



## WEEKLY STUDY

### ***Stepping Into Increase - Week One***

We are starting 2025 with a new series. We have much evidence that God invites us into a life of increase—to step into more life with more faith. I'm making an assumption that if you are engaging with this study, then you are doing so as a means of increasing your faith and understanding. The increase we are seeking from God is ultimately so that we can serve God better. Consider how God's blessings in your life have become a blessing to others. Asking for an increase of faith is a way of asking for more of what God already desires for you and for the world around you. Is this a shift in thinking for you?

Peace of Christ,  
Pastor Mark Youngman

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from your own daily reflections and consider the Group Discussion questions below. If you would like to get connected visit [prov.church/smallgroups](http://prov.church/smallgroups).

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## DAILY STUDY

### **MONDAY: LUKE 17:1-6 (ESV)**

And he said to his disciples, “Temptations to sin are sure to come, but woe to the one through whom they come! <sup>2</sup> 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 to sin. <sup>3</sup> Pay attention to yourselves! If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him, <sup>4</sup> and if he sins against you seven times in the day, and turns to you seven times, saying, ‘I repent,’ you must forgive him.”

<sup>5</sup> The apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith!” <sup>6</sup> And the Lord said, “If you had faith like a grain of mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you.”

- In verse 1, Jesus reminds his disciples of the “woes” pronounced to the Pharisees previously in Luke. It was inevitable that false teachers would come. Ever since the first false teacher ([the serpent in Genesis 3](#)) slithered onto the scene, there have been dangers associated with leading others away from the truth. Why would you want your brother to stumble? If your brother or sister

responds to the truth you have professed, you must offer forgiveness. As you head into a time of prayer, consider whether there is anyone whose response to Jesus you need to recognize and celebrate today.

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- **Prayer Prompt: “I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. (Genesis 12.1)**
- *God, I consider the blessing you have given me. Make me a blessing to those around me today. Amen.*

## **TUESDAY: LUKE 17.1-6 (ESV)**

- The shrewd manager and the rich man that you can read about in Luke 16 fit the category of those who cause others to stumble. Jesus warns them against becoming a stumbling block to others through dishonesty or selfishness. These are both things that the Pharisees and teachers of Jesus’ day were guilty of. Are there ways in which (even by mere association) you might be causing someone else to stumble?
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- **Prayer Prompt: I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.” (Genesis 12.2)**
- *Lord God, I do not want to cause anyone to stumble in their faith. As you strengthen me in my own faith, also use me to bless and strengthen those around me. Amen.*

## **WEDNESDAY: LUKE 17.1-6 (ESV)**

- Jesus was not playing games with the eternal ramifications of the disciples’ actions. It would be better to go into the sea with a two ton stone than cause someone else to miss out on the truth. Connecting these verses again to Luke 16 (shrewd manager and the rich man), it is clear that the disciples responsibility was to the spiritual and physical needs of the “little ones”. In what ways is God calling you to serve others both spiritually and physically?
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- **Prayer Prompt: *But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen. (2 Peter 3.18)***
  - *Jesus, I learn more about you and experience your presence profoundly when I am sharing your promises with others. Open my eyes to those opportunities today. Amen.*

#### **THURSDAY: LUKE 17.1-6 (ESV)**

- When we remain focused on the truth given to us through Jesus, then everything else will be exposed. Sin will be exposed in the context of a community that is focused on the Way of Jesus. In such a community, we learn that it is [not our job to focus on the judgement](#) (God will take care of that), but to guide them and [correct them in love](#). How have you seen sin that seems to remain just under the surface impact a person or a community? Ask God for the words and boldness to offer (or receive) a rebuke when one is required.
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- **Prayer Prompt: *For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. (1 John 5.4)***
- *Jesus, I know that you have called me to a different kind of life. There are many voices that want to lead me astray. Today I fix my eyes on you and rely on the faith given to me. Amen.*

#### **FRIDAY: LUKE 17.1-6 (ESV)**

- The repentance that Jesus identifies in verses 3 and 4, when it leads to forgiveness, can restore relationships here on earth. But even more so, it can lead to reconciliation with God. Is there someone you need to forgive? How has your relationship been impacted by a grudge or cutting of ties? A question we might ask ourselves is, “Is my ego preventing me from forgiving someone else?” Repentance should necessarily lead to forgiveness (it does with God), even though we may need to create healthy boundaries with someone who has hurt us. Pray for those who need to repent. Ask for grace to offer forgiveness when they do.
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- **Prayer Prompt: And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. (Hebrews 11.6)**
- *God, I believe in your gift to me through Jesus Christ, the great High Priest. Through his judgment, he offers me an opportunity to repent and receive forgiveness. Thank you God! Amen.*

**SATURDAY: LUKE 17:1-6 (ESV)**

- The disciples asked Jesus for an *increase* in faith. They already *have* faith, even if it is only the size of a mustard seed. But they recognize their need for more. If it is selfish to ask for more, then this is a holy selfishness that is actually spurred by a desire for the Kingdom of God. Do you desire God’s Kingdom above everything else? Ask God for an increase of faith.

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- **Prayer Prompt: For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.” (Romans 1.17)**
- *God, transform any motive within me that ends only in my own gain. I want holy selfishness that equips me to be more usable by you. Amen.*

**GROUP DISCUSSION**

Pastor Jacob shared four steps of increasing our faith. Record how each one contains smaller steps you can take.

1. Create space to increase faith. Make room for God. What will you need to decrease in order to create more space for God?
2. Take steps towards forgiveness. Unforgiveness is a barrier to increased faith. What are steps you can take in forgiving others? Forgiving yourself?
3. Begin a practice of gratitude. How are you going to spur your own gratitude? Journal what you are grateful for? Spend regular time with a friend committing to share gratitude.
4. Be persistent in prayer. This connects with #1. Make room for God and listen. Make room for God and respond to the ways God shows up.