURGED:** and by the **FEAR** of the LORD men **DEPART** from evil.

**Thought 2.** Notice it takes “mercy” and “truth” to purge iniquity. Some people show mercy, and don’t give the “truth”, and then some do the opposite.

**NOTE: Take heed to yourselves.....** Take heed to your spirits, to your doctrines, walk, and conversation, that you give no offence to any, that you are not stumbled by what you shall see in, and meet with from others: **if thy brother trespass against thee;** See Gill on Matthew 18:15.

**Matthew 18:15-18,** Moreover if **thy brother** shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast **gained** thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, **Whatsoever (who)** ye shall **bind** (to **RESTRAIN** [restrict]) shall be **bound** in heaven: and **whatsoever (who)** ye shall **loose (unloose)** [unbind, to remit {pardon}; absolve {release from penalty}] on earth shall be **loosed** in heaven.

**Thought 3.** 1 Cor. 5, agrees with Matt.18 about when to “bind RESTRAIN” from fellowship Christians for certain SINS until they repent.

**1 Corinthians 5:12-13,** For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye JUDGE them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore **PUT AWAY (remove)** from among yourselves that **WICKED person.**

**rebuke him;** privately, and proceed according to the rules there directed to; lay his sin before him; endeavour not only to convince him of the fact, but of the evil of it; how contrary to the will of God; how unbecoming the Gospel of Christ, and the profession he makes; how hurtful to himself, as well as injurious to his brother; and how such evils give the enemy occasion to reproach the saints, to speak evil of the ways of God, and blaspheme the name and doctrines of Christ, and harden sinners in their sins, as well as stumble **weak Christians,** and **sadden the hearts** of the **righteous.**

**And if he REPENT;** if he is made sensible of his evil, and is truly SORRY for it, and ingenuously (an ingenuous (sincere) manner; openly) acknowledges it: **FORGIVE** him... (Source: <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/geb/luke-17.html>)

**REPENT defined 3340, to THINK differently or afterwards, i.e. reconsider (morally, FEEL COMPUNCTION).**

Compunction, the pain of SORROW or regret for having offended God, and incurred his wrath; the sting of conscience proceeding from a conviction (state of being convinced) of having violated a moral DUTY.

**Thought 4.** The SORROW being spoken of here is a “godly sorrow.”

**2 Corinthians 7:9-10,** Now I rejoice, NOT that ye were made **SORRY**, but that ye **sorrowed** to **repentance:** for ye were made SORRY after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly **sorrow** worketh **REPENTANCE** to salvation not to be repented of: but the **sorrow** of the world worketh **DEATH.**

REPENTANCE, n. **1.** In theology, the PAIN, regret or affliction which a person feels on account of his past conduct, because it exposes him to punishment. This sorrow proceeding merely from the FEAR of punishment, is called legal repentance, as being excited the terrors of legal penalties, and it may exist WITHOUT an amendment (change) of life.

**2.** sorrow or deep CONTRITION for sin, as an offense and dishonor to God, a

violation of his holy law, and the basest ingratitude towards a Being of infinite benevolence. This is called evangelical repentance, and IS accompanied and followed BY amendment (change for the BETTER) of life.

Contrition, the state of being contrite (HUMBLE); HUMBLE penitence (pain; SORROW or GRIEF of heart for sins or offenses).

**FORGIVE defined 863, send forth, in various applications (as follow): remit (Pardon,** to give back or away. Guilt implies a being bound or subjected to censure, penalty, or punishment. To pardon, is to GIVE UP this obligation, and RELEASE the offender. We pardon the offender, when we release or absolve him from his liability [responsibility, exposure] to SUFFER punishment.).

FORGIVE, **1.** to cease to FEEL resentment against on account of a wrong committed: **2.** to GIVE UP **RESENTMENT** of or claim to requital for (an offense or wrong). Resentment, a FEELING of indignant displeasure because of something REGARDED (look at) as a wrong, INSULT, or other INJURY. Indignant, filled with indignation (typically intense deep-felt resentment or ANGER aroused by annoyance at or displeasure with or scorn (**DISDAIN** [feeling of disrespect and FEELING of a strong drawing back or away]) over something that actually IS or FELT to be UNJUST or unworthy or MEAN.

**Thought 5.** When we forgive, we won't FEEL resentment, anger or have a desire to withdraw. If we have any of these in our MIND, then, we have not forgiven yet.

**Luke 17:4,** And if he **trespass** against thee **SEVEN** times in a day, and **SEVEN** times in a day turn again to thee, saying, **I repent;** thou shalt **FORGIVE him.**

**NOTE:** ...trespass against thee seven times in a day,... For good men are frequently apt to fall into sin, and offend both God and man; see Proverbs 24:16 "and **seven times** in a day turn again to thee, saying, **I repent**"; as often as he sins, and appears to be truly sensible of it, and **HUMBLE** for it, and makes acknowledgments of it; and not only barely in words professes his concern for it, but there is **reason to believe** that he is **heartily grieved** for it, and to hope that he will **behave better** for the future: **thou shalt forgive him;** this seems to be occasioned by Peter's putting such a question to Christ, how often a brother might sin against him, and he forgive him; see Matthew 18:21. (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/luke-17.html>)

**Matthew 18:21-35,** Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother SIN against me, and I **FORGIVE** him? till SEVEN times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until **seven** times: but, Until **SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN.** Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of **HIS servants.** And when he had begun to reckon, ONE was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, **have patience** with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with **compassion,** and loosed him, and **forgave him the debt.** But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, **Have patience** with me, and I will pay thee all. And **he would not:** but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very **sorry,** and came and told unto their **lord** all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, **I FORGAVE thee** all that debt, because thou desiredst

me: **Shouldest** not thou also have had **compassion** on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father **DO** also unto you, **IF YE** from your hearts **forgive not** every one his **brother** their trespasses.

**Ephesians 4:32** ...be ye **KIND** one to another, tender-hearted, **FORGIVING** one another, even AS God for Christ's sake hath **FORGIVEN** you.

**Luke 17:5**, And the **apostles** said unto the Lord, **INCREASE** our **FAITH**.

**NOTE:** This work of pardoning every offense of every man, and that continually, seemed so difficult, even to the disciples themselves, that they saw, without an extraordinary **degree of faith**, they should never be able to keep this command.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/acc/luke-17.html>)

**Thought 1.** As we know, they're referring to an increase of "FAITH" IN God.

**Mark 11:21-22**, And Peter calling to remembrance saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig tree which thou **cursedst** is withered away.

And Jesus answering saith unto them, **Have FAITH IN God.**

**Luke 17:6**, And the Lord said, *If ye **had faith AS a grain of mustard seed**, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should **obey you.***

**Thought 1.** The teaching point we need to SEE is even though the mustard seed is small, the smallest of all seeds, it keeps WORKING to achieve the goal that God has assigned it. It does this with his help, through the laws of nature in force, until it becomes a great tree, under whose shadow, the birds lodge. The fact this is "God's WILL" must not be overlooked. The faith we have in God, is based on his will revealed by HIS word spoken, written, or revealed by his Spirit in a vision. What's from God will never contradict his written word.

**Mark 4:30-32**, And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it? **It is LIKE a grain of mustard seed**, which, when it is **sown** in the earth, **is less** than all the seeds that be in the earth: But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may **lodge** under the shadow of it.

**Luke 17:7-9**, *But which of you, having a **servant** plowing or feeding cattle, **will say** unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? And will **not rather say** unto him, **Make ready** wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he **thank** that **servant** because **he DID** the things that were **commanded** him? I trow (**think**) not.*

**NOTE:** It is never supposed that the **master** waits on the **servant** - the **servant** is bound to wait on his **master**, and to do every thing for him to the uttermost of his power: nor does the former expect thanks for it, for he is **bound** by **his agreement** to act thus, because of the stipulated reward, which is considered as being equal in value to all the service that he can perform.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/acc/luke-17.html>)

**Thought 1.** That servant came in TIRED, and worn out from working in the FIELD. But, regardless, he obeys because of reverence! The only thing that matters, or is looked at IS what he was COMMANDED to DO. What's the SECRET to his obedience? Reverence!

And his disciples would've DONE exactly what Jesus said in this parable. So, as some folk say "flip the script." When we UNDERSTAND the FEAR (reverence) of the Lord, it's

EASY to obey him, because it makes us “lean to his will” and “UNWILLING” to offend him.

**Fear defined 3374, reverence** (1. deep RESPECT and esteem (HIGH VALUE) mingled with **FEAR** and affection (LOVE). 2. The FEAR acceptable to God, is a filial [CHILD in relation to his parents] fear, an awful reverence of the divine nature, proceeding FROM a just esteem [high value] of his PERFECTIONS [infinite POWER, holiness, justice, benevolence and wisdom], which produces IN us an inclination (LEANING of the MIND or WILL) TO his service and an UNWILLINGNESS to offend him.).

**Thought 2.** The product of the “reverence” we have for God is a strong confidence (trust [faith])... This why the centurion, in Luke 7, had GREAT FAITH for his servant to be healed. He “understood reverence” for God, the HIGHEST AUTHORITY in existence.

**Psalm 111:10**, The fear (**reverence**) of the Lord (**Yahweh**) is the **beginning** of wisdom: a **good understanding** have ALL they that **DO** his commandments...

**Proverbs 14:2**, He that walketh in his UPRIGHTNESS, **FEARETH** (reverence) the Lord: but he that is **perverse (to turn aside)** in his ways **DESPISETH** him.

**Despiseth defined 959, to disesteem** (to slight [to neglect: 1. to omit by carelessness or DESIGN {a scheme or plan in the mind} 2. to forbear {stop, **PAUSE**, refuse} to treat with attention or **RESPECT** ]).

**Proverbs 14:26**, In the **FEAR (reverence)** of the Lord (**Yahweh**) is **strong confidence (trust [FAITH])**...

**Luke 7:8-9**, For I **ALSO** am a man **SET under authority**, having **under me soldiers**, and I SAY unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When **Jesus HEARD these things, he marveled** (wonder [affected with surprise or admiration; be amazed]) at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, **I have NOT found so GREAT FAITH, NO, NOT in ISRAEL.**

**Luke 17:10**, So **LIKEWISE** ye, when ye shall **have DONE ALL** those things which are **COMMANDED** you, say, We are **unprofitable** (producing no improvement or advantage) **servants: we have DONE** that which was **our duty to DO.**

**NOTE:** This text has often been produced to prove that no man can live without committing sin against God. But let it be observed, the text says **unprofitable servants, NOT sinful servants**. If this text could be fairly construed to countenance sinful imperfection, it would be easy to demonstrate that there is not one of the spirits of **just men made perfect**, in paradise, nor a ministering angel at the throne of God, but is sinfully imperfect: for none of these can work righteousness, in the smallest degree, beyond those powers which God has given them; and justice and equity require that they should exert those powers to the uttermost in the **service of their Maker**; and, after having acted thus, it may be justly said, They have done only what it was their duty to do. The nature of God is illimitable, and all the **attributes** of that nature are infinitely glorious: they cannot be lessened by the transgressions of his creatures, nor can they be increased by the uninterrupted, **eternal obedience**, and unceasing hallelujahs, of all the intelligent creatures that people the whole vortex of nature. When ages, beyond the power of arithmetic to sum up, have elapsed, it may be said of the most **pure** and **perfect** creatures, "Ye are unprofitable servants." Ye have derived your being from the infinite fountain of life: **ye are upheld** by the **continued energy of the Almighty**: his glories are infinite and eternal, and your obedience and services, however excellent in themselves, and **PROFITABLE TO YOU**, have **added nothing**, and **CAN add nothing**, to the absolute **excellences** and **glories** of your God.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/acc/luke-17.html>)