

I. Offense and Faith

- A. Then He Said (vs. 1) - Jesus had been teaching the disciples about avoiding what this fallen age esteems highly, but which is folly or even evil in the eyes of God. Namely, the wrong priorities and wrong view of wealth. By pursuing wealth hypocritically, the Pharisees had turned many of their fellow Jews away from the values of the Kingdom and of the heart of God. Jesus now warned the disciples of these types of offenses...
1. Offenses (vs. 1) - The original Greek word translated “offenses” speaks of a crooked stick or a spring on a trap that causes an individual to fall or be caught. In the immediate context to this passage, the “offense” is the wrong priorities and beliefs about wealth which cause people to be trapped or stumble into ungodly thinking and practices that lead them away from the Lord's heart and ways. (Mt. 16:23; Rom. 9:33, 14:13, 16:17; 1 Cor. 1:23)
- B. Woe to him through whom they come (vs. 1)- Jesus gives a very graphic and clear warning to those who would teach or disciple someone else, and then do an offensive thing which leads that person away from the truth. He tells His disciples that it would be better for them, or more bearable for them, to experience their own personal suffering and death than to be responsible for the suffering and death of others.
- C. Therefore take heed to yourselves (vs. 3) - The context of the “yourselves” here is not introspection but rather extrospection. We are to examine one another and hold one another accountable in a spirit of gentleness and love because we are all very susceptible of causing each other to stumble. We are to watch out for one another in this way.
- D. If your brother sins against you rebuke him (vs. 3) - If your brother (in Christ) holds or walks out a wrong or anti-kingdom aspect in their life, we are to call it out or “rebuke” them in love. Why? Because we love them and we don’t want them to feel the shame and guilt of causing others to stumble. (Eph. 4:2-15; Gal. 6:1-5)
- E. Repents Seven Times in One Day (vs. 4) - This indicates that we are not permitted to judge another’s repentance nor ever withhold forgiveness from the repentant, even if they have offended multiple times. If someone had sinned against me seven times in a day, and kept asking me to forgive them, I might think that they

were not really sincere. Yet Jesus commands me to still forgive them and restore them. Why? Because this is the way God is and how He loves and we are to imitate Him.

- F. Increase our Faith (vs. 5) - The disciples immediately recognize the need for supernatural power to be aware of offenses, and even more so, to continually forgive those who have caused them or others to stumble. Jesus gives them so much hope and encouragement by telling them that the beginning of this faith “seed” is understanding the forgiveness and love of God and that's all that's needed to forgive like God forgives. Its from this basic “seed” or foundation that the rest of our faith grows.
- G. Say to yourselves we have done what is our duty to do (vs. 10) - In this word picture of the servant who does that which he is hired to do, the idea is that it's not exceptional love to forgive our brother, but rather, reasonable love in light of God's forgiveness and love for us. (Mat. 18:21-35; Lk. 7:39-47; Jhn. 3:14-17)

“No duty required of men and women more grates upon flesh and blood than this of continually forgiving those who cause us pain, there is nothing that most of people find harder to put in practice; so as indeed where there is not a root of faith, this fruit will not be found.” (Poole)

II. Ten Lepers

- A. As has we have seen so many times before in Luke's gospel, Jesus will now walk out in real time and real life the principle which He just focused upon. He purposely walks into Samaria (the despised and wicked people in the eyes of the Jews) and to a community of lepers (a despised and wicked disease in the eyes of all) and heals ten lepers freely by, and through, His love, grace, and power.
- B. When he saw he had been healed (vs. 15)- This is the key idea of this story. There was a realization this leper had that caused him to turn around in thankfulness. This is the idea behind the faith it takes to forgive our brother who has wronged us. Do we see that we have been forgiven? Do we realize the depths of the mercy we have received? Jesus tells us that we do not if we are unable to forgive our neighbor.
- C. Were there not ten? How is it that only you gave thanks? (vs. 17)- Jesus is in awe that that there was only one who reasonably responded to the miracle that happened to him and took time to give thanks and glorify God. This should be a warning to us, at our propensity of pride, to not recognize both the depths of our

sickness and disease at the heart level, and how much we have been healed and forgiven. (Is. 1:18; Eze. 36:25-31; Pauls Progression (1 Cor. 15:9; Eph. 3:8; 1 Tim. 1:15))

“Growing saints think themselves nothing; full-grown saints think themselves less than nothing.” (Spurgeon)

III. The Coming Kingdom

- A. I believe Jesus now shows the Pharisees and the disciples another “offense or stumbling block” that is causing people to be confused about Jesus and what He is doing. The Pharisees were looking for the worldwide physical signs of the Messiah’s coming that the prophets spoke of (example: moon turning to blood etc.). Jesus begins to explain to them that the initial and most important work of the Messiah will be to transform and make new the internal conditions of humanity before the external conditions of the fallen age.
- B. The Kingdom of God is not Coming with Outward Signs (vs. 20) - It is of significant note that the verb “coming” is used in the present tense, not in the future tense. In others words, He is saying that the aspects of the Kingdom of God that He was currently establishing were unseen and internal. His current mission was to bring about the realities of the promised new covenant which dealt exclusively with the internal issues of the fall. We must understand that when Jesus returns, He will judge all sin and bring world-wide justice and righteousness through force (dash the nations to pieces with a rod of iron). Before He does this, He brings about a way for the entire world to be forgiven and conformed internally to His righteousness and justice. (Ez. 36:24-36; Jhn. 3:1-16)
- C. The days will come When you Will Long to see the Son of Man (vs. 22) - Jesus makes a very important distinction between the current day and the “days of the Son of Man”. In order to understand the difference we must look to the context of the prophecy concerning the Son of Man (Dan. 7:13-14, 1-28). The days will come when we will long for His coming on the clouds and establishing His righteous rule over the entire earth. Those days will come with great physical signs.
- D. For as Lightning Flashes and Shines Across the sky so will His Coming Be (vs. 24) - Jesus tells the disciples that they do not need to worry about missing the coming of the Son of Man. In fact, the entire world will not miss it, just like no one can miss the brightness and sound of lightning on a dark night when they are

standing outside. In fact, this description of lightning flashing across the sky is exactly in line with what the rest of the prophetic scriptures say about what it will be like when He comes. (Is. 13:10; Mat. 24:29-30; 1 Thes. 4:16-17, 2 Thes. 2:8; Rev. 1:7, 8:12-13, 16:10-11, 19:11-14)

- E. Just as it happened in the days of Noah, so also in the days of the Son of Man (vs. 26) - In the days of Noah the judgment of God came upon them suddenly because they were not ready, nor did they heed the signs of the times and the prophetic warnings given to them. The earth was filled with wickedness and sin had risen to heights unimaginable. However, the people were doing life as if nothing was wrong; they were not ready for the days of judgment that were about to be upon them. They were warned over and over, but only one man and his family responded rightly and made it through the days of judgment because he, Noah, had been living a watchful and ready life, preparing for the difficulty of the coming days. (Lk. 12:39; 1 Thes. 5:1-11; Rev. 16:15)
- F. Don't Look Back, Remember Lot's Wife (vs. 32) - Even as judgement was coming upon the wicked city that she was once part, of Lot's wife "looked back" and fell into judgment herself. In context to the passage in Luke, Jesus warns the kind of readiness that is needed to endure the days of His coming will be a total estrangement from the things of this age.
- G. Whoever Seeks to Keep his Life will Lose it (vs. 33) - Whoever seeks to keep his life (aspects of this age that are temporary) will lose their very lives over these things. However, those who set the right priorities and die to their flesh and themselves daily will keep their lives. (Acts. 20:23-24; Phil. 3:7-21; Rev. 12:11)
- H. One will be Taken and the Other Left (vs. 34-35) - It is mysterious to me how the particular theme of "being taken" found here and in Matthew 24:37-44 has been interpreted by many as a good thing and refers to a secret rapture of the church. Both passages make it pretty clear that to be "taken" is clearly a negative thing, that Jesus is warning us to not let it happen to us. In the Matthew passage, the taken ones were the ones who died in the judgment of God, so too here, the ones who are taken are likened to dead rotting bodies that need to be cleaned up by vultures.
 - 1. In both Matthew and Luke, the immediate context of this teaching both preceding and following is to be watching and ready in fervent prayer and radical devotion so that we are not overtaken by the spirit of the age, and

position ourselves to suffer the righteous judgment upon sin and death that He will bring when He comes.