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Things That Cause People to Sin are Bound to Come
Luke 17: 1-6

Things that cause people to sin are bound to come DIG: What might be an example of what Jesus means in the first saying? In the second saying, what does watch yourself mean? How could you practice forgiveness without reinforcing someone's bad behavior? In the third saying, what kind of faith is necessary to establish God's Kingdom? Is Messiah being realistic, idealistic, or what?

REFLECT: If you have ever caused someone to stumble, what is the biblical solution as far as our relationship with ADONAI is concerned (First John 1:8-10)? As far as the offended person is concerned? How hard is it for you to confront a brother or sister who has sinned against you? What attitude should you have? How is your faith barometer?

The parable of the obedient servant is prefaced by **three sayings** of **Jesus**. These sayings about the wickedness of causing others to **sin** in **verses 1-2**, the duty of **forgiveness** in **verses 3-4**, and the power of **faith** in **verses 5-6** (followed by the parable in the next file), are a fit conclusion to the teaching on stewardship.

As **Yeshua** continued **His** journey toward Yerushalayim, **He** taught **His apostles** what it meant to follow **Him**. It was inevitable, **He** told **them**, that there would be stumbling blocks to **faith**, both because of the devil's interference, and because of the all-too-human tendency to abuse our freedom. But the inevitability of such temptations and abuses doesn't excuse our need to be vigilant against sin and to continue to uphold one another in dignity and love.

To be a disciple of **Messiah** means to pay close attention to the forces that move our hearts, to determine whether they are coming from **the Spirit** or from our fallen nature. We must be on guard against temptations from other people, all the while holding out love and mercy for everyone. We are called to love even those who hurt us emotionally and provoke improper reactions from us.[1138]



First: Jesus said to His talmidim, "Things that cause people to stumble are bound to come, but woe to anyone through whom they come." Using the graphic image of the millstone, **Christ** told **the Twelve** that **it would be better for them to** die than to be the source of another person's **sin**. **It would be better for them to be thrown into the sea with a millstone** (a heavy stone for grinding grain) **tied around their neck than to cause one of these little ones**, the weak and vulnerable for whom **Messiah** had so much concern, **to stumble (Luke 17:1-2).**

Secondly, He said: So watch yourselves (be careful)**. If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them.** This goes against the grain . . . This implies no remorse or wanting to make things right. **And if they repent, forgive them. Forgiveness** is a command **(Matthew 6:14-15, 18:21-35)**; one is to **forgive** from one's heart, overruling one's feelings if necessary – since this too goes against the grain of our sensibilities. **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** over and over **(Luke 17:3-4). Jesus** had taught **the Twelve** earlier in **His** ministry the lesson of unlimited **forgiveness** for a repentant believer in **Christ** (**to see link click Gi – If a Brother or Sister Sins, Go and Point Out Their Fault**). Now **He** repeats this teaching to the whole group of disciples in a slightly different form.

Thirdly, reeling under the impact of these demands, **the apostles** asked **Yeshua** to **increase their faith! He** assured them that **their faith** would prove to be adequate to the demands because **ADONAI's** great desire to establish the kingdom of **God** among **His** people. This has been **His** purpose from the beginning of time and **He** is committed to bringing it about. Even the smallest amount of **faith** can achieve what is humanly impossible. **If you have faith as small as a**

mustard seed, you can do amazingly miraculous things, such as **say to this mulberry tree, “Be uprooted and planted in the sea,” and it will obey you (Luke 17:5-6).** What **the Prophet from Galilee** meant by that is that no obstacle, no matter the size, can stand before **faith** in **God**. No obstacle can prevent the humble from living in mercy and love, just as **Christ** did.

***Lord Jesus**, we believe that **You** came to establish **Your** Kingdom among us. Through the gift of **faith** **You** have bestowed on us, we happily embrace the opportunities **You** give us to love **Your** people. **Lord**, increase our **faith** so that we may build **Your** Kingdom.*[1139]