

Luke 17:1-10 ESV

Calling Someone Out Can Be a Blessing!

Sunday, October 2 at 8:00 & 10:45 + Monday, October 3 at 7 PM

20th Sunday after Pentecost / 19th Sunday after Trinity – 2016

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: Through today's gospel reading, Jesus will ➔teach us some important things related to sin, ➔encourage our faith, and ➔talk about serving.

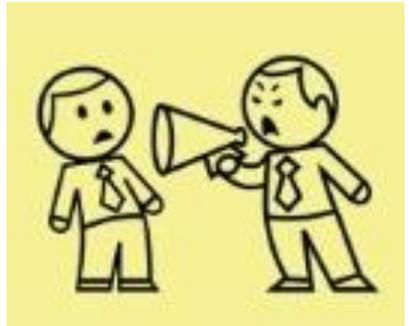
1. **Don't Tempt Other Christians:** ¹ **And [Jesus] said to his disciples, "Temptations to sin are sure to come, but woe to the one through whom they come! ² It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were cast into the sea than that he should cause one of these little ones [or someone immature in his faith] to sin."**
 - a. More than "to sin": The Greek word is **σκάνδαλον**, which is the source of the English word **scandal**, which means **snare** or **stumbling block**. **Lenski** described them as **"deathtraps"** – *not just sin, but sin that pulls a person ☹from being alive in Christ ☹to being dead in sin. Doing so is so horrible that a person would be better off being attached to a millstone (which weighs about 1,500 pounds.¹) and being cast into Lake Erie.*
 - b. Temptations: They come from ➔the devil, ➔people, and ➔our own desire to sin. We have no control over the devil or a person's desire to

¹ <http://hudsonvalleygeologist.blogspot.com/2014/12/how-much-does-millstone-weigh.html>

sin, *but let us be very careful to never set a **deathtrap** for anyone who knows Jesus!*

2. **Rebuke Other Christians:** ³ **“Pay attention to yourselves** *[thus be careful not to set deathtraps, nor to be lured into them]!* **If your brother** *[thus a fellow believer]* **sins, rebuke** *[or warn]* **him, and if he repents, forgive him.** ⁴ **And if he sins against you seven times in the day, and turns to you seven times, saying, ‘I repent,’ you must forgive him.”**

- a. Let’s care about each other: Imagine driving; *then screeching to a halt inches from falling into a huge sinkhole in the road!* After getting composed, you turn around to see another car headed for the same sinkhole; *if you cared about the other driver, you would try to warn him!* So, *when Christians sin – whether against us or another, Jesus is calling us to **call them out**, to strongly and yet kindly warn them for two reasons: (1) to honor our Lord and (2) to care about our brother or sister in Christ.*



- b. Let’s forgive the repentant ones: Whenever a person hears of his sin and, *by the Holy Spirit,* repents, we have the privilege of assuring him of God’s forgiveness in Christ. When people fall and repent, *we must forgive – even as God continues to forgive us who **fall and repent!***

3. **You Already Have the Faith:** ⁵ The apostles [*thus the twelve*] said to the Lord, “Increase our faith!” ⁶ And the Lord said, “If you [have] faith like a grain of mustard seed, you [would have said] to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and [be] planted in the sea,’ and it would [have] obeyed you.” // First, a person either has saving faith in Jesus or he does not; second, for those who have such faith, they live lives of faithfulness, thus they consistently do the teachings of Jesus! The apostles had faith, so Jesus said what He did to build up their faith – *to help them know that their faith could do the impossible!* Jesus’ words also pointed ahead to their future work by which “the kingdom would be transplanted, root and branch, from Israel into the Gentile world in congregation after congregation” (Lenski, 869). Dear friends, for all of us who know Jesus as Savior, we also have faith; *since that faith is tapped into the power of God*, so let us live with the knowledge that **nothing is impossible with God!**
4. **Our Service Does Not Earn a Reward:** Jesus knew **all** that was coming – *He knew the Spirit would work in conjunction with the apostles to bring many Jews and Gentiles to repentance.* He also knew they would have a tendency to **become proud and expect a special reward**; therefore, Jesus said to them: ⁷ “**Will any one of you who has a servant plowing [thus working hard] or keeping sheep [as the apostles would soon be working with human sheep] say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘Come at once and recline at table’?** [*The implied answer is “No.”*] ⁸ **Will he not rather say to him, ‘Prepare supper for me, and dress properly [change from your field clothes to your table-serving clothes], and serve me while I**

eat and drink, and afterward [after I eat and drink] you will eat and drink'? ⁹ Does he thank the servant because he did what was commanded? [The answer imbedded into the Greek text is "No."] ¹⁰ So you also, when you have done all that you were commanded, say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.'"

- a. Expect no reward: Even though the slave worked hard in the field, *he was not rewarded with being able to recline immediately.*
- b. Expect no thanks: Even though the slave continued his work by serving his master food and drink, *he was not thanked.*
- c. Just fulfill your obligation: Since God ♠made us, ♠saved us, and ♠sustains us, **Dr. Luther told us the proper response: "For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him" (First Article Explanation).** We may feel like God should thank us, **yet we should thank Him**; we may feel like He should praise us, **yet we should praise Him**; we may feel like He should serve us, **yet we should serve Him**; and we may feel like He should obey us, **yet we should obey Him!** We do all such things BECAUSE **we are saved thru Jesus!**

Conclusion: Let us pray: Dear Jesus, *since we are pure in God's sight through Your perfect sacrifice*, help us to ♠not tempt others, ♠warn those who sin, ♠realize the power of our faith, and ♠gladly do Your will. And all God's people said...