

## Week 11

### Servants and masters

#### Luke 17:7-10 (NIV2011)

<sup>7</sup> “Suppose one of you has a servant plowing or looking after the sheep. Will he say to the servant when he comes in from the field, ‘Come along now and sit down to eat’?”

<sup>8</sup> Won’t he rather say, ‘Prepare my supper, get yourself ready and wait on me while I eat and drink; after that you may eat and drink’?”

<sup>9</sup> Will he thank the servant because he did what he was told to do?

<sup>10</sup> So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.’ ”

The expectation is that we do our job. I wouldn’t like to be a slave or that type of servant but hey, we do what is expected of us in our jobs, whether that is our vocations or our ministry. It seems a bit harsh, but there is reality to it isn’t there. I have always felt sorry for servants and butlers in old English TV shows. They always have to answer the door or when the bell rings and be up dressed and totally correct and do whatever is required. No one ever seems to thank the butler. But as soon as something goes wrong it’s the butlers fault. The old catch cry “The Butler did it”.

Notice though in verse 10.

So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.’ ”

It is kind of saying, when you’ve done what’s expected don’t expect too much praise for it. After all, it was expected.

So we can’t expect thanks. Well, Expect it, probably not, but from the others side, I think bosses, leaders, department heads, ministry leaders, coaches, teachers etc need to break the expectation and give credit where it is due. But yeh, don’t expect it, just accept it when you get it.

But this passage needs to be read in context. What went before.

Read it in context with this.

#### Luke 17:1-6 (NIV2011)

Jesus said to his disciples: “Things that cause people to stumble are bound to come, but woe to anyone through whom they come.

<sup>2</sup> It would be better for them to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around their neck than to cause one of these little ones to stumble.

<sup>3</sup> So watch yourselves. “If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them.

<sup>4</sup> Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying ‘I repent,’ you must forgive them.”

<sup>5</sup> The apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith!”

<sup>6</sup> He replied, “If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it will obey you.

Woe, some hard stuff here. Don't cause others grief, don't minimalism others spiritual walk. There are consequences if you do. Where does that connect with the parable? Perhaps we have to do the discipling thing and not expect credit, do the mission thing and not expect credit, do the ministry thing and not yep you guessed it to expect credit.

Crikey, is this saying there is no status I. Ministry and mission?. Probably yes.

The focus is on developing people spiritually, not getting brownie points or status creds.

What's more, it gives us a starting point.

To make sure you don't jeopardise someone's spiritual walk – forgiveness is a good starting point. Why? It fixes relationships. But crikey it is hard. And notice here -

Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying 'I repent,' you must forgive them."

Continue to forgive. I read somewhere a couple of weeks ago that if they don't ask for forgiveness you don't have to forgive and this verse was quoted. I don't think that's what it is saying. There is a principle here. The principle is – forgive, and forgive a lot.

Or I like the last bit there

you must forgive them.

It again including the parable – and not expect any thanks for it.

It's easy to do the forgiveness thing so people think we are spiritual or humble or someThing like that but this parable and this passage says that's not the way it works for Christians.

People wrong you and you have to forgive. This is hugely uncomfortable in our world of looking out for number one and of course number one is me.

It means we will be taken advantage of.

It means we will be hurt.

It means people will do the wrong thing by us.

Get it. Forgive them.

Why? Jesus says to. And Jesus did so – for you. He forgave you, so, forgive people.

Are we truly following Jesus? Do as he says and forgive. Copy Jesus.

Then lay this passage down in parallel to the parable.

Is it saying expect to be taken advantage of.

It is saying people to do the wrong thing by you.

Yep and It is saying... still forgive them

I love the term in v 3 <sup>3</sup> So watch yourselves.

I love it because of its reality. We don't instantly react with forgiveness do we, well, I don't know about you, but I don't. I have to watch myself. Watch myself that I react as Jesus would expect me to.

How else are we to react?

I love the disciples reaction, look at v 5

<sup>5</sup> The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"

Hey there is some perspective there isn't there. These giants of faith recognize that they can't do this stuff. They need Jesus help.

So do we!

Is our reaction to this parable and story asking Jesus to help us?lets be realistic here, this is not easy teaching to take in. It's not hard to understand, it's not theologically heavy, actually it's really practical but it's hard to put into practice. And hard to instill in our mindset.

But get a handle on Jesus response.

<sup>6</sup> He replied, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you.

What is this. The disciples feel inadequate and Jesus says you don't need much but what you have can be really effective.

Oh I like that!

I like to think I can make a difference. Love it.

Jesus can take my little inadequate faith and use it to make a difference. That inadequate faith can be turned into, effective forgiveness.

Yep, a difference in forgiveness. Let's not think about changing the world here,

Let's think about changing someone's thought processes by forgiving them, let's assist someone's spiritual development by forgiving them, let's break the expectation of perfection or extra ordinary work load with forgiveness.

Let's forgive as a starting place.

Forgiveness is the starting point of great things for God.

Increase our faith please and increase our capacity for forgiveness please God.

