

## Jesus Teaches about Faith, Evangelism, Stumbling Blocks, Discipline, and Forgiveness

### Matthew 18

Group <sup>1</sup>	C	V	Description
Rank in Kingdom	18	1-6	A disciple must have childlike faith
Stumbling Blocks		7	Stumbling blocks: within and without
		8-9	Get rid of the things in your life that causes you to stumble
		10-11	Guardian Angels; Jesus came to save the lost
Ninety-nine Plus One		12-14	Jesus teaches about the 99 and the 1
Discipline and Prayer		15-18	Dealing with sin among believers, i.e. church discipline
		19-20	Agreement in prayer and fellowship resulting in God's presence
Forgiveness		21-22	Jesus is asked about forgiveness, how often?
		23-35	Parable of the two debtors – How much you forgive is important!

### Reflections

Do you know just how much you have been forgiven? If you haven't considered this yet, you should. It would greatly effect and most likely change the way you treat people and how quick you are to forgive others.

Having childlike faith is not easy. Here in America, we are taught from an early age that we can do anything we set our mind to doing. That isn't necessarily bad, as long as we always acknowledge God and give Him the honor that is due Him in the process. God wants us to be industrious and the use the many gifts and talents that He gives us to help ourselves and others. But He is also a jealous God and will allow us to experience things so that we will learn to acknowledge His presence in our lives and the universe. This is the overarching theme of this chapter.

The other themes of this chapter are varied: dependent faith, not being and removing stumbling blocks, seeking the lost, dealing with sin among believers, fellowship and prayer, and forgiveness. Also there are two parables in the chapter: the ninety-nine plus one in verses 12-14 and the two debtors in verses 23-35.

#### 1-6 – A disciple must have childlike faith

- This in connection to the stumbling blocks that follow remind us that the children Jesus is referring to are not just young children but any child of God, regardless of their age.

#### 7 – Stumbling blocks: within and without

- Following Paul's guidelines in Romans 13 will help us identify possible stumbling blocks we might be causing and what stumbling blocks we trip over that we need to get rid of in our lives.
- They all fall into one of the three categories of sins as in 1 John 2:16.
  - Lust of the flesh
  - Lust of the eyes
  - Boastful pride of life

<sup>1</sup> (NASB) "Group" column from the headings in the NASB text.

## Jesus Teaches about Faith, Evangelism, Stumbling Blocks, Discipline, and Forgiveness

### 8-9 – *Get rid of the things in your life that causes you to stumble*

- This deals with the intentional process of identifying those things which cause us to sin or even think about sinning and the need to remove them from our lives with ruthless abandon. Why? Your eternal soul is dependent on it!

### 10-11 – *Guardian Angels; Jesus came to save the lost*

- This is one of the few passages where Jesus talks about children having guardian angels. Again I don't think that this is just referring to young children but to any believer. God is always aware of what is happening to all His children, of whom we become a part of when we place our faith in Jesus and are adopted as fellow heirs with Christ.

### 12-14 – *Jesus teaches about the 99 and the 1*

- Verse 11 should really be connected with this parable because it shows the heart of God and His Son Jesus, to seek and save the lost.

### 15-18 – *Dealing with sin among believers, i.e. church discipline*

- How do you confront sinful behaviors among believers? Jesus gives an outline here of how to go about doing this. First, meet individually and privately. Second, meet with two or three others. Lastly, bring the matter to the attention of the whole church.

### 19-20 – *Agreement in prayer and fellowship resulting in God's presence*

- This section is tied to the one that precedes it and the one that follows it. We should come to an agreement when it comes to confronting sin among believers and we should also come to an agreement when forgiveness is granted and fellowship is restored.

### 21-22 – *Jesus is asked about forgiveness, how often?*

- How often are we to forgive someone who asks for forgiveness? In Luke 17:1-4, when Jesus is asked this, His response is that even if someone sins against you or cause you to sin 7 times in one day, you should forgive them. Here the principle is this, if someone asks to be forgiven, just forgive them, even if it is difficult or hard to do. If you don't ...

### 23-35 – *Parable of the two debtors – How much you forgive is important!*

- Jesus then tells the parable of the two debtors. One who has a huge debt which could never be repaid in a person's lifetime but he is forgiven. Then he in turn treats someone harshly who owes him a very small amount, nothing compared to his previously forgiven debt. When the person who originally forgave the first man's debt hears of his harsh treatment of the second, the forgiveness is removed and the first man suffers the same type of treatment he imposed on the second man.
- This is worth repeating, do you know just how much you have been forgiven? If you haven't considered this yet, you should. It would greatly effect and most likely change the way you treat people and how quick you are to forgive others.

---

### ***There and Then: Here and Now***

Answer the questions below as you reflect on your own life and this part of our study: *my LOG vs others SPECK*. Here are some possible responses I've identified from the text that might apply to anyone.

---

\* *Navigator Bible Study Handbook* (with additions) & Matthew 7:1-5.

## Jesus Teaches about Faith, Evangelism, Stumbling Blocks, Discipline, and Forgiveness

S - Are there *sins* for me to avoid or confess?

•

P - Are there *promises* from God for me to claim?

•

E - Are there *examples* for me to follow or avoid?

•

C - Are there *commands* for me to obey?

•

K - How has this passage increased my *knowledge* about God / Jesus / Holy Spirit?

•

---

*Key Words:* New Testament, Gospels, Matthew, Jesus, Faith, Stumbling Blocks, Evangelism, Discipline, Prayer, Forgiveness

---



This work by James Swanson is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/) International License. Originally published at [studythebook.org](http://studythebook.org) on July 24, 2016.

---

### *Bibliography*

---

(NASB) *New American Standard Bible*. La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995. Print.