



The Gospel of Luke - Chapter Seventeen

V. [Luke 9:51-19:27 - The Journey to Jerusalem \(continues\)](#)

V.b [Luke 13:22-17:10 - The second mention of the journey to Jerusalem \(continues/concludes\)](#)

V.b.iv [Luke 14:7-17:10 - Various Teachings and Parables \(continues/concludes\)](#)

Summary of Chapter Seventeen

Jesus told his disciples that there would always be something that causes people to sin but when someone causes someone else to sin, it will be much worse for the person who causes it. Teachers must never deliberately lead people into sin and, if guilty of this, it would be better for that person to be drowned at sea than to continue living. God holds teachers of his word to a higher level even for unintentional errors.

The disciples asked to have their faith strengthened so they would not lead people astray. As Jews, the disciples were expected to be grateful for doing their job and appreciative of what Jesus had done for them. Many times people forget what God has done for them and this may condemn them to suffering.

The Pharisees continued to press Jesus about when the Kingdom of God would come upon the earth. Jesus reminded them that the kingdom would come like Noah's flood or the fire that destroyed Sodom.

Not everyone would be saved at the Second Coming of Jesus. People would be together then one would be taken and the other left to ponder what had happened.

V.b.iv.10 Luke 17:1-10 - Sin, faith, duty

Jesus gives a strong warning to those who cause others to sin, particularly if it is their intention to do so. He also teaches his disciples to adopt a forgiving nature and attitude towards their brother, no matter how many times he sins against them.

He also teaches them that their service is a duty and that they should not expect praise or reward for doing it. They should consider themselves to be unworthy servants and to acknowledge that what they receive is an undeserved gift.

¹ Jesus said to his disciples: Things that cause people to sin are bound to come, but woe to that person through whom they come.

Luke 17:1

God has ordained that things that cause people to sin are bound to come, but that does not excuse any individual from being the cause of temptation to others, for Jesus says: woe to that person through whom they come. This can be seen in: <<*The Son of Man will go as it has been decreed, but woe to that man who betrays him*>> (Luke 22:22), in: <<*This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross*>> (Acts 2:23), and: <<*Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen*>> (Acts 4:27-28).

Even when something is done 'by God's set purpose and foreknowledge' it does not release us from our individual responsibility from doing what is right in keeping with the Gospel.

² It would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied round his neck than for him to cause one of these little ones to sin.

Luke 17:2

Better for him, than for. Drowning with a millstone around one's neck has less serious consequences, because there may not be the same eternal consequences, associated with causing one of these little ones, who believe in Christ or who have begun to follow him in some way, to sin. This is confirmed in Matthew 18:6 <<*But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea*>>.

Jesus has emphasised that receiving lowly persons in Christ's name means receiving him. He now warns against causing such people who believe in him to sin. That is, to lead them to disbelief or to transgression of God's moral laws. Any who do this will receive severe punishment from God, i.e. thrown into the sea. This warning applies to anyone who would seek to destroy the faith of a child or a new Christian.

A millstone is a round stone used for grinding grain and probably weighing hundreds of pounds. It would have been propelled by a donkey walking in circles on a track.



³ So watch yourselves. If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. ⁴ If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times comes back to you and says, 'I repent', forgive him.

Luke 17:3-4

If your brother sins refers here to individual acts of sin or transgressions of moral laws. It applies to all sin as they are not graded in any way in God's eyes, except for blaspheming the Holy Spirit.

Rebuke him. Sin cannot be overlooked but must be rebuked so that repentance and restoration can occur. Jesus also teaches them to do so in all humility.

Remember, it's rebuke him, it's not judge him!

If he repents, forgive him seven times. In Judaism it was considered honourable to forgive three times. The disciples, as part of the new covenant community, were expected to exceed that standard. When forgiving someone we should also wish them well and not hold a grudge. Paul speaks of a sinner who, once punished, should not be persecuted but: <<*instead, you ought to forgive and comfort him, so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow*>> (2 Corinthians 2:7). You can and should forgive someone even if they have not asked for it or offered an apology for their offence, and: <<*Do not say, I'll do to him as he has done to me; I'll pay that man back for what he did*>> (Proverbs 24:29).

Within Judaism three times was sufficient to show a forgiving spirit. This is based on Job 33:29-30 <<*God does all these things to a man – twice, even*

three times – to turn back his soul from the pit, that the light of life may shine on him>>, on Amos 1:3 <<This is what the Lord says: For three sins of Damascus, even for four, I will not turn back my wrath. Because she threshed Gilead with sledges having iron teeth>>, and Amos 2:6 <<This is what the Lord says: For three sins of Israel, even for four, I will not turn back my wrath. They sell the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals>>, thus Peter, with his seven times, believes he has shown generosity: <<Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?” Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times>> (Matthew 18:21-22). But true disciples of Jesus are to forgive without keeping count, i.e. seventy-seven times. This may echo and reverse Lamech’s boast of vengeance to his wives after he had killed a young man: <<If Cain is avenged seven times, then Lamech seventy-seven times>> (Genesis 4:24).

When faced with a situation that offends us, or where we give offence, we need to be aware of misunderstandings. A biblical example came as the twelve tribes settled into their inheritance. Two and a half tribes had chosen land east of Jordan and on their way home, after all the other tribes had been settled west of the Jordan, they built an altar to God. Their intention was to set it up, not to worship at it as this would contravene the law, but as a reminder to all tribes that they were all one nation even though there was a physical barrier between them. However, when the other tribes heard of this altar they assumed the others were abandoning God and going their own way. In response, they took an army with the intention of destroying their brothers and would have done so until an explanation was given: <<When Phinehas the priest and the leaders of the community – the heads of the clans of the Israelites – heard what Reuben, Gad and Manasseh had to say, they were pleased. And Phinehas son of Eleazar, the priest, said to Reuben, Gad and Manasseh, Today we know that the Lord is with us, because you have not acted unfaithfully towards the Lord in this matter. Now you have rescued the Israelites from the Lord’s hand>> (Joshua 22:30-31). We can see how dire the consequences for our relationships can become through misunderstanding. Make the effort to find out what is truly meant, do not listen to or spread rumours and always seek reconciliation. Do not let the devil spoil relationships in this way.

⁵ The apostles said to the Lord, Increase our faith! ⁶ 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.

Luke 17:5-6

Increase our faith! The apostles are not, of course, devoid of faith but their faith is not functioning properly. Faith can be stronger or weaker. Jesus' reply indicates that even a very small amount of faith, if it is genuine trust in God, can lead to remarkable results. The issue is not the size of faith but its presence. This verse must be understood in connection with other passages that talk about prayer and the nature of genuine faith.

With regard to a mustard seed Matthew writes: <<*He replied, Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, Move from here to there and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you*>> (Matthew 17:20).

Two conditions are given for answered prayer: abiding in Jesus and his words; the Spirit abiding in believers, thus transforming their thinking. Elsewhere, Jesus says that believers must ask in his name, i.e. in accord with his character and for his glory. If God's people truly abide in Jesus they will desire what he desires and will pray according to his words and those prayers will be pleasing to him.

Faith is a settled trust and confidence in God, based on his character and promises, as revealed in scripture. Vacillating between trusting God and trusting the world, or in one's own natural abilities, makes a person like a wave of the sea; that is, a picture of instability and uncertainty.

A person who doubts God's goodness dishonours him. Such a person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord since he is unsure whether God is good or will do good. It is a double-minded person that is in two minds; torn between God and the world and is, therefore, unstable in all their ways.

Most NT letters contain final words of warning in their closing lines. Keep yourselves from idols means keep yourselves from trusting, obeying, revering or following; that is, in effect, from worshiping anyone or anything other than God himself and his Son, Jesus.

Uprooted and planted in the sea. In practice, the apostles' faith would not manifest itself in such dramatic signs but in their preaching, healing and perseverance.

⁷ Suppose one of you had a servant ploughing or looking after the sheep. Would he say to the servant when he comes in from the field, 'Come along now and sit down to eat?' ⁸ Would he not rather say, 'Prepare my supper, get yourself ready and wait on me while I eat and drink; after that you may eat and drink?' ⁹ Would he thank the servant

because he did what he was told to do? 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’.

Luke 17:7-10

The question of v.9, ‘would he thank the servant?’ implies an answer of no. Jesus is not, however, encouraging anyone to be inconsiderate or rude.

Rather, it is a vivid example to illustrate the point of v.10, namely that we are unworthy servants. Like the tax collector in Luke 18:13, and unlike the Pharisee (Luke 18:11-12), Christians should acknowledge that God owes them nothing and that they owe him everything, especially their very lives. For, as Paul puts it: <<*For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?*>> (1 Corinthians 4:7).

We should never expect to be rewarded for our service, whether it be working in the field or serving on table, our service to God is continuous and it is our duty. Grace, mercy and salvation are greater rewards than we could ever expect or earn. We should remember that we have nothing to give God that he needs but we can give him what he wants: our eternal praise, worship and obedient service.

V.c Luke 17:11-19:27 - The third mention of the journey to Jerusalem

This section begins with the third mention of Jesus’ intention of completing his final journey to Jerusalem.

V.c.i Luke 17:11-19 - Ten healed of leprosy

Jesus heals ten lepers of whom only one, a Samaritan, expresses thanks. Leprosy was seen as a disease inflicted by God as a direct result of someone’s particular sin. Therefore, Jesus always took especial care to heal lepers as it helped them to understand who he was and the kingdom message he proclaimed to them. It also allowed them to return to being in community.

¹¹ Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus travelled along the border between Samaria and Galilee.

Luke 17:11

On his way to Jerusalem . Compare v.11 with <<*resolutely set out for Jerusalem*>> (Luke 9:51), and: <<*he made his way to Jerusalem*>> (Luke 13:22).

Samaria. As noted in Luke Chapter 10, the Samaritans were a racially mixed group of partly Jewish and partly Gentile ancestry, who were disdained by both

Jews and non-Jews. It was the king of Assyria who brought foreign people to settle in Samaria in 722BC, after defeating the northern tribes of Israel and taking them into captivity. See 2 Kings Chapter 17 and notes on Luke 10:33 for the full account.

¹² As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance ¹³ and called out in a loud voice, Jesus, Master, have pity on us!

Luke 17:12-13

Ten men who had leprosy uses the Greek word *lepra* that indicated a variety of serious skin diseases and was not limited to what is today called leprosy or Hansen's disease. The OT provided specific guidelines for the examination and treatment of those with a variety of skin diseases generally called leprosy, many of which were highly contagious. Refer to Leviticus Chapters 13-14 for full details of treatment under the Law of Moses.

Stood at a distance. Compare with: <<Command the Israelites to send away from the camp anyone who has an infectious skin disease or a discharge of any kind, or who is ceremonially unclean because of a dead body. Send away male and female alike; send them outside the camp so that they will not defile their camp, where I dwell among them>> (Numbers 5:2-3), and: <<Now there were four men with leprosy at the entrance of the city gate. They said to each other, Why stay here until we die?>> (2 Kings 7:3), which are examples in scripture why the men would automatically keep their distance. The law required lepers not to mingle with other people. They must also clearly identify themselves: <<The person with such an infectious disease must wear torn clothes, let his hair be unkempt, cover the lower part of his face and cry out, 'Unclean! Unclean!' As long as he has the infection he remains unclean. He must live alone; he must live outside the camp>> (Leviticus 13:45-46).

Have pity or mercy. As with the rich man: <<So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire'>> (Luke 16:24), the blind beggar: <<He called out, Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me! Those who led the way rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, Son of David, have mercy on me!>> (Luke 18:38-39).

¹⁴ When he saw them, he said, Go, show yourselves to the priests. And as they went, they were cleansed.

Luke 17:14

Show yourselves to the priests. The rationale for this instruction is found in Leviticus 14:2-32. Even the Samaritan went to the priests as Samaritans had their own version of the Pentateuch, which would have given the same instructions.

As they went, they were cleansed, i.e. healed. The priests would declare them clean. They had to begin to obey Jesus' command to go to the priests before they were actually healed. Disciples have to learn to obey Jesus even if the logic of it doesn't seem right. For example: <<*When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch. Simon answered, Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets. When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break*>> (Luke 5:4-6).

We see this also with Naaman having to have faith to obey Elisha and washing himself in the Jordan to become clean: <<*Naaman's servants went to him and said, My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he tells you, 'Wash and be cleansed?' So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy*>> (2 Kings 5:13-14).

¹⁵ One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice.^{16a} He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him –

Luke 17:15-16a

One leper came back as confirmed in: <<*Then Naaman and all his attendants went back to the man of God. He stood before him and said, Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel. Please accept now a gift from your servant*>> (2 Kings 5:15), praising God with a loud voice, which is a favourite Lukan expression. Refer to Luke 4:33, 8:28 and 19:37 for similar examples.

The leper threw himself at Jesus feet or fell on his face, is confirmed in Luke 5:12 by: <<*While Jesus was in one of the towns, a man came along who was covered with leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he fell with his face to the ground and begged him, Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean*>>.

And thanked him. Elsewhere in the NT such giving of thanks is always directed to God in every one of 37 other occurrences of the Greek verb *eucharisteō*.

How many times do we forget to thank God for the abundance of good things he provides each and every day, let alone forgetting or neglecting to thank him for

this amazing miracle. Followers of Jesus are called to be thankful people, both to God and to all the people we encounter during our daily lives, such as those who serve us in supermarkets, etc.

^{16b} and he was a Samaritan.

Luke 17:16b

And he was a Samaritan. The noun is emphasised in the Greek; placing the statement later in the story also serves to emphasise that the only grateful leper was a Samaritan.

¹⁷ Jesus asked, Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? ¹⁸ Was no-one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner? ¹⁹ Then he said to him, Rise and go; your faith has made you well.

Luke 17:17-19

The Samaritan's faith has made him well, literally saved him. This is confirmed by the use of the same Greek verb in Luke 7:50, 8:48 and 18:42 so that the healing here was more than physical.

In modern times, one out of ten giving praise to God for what he is doing in everyone's lives would be seen as revival. How expectations have changed.

V.c.ii Luke 17:20-37 - The coming of the kingdom

This account consists of two sections involving the 'already now' (vv.20-21), and 'but not yet' (vv.22-37) of the kingdom. Israel was expecting a temporal kingdom. They anticipated being raised up above all the other nations of the world and taking what they saw as their rightful place as God's chosen race. But Jesus was consistently preaching of a spiritual kingdom. One that would stand forever, for to Pilate: <<*Jesus said, My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place*>> (John 18:36).

²⁰ Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation,

Luke 17:20

The Pharisees apparently desire to know the cosmic signs preceding the coming of the kingdom so that they can be sure not to miss it. Jesus replies that the kingdom will not come with your careful observation. This phrase translates the Greek word *paratērēsis* that occurs only here in the entire Bible.

In light of vv.21-37, Jesus apparently means that the arrival of the Kingdom of God will not be accompanied by spectacular signs in the heavens but rather that the kingdom will come quietly, evident only in the change in people's hearts and lives.

In Luke Chapter 19 we will look at the Parable of the Ten Minas, which Jesus gave in response to those who supposed that the Kingdom of God was to appear immediately. This was probably a concern especially because he was near to Jerusalem, where the expectations of a political Messiah may have been extra high. The parable will show that the kingdom will not be seen in its fullness until Christ returns; it begins in a small way and grows gradually until then.

And at the time of Jesus' ascension from the Mount of Olives, the disciples asked Jesus when he was going to restore the kingdom to Israel, because they concluded from his resurrection and the promise of the Spirit that the Messianic Era had dawned and the final salvation of Israel was imminent. However, they were probably still expecting the restoration of a military and political kingdom that would drive out the Roman armies and restore national sovereignty to Israel, as had happened numerous times in the OT. Jesus corrected them, not by rejecting the question, but by telling them that they would receive power from the Holy Spirit, not in order to triumph over Roman armies, but to spread the good news of the Christ's message throughout the world. In other words, the return is in God's timing; in the meantime, there are other key things believers are to do.

²¹ nor will people say, 'Here it is', or 'There it is', because the kingdom of God is within you.

Luke 17:21

The Pharisees repeat their mistake of Luke 14:15 <<*When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, Blessed is the man who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God*>>, in not recognising that the Kingdom of God has already come.

Although the translation here records Jesus saying 'the Kingdom of God is within you', there are many commentators who believe that he would not say this to disbelieving Pharisees. It is thought is within you, i.e. in the person of Jesus and in the reign of God manifested in those who are already following Jesus.

²² Then he said to his disciples, The time is coming when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, but you will not see it.

Luke 17:22

Son of Man is Jesus' favourite self-designation, indicating the true meaning of his identity and ministry:

1. The humble servant, who has come to forgive common sinners.
2. The suffering servant, whose atoning death and resurrection will redeem his people.
3. The glorious King and Judge, who will return to establish God's kingdom on earth.

One of the days probably means they will long to see a day when Jesus has already returned to the earth and is with them again, but some take it to mean they will long for the time when Jesus was with them on earth.

You will not see it because he will no longer be on earth and will not yet have returned.

²³ Men will tell you, 'There he is!' or 'Here he is!' Do not go running off after them.

Luke 17:23

Believers should not go running off after people who claim that Jesus has come in a secret or hidden way, for he will come in a way that is dramatic and visible to all.

²⁴ For the Son of Man in his day will be like the lightning, which flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other.

Luke 17:24

The coming of the kingdom, inaugurated by the return of the Christ, will be as bright, unmistakable and sudden as lightning. Just as lightning lights up the sky, all will see it.

²⁵ But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.

Luke 17:25

First he must suffer. The consummation of the kingdom requires that a divine event must first take place. That is the obligation that Jesus must first die according to God's plan in order to redeem a people for himself.

Once again this generation does not refer to everyone then living but to the leaders and others who rejected both John the Baptist and Jesus, and who were still the dominant force in the culture. In their rejection of both the ascetic John, i.e. a person who dedicated his life to a pursuit of contemplative ideals and practiced extreme self-denial or self-mortification for his beliefs, and the non-ascetic Jesus, they were denying the Kingdom of God and the Father himself.

²⁶ Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man. ²⁷ People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all. ²⁸ It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. ²⁹ But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulphur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all.

Luke 17:26-29

Eating, drinking is not a description of specific evils in the days of Noah and Lot. It means rather that life went on as normal and people were caught unprepared. There are also warnings by the prophets, e.g. <<*The Lord, the Lord Almighty, called you on that day to weep and to wail, to tear out your hair and put on sackcloth. But see, there is joy and revelry, slaughtering of cattle and killing of sheep, eating of meat and drinking of wine! Let us eat and drink, you say, for tomorrow we die!*>> (Isaiah 22:12-13). Therefore, we are not without excuse or example.

³⁰ It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed. ³¹ On that day no-one who is on the roof of his house, with his goods inside, should go down to get them. Likewise, no-one in the field should go back for anything.

Luke 17:30-31

On the roof, as previously discussed, envisions a Palestinian home with a flat roof and outside stairs. This was used as a domestic space and was quite a cool place, especially on balmy evenings.

Inside the house or in the field are simple analogies using imagery familiar to the original listeners, which stress that there will be no time to prepare when the Son of Man comes. Some interpreters argue from the Palestinian details of this illustration that Jesus is referring to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD70.

³² Remember Lot's wife!

Luke 17:32

Lot's wife turned back looking longingly at Sodom. Her death is an example of divine judgement that comes quickly on those who do not wholeheartedly obey the Lord's commands. The command was clear: <<*As soon as they had brought them out, one of them said, Flee for your lives! Don't look back, and don't stop anywhere in the plain! Flee to the mountains or you will be swept away!*>>

(Genesis 19:17), but the disobedient response was catastrophic: <<*But Lot's wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt*>> (Genesis 19:26).

³³ Whoever tries to keep his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it.

Luke 17:33

Jesus has referred to this previously: <<*For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it*>> (Luke 9:24).

Jesus' paradoxical statement demands two different senses of the word life: whoever lives a self-centred life focused on this present world, i.e. would save his life, will not find eternal life with God, i.e. will lose it. Whoever gives up his self-centred life of rebellion against God, loses his life for the sake of Christ and the Gospel. He will find everlasting communion with God, i.e. will save it.

³⁴ I tell you, on that night two people will be in one bed; one will be taken and the other left. ³⁵ Two women will be grinding grain together; one will be taken and the other left.

Luke 17:34-35

Taken, left indicate that one is caught up to be with Christ while the other is left as we read: <<*And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other*>> (Matthew 24:31).

Since vv.26-27 relate this passage to the days of Noah the description may indicate that one is taken away to final judgement, while the other remains to experience salvation at Christ's return. This would fit with the idea of the majority being taken in Noah's flood to judgement, and is supported by: <<*But I am full of the wrath of the Lord; I am weary of holding it in. Pour it out on the children in the street, and on the gatherings of young men as well; both husband and wife shall be taken, the old folk and the very aged*>> (Jeremiah 6:11). However, most commentators understand that the one who is taken is among those chosen and that the Son of Man: <<*will gather his elect from the four winds*>> (Matthew 24:31). The elect may be spared from witnessing God's wrath: <<*Seek the Lord, all you humble of the land, who do his commands; seek righteousness, seek humility; perhaps you may be hidden on the day of the Lord's wrath*>> (Zephaniah 2:3).

Verse 36 is not included in the NIV translation. The following is included for completeness but was not in early manuscripts and will not be commented upon.

{{³⁶ (KJV) Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left}}

Luke 17:36

The Lord knows who to take and who to leave behind. Consider: <<Your hand will lay hold on all your enemies; your right hand will seize your foes>> (Psalm 21:8), <<Though you soar like the eagle and make your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down, declares the Lord>> (Obadiah 4), <<Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks>> (John 4:23), and: <<I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing>> (1 Timothy 2:8).

³⁷ Where, Lord? they asked. He replied, Where there is a dead body, there the vultures will gather.

Luke 17:37

Dead body, vultures. It seems best not to over-interpret this striking proverbial expression. It probably means simply that just as people from far away can see vultures circling high in the air, Christ's return in judgement will be visible and predictable. A similar view is that the vultures suggest the widespread death that will accompany the return of Christ to judge those who have rejected his kingdom. In either case, it will be impossible for people not to see and recognise the return of Christ.