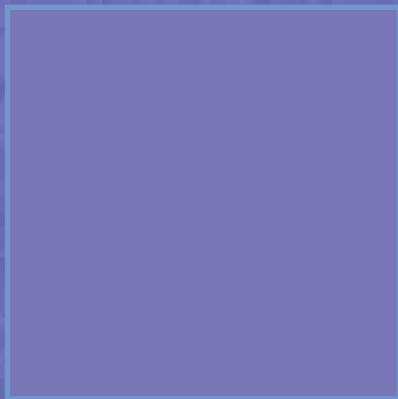


C H A P T E R



1. As we do every week, let's read the chapter at least twice before beginning to answer the study guide. Don't forget to pray asking God to open your eyes and ears to all he has for you in this chapter.
2. The chapter opens with Jesus speaking to his disciples. Remember there are many disciples. His disciples were simply those who follow, learn, and adhere to his teachings. Jesus wants them to know there will be things that come their way which will try to make them stumble. Jesus was very familiar with this, those who disliked him were constantly looking for a way to trip him up. Jesus said it is a dreadful thing to be the one who causes others to stumble.

List just a few things that may cause us to stumble. If you are not sure what things Jesus is talking about, read 1 John 2:16 and think of things that fit into these categories.

-
-

3. The thing about stumbling is, no one gets up with the intent to stumble. No one wakes up in the morning thinking, this would be a great day for me to trip. No one wants to lose their balance and fall, so why do we? Think about the last time you stumbled and fell, what were some contributing factors?
4. The last time I took a hard fall was about a year ago. I was watching my grandchildren on their skateboards, and it just looked like such fun. Against all logic I chose to try it myself. (My grandchildren tried to say it was not a good idea.) With no instructions as to how to skateboard, and no padding, just an irrational belief I was still coordinated enough to handle such a task, I got on a skateboard. My first few turns were slowly, yet successfully completed. It was not until my fourth turn, when the inevitable happened. I placed too much weight on my right foot that was pushing me. With little weight on the board, it continued moving and so did I, just not in the same direction. I tell you this to show it was not just one thing that caused me to fall, it was a series of poor choices and a lack of focus. Since I was not seriously hurt, this makes a slightly funny story. Have you ever experienced something similar?

Has a friend tried to speak words of warning to you?

Were they trying to harm or help you?

Did you listen and avoid the consequences or like me, did you venture on and suffer for your bad decision?
5. When poor choices and lack of focus lead us to bad decisions in our walk of faith, it can be much more costly. Not only does it cost us, but it can affect others watching our lead as well. Since we cannot predict the ripple effect of our bad decisions, we must be prayerful and listen to the Holy Spirit guiding us. Discipleship is more than just following; it is leading others well. We must show new believers an example of how to follow Jesus well. Everyone is leading someone. What are you doing today to ensure you lead others well?
6. Next, Jesus warns his followers not to be easily offended. If someone hurts us, we should go to them in love and talk to them about the problem. The Bible instructs us to have forgiveness ready. What if they repeat this behavior? Specifically, what are believers to do?
7. Don't you just love the words of the apostles in verse 5? They knew this was going to be difficult. This would take great faith. What did they ask Jesus to do for them?

8. Define faith.
9. Read Hebrews 11:1, in several translations.
Did you find anything here that you would like to add to your definition of the word “faith”?

Can you think of a time you experienced this calm assurance of faith?

Please briefly share it in your small group. It is good for us to practice sharing a brief testimony of our faith. It is reassuring for us and an example for others. Living by faith is not always something huge, it is a daily moment by moment life fixed and focused on things of eternal value.

10. There are many stages of faith. Read the verses listed below and in a very few words write what you see about the varying degrees of faith. This is certainly not a complete list of all the scriptures have to say about faith, but it is enough for us to see our need to build our faith daily.

I have given you the first one:

- a. Romans 12:3
- b. 2 Thessalonians 1:3
- c. Matthew 15:28
- d. Romans 4:20
- e. 1 Timothy 1:5
- f. Romans 14:1

A measure of faith, we will not all have the same measure.

11. Where does our faith originate? Ephesians 2:8-9

12. I once watched a YouTube, “The Annual World’s Strongest Man competition.” One event in this competition was men pulling a train engine from a dead stop several yards down a track. I was amazed!!! How is that possible? Could anyone really do that? Yes, I was watching it. However, not just anyone can do it. It was only those who had given themselves to building their muscles, training every day.

Faith is a bit like that. We can grow our faith everyday if we choose to focus on spiritual things. How serious are you about growing your faith?

It is often as simple as a choice. Yet, the process of choosing almost always involves a bit of introspection, laying something down to pick up something else.

What are you ready to lay down

What are you willing to pick up?

13. Jesus warns against pride which slips in if we are not careful. The praise of men does feel good, but we should not look for or expect their praise. Our deeds should be done as an act of worship. It only takes a little faith to accomplish great things. Far too often, we see believers get discouraged and then bitter when they do not receive the praise, they feel they are due.

What does this reveal?

Even though we don’t want to look for praise from others, that does not mean we are to be short on giving it out. Speaking a good word of encouragement can re-energize a weary warrior. Find someone today (or several persons) and speak a word of encouragement to them.

14. Let’s stop for a few minutes to read Romans 5:8, underline your condition when Christ died for you. What was our condition when Christ died for us?

15. Psalms 99:9 *Exalt the LORD our God and worship at his holy mountain, for the LORD our _____*
 When we read this verse, we see we have a problem. The problem is, God is holy. What do we know about ourselves after reading Romans 5:8, in the previous question and Romans 3:23 below?
 Romans 3:23 “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”
16. God graciously solved this problem for us in the Person of His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus bore our sin in His body on the cross and now offers us eternal life (Heaven) as a free gift. This gift is received by faith.
 Saving faith is more than acknowledging certain historical facts. It is more than merely looking to him in a crisis. Saving faith is resting in his finished work on our behalf and placing our trust in Christ alone.
 Read Acts 16:31, if we _____ we will _____.
 Are you still wondering if it could it really be this simple to know your sins are forgiven?
 If you are not sure, read John 3:16. This is one of the most often quoted verses found in God’s word. Underline the verbs in John 3:16.
 What is required for us to receive eternal life?
 This is the Greek word Pisteuo, to think to be true, to be persuaded of, to credit, place confidence in,
17. After reading the previous question, did it cause you to stop and consider your own spiritual walk? Have you transferred your trust and accepted Christ as the Lord of your life?
 Read Romans 10:9-10, if we repent, acknowledging our sin and turn from whatever we were previously trusting in, and accept his finished work, the Bible says we will be saved. If this is something you would like to do, he is only a prayer away.
18. Ask yourself, who am I following and why?
 Is it to be seen by those around me?
 If we are honest, a certain amount of the things we do is to please others. That is not a bad thing but we would be wise to periodically check the “why” behind our actions.
 When I was very young in my walk of faith, I asked this question of my friend, Dorothy. She responded, “*I serve an audience of One.*”
 Would you say that is the focus of your service?
19. According to Luke 17: 11, where is Jesus?
20. Who did he meet along the way?
21. Why were they unable to approach Jesus?
22. What did they call Jesus?
 As we have said before, this is a very good place to start, acknowledging Jesus as _____.
23. What did they want Jesus to do?

24. Jesus did not carry on a conversation with these men, he simply told them to go and _____
_____ to the priest.
25. As they walked away that day, what happened?
Do you think it would have been the same outcome if they had become frustrated and headed back to their leper colony?
Why? or Why not?
26. One by one the lepers looked down and to their surprise, what did they see?
27. One man responded differently from the other nine on that day.
What did he do that was different from the other nine?
Who got the glory?
28. What did you learn about this man's nationality and character from Luke 17:16?
29. Judging by Jesus's question in verses 17-18, what nationality is implied concerning the other nine lepers?
30. What did Jesus say had been instrumental in his healing?
31. What are you believing God for today? Be specific.
32. What miracle are you seeking?
Does it look impossible?
Look up Luke 1:37 and write it out.
Hudson Taylor, missionary to China in the 1800's said, "There are three stages to every great work of God; first it is impossible, then it is difficult, then it is done."
Let's practice trusting God for the impossible, enduring the difficult and thanking Him when it is done.
Is there anything you would like to stop and thank God for today?
33. Read Luke 17:20-21
What is Jesus trying to help them understand about God's kingdom?
They were looking for a kingdom like the earthly kingdoms they had previously experienced. Jesus said, "the kingdom of God is within you." It is a matter of the heart. The kingdoms of the earth have designated land boundaries. How does God's kingdom differ from earthly kingdoms?
34. In Luke 17: 22-24, Jesus gives his followers a word of warning. Do you think they understood what he is talking about?
35. Jesus tells his followers some very difficult news in Luke 17:25. Do you think they could ever imagine all that was about to happen?
When God is about to do something, which only he can do, do you believe it will be something we could imagine?
Why? or Why not?

36. What historical event does Jesus refer to in Luke 17:26?
37. What were people doing right up until Noah and his family went in the ark?
38. Scripture tells us it was the same in the days of Lot.
What does Luke tell us these two events have in common?

Does this sound familiar to the days we are living in?
39. God came with judgement on the city where Lot lived with his family.
What happened to the people of Sodom?
40. Luke 17:30 (NIV), says *“it will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed.”*
What is Jesus saying to expect?

What kind of day will it be when he returns?
41. We do not know the day or the hour of Christ’s return.
What should we be doing each day while there is time?
Read Matthew 25:13
42. Is there anything you would do different today, if you knew Christ was going to return in the morning?

Read Matthew 24:42-44, underline the clear direction believers are given in these verses.
43. Living each day as if it were our last might motivate us to have conversations we have been putting off.
Can you think of anyone you would like to share the good news of Jesus Christ?

I am a bit hesitant to leave this question in the study guide. Often people, who experience a sense of urgency and longing to see a friend or loved one come to Christ, will witness with a confrontive or judgmental tone. How would Jesus approach this person if he was the one having this conversation? Please, pray before having this conversation so the words you speak come from a heart of love. Then, leave the results to the Holy Spirit.
44. How foolish is it to continue to put off salvation?
Each of us were given a birthday. However, we also have another day that has been foreordained. Only God knows how many days we have left. Putting off preparing for eternity is the ultimate of foolish decisions.
One day this life will be over and then what?
45. In Luke 17:33, we see a warning for those who would try to captain their own ship in this life. There are many diverse ways people face the decisions of life. What are some of the ways you have seen people make their choices each day?
46. Luke 17:34-37 gives us a bit of insight into what will happen when the Lord returns. Some translations (NIV, ESV, etc.) do not include verse 36. Please, do not let this rattle you. If you would like to read it look it up in the KJV and the NKJV. Jesus is referring to his return. What sad event does Jesus give a warning concerning?

47. Verse 37 is a word picture for the reader. Jesus quotes a familiar proverb of that day. He reminds them that one vulture circling in the sky is not a cause for much concern. But several vultures circling, can only mean one thing.
What conclusion would one come to if they see several vultures circling in the sky?
48. Now, let's apply this to what Jesus has been teaching. One sign or event might not seem like much. Although, when we see multiple signs that we have been warned about what might we reason is about to happen?
49. Are you seeing any signs that cause you to think Jesus' return could happen soon?
Read Matthew 24:6-8, what does God's word call this?
50. Jesus gave his followers these as warnings, not to frighten us. He wants us to be aware, to be ready, and to be watching for his return. Would that describe you? I am so proud of you for studying God's word so you will not be caught unaware. Would you say he is your master? Would you say you are his servant?

Are you sharing the gospel message with the kind of compassion Jesus had when he looked on the lost?
51. As I am writing today, I am waiting for my brother's plane to arrive in a couple of hours. I am watching the clock; I cannot wait to see him. I have anticipated his arrival over the last couple of days and have been preparing for it. His room is clean and ready, my refrigerator is stocked with things he likes and the family members here in town have been invited over so they, too, can enjoy time with him. This is the kind of anticipation I want to have for Jesus' return. Are you looking forward to Jesus' return with great anticipation?
52. Why not ask God to give you an opportunity to share the good news with someone this week? Then share your experience in your small group. You can start small. We must not despise the day of small beginnings. Every great journey began with a single step. Every great structure was built by laying a first stone. Every great life achievement began with one idea that was acted upon. Let's just do the next right thing and trust God to bless the harvest.

Biblical References

Day One

Question 2

1 John 2:16 (NIV) For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father, but from the world.

Question 9

Hebrews 11:1

(NASV) (ESV) Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen.

(HCSB) Now faith is the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is not seen.

(KJV) Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

(MSG) The fundamental fact of existence is that this trust in God, this faith, is the firm foundation under everything that makes life worth living. It's our handle on what we can't see.

(NIV) Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.

Day Two

Question 10

Romans 12:3 (NIV) For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.

2 Thessalonians 1:3 (NIV) We ought always to thank God for you, brothers and sisters, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love all of you have for one another is increasing.

Matthew 15:28 (NIV) Then Jesus said to her, *“Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted.”* And her daughter was healed at that moment.

Romans 4:20 (NIV) Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God,

1 Timothy 1:5 (NIV) The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

Romans 14:1 (NIV) Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters.

Question 11

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NIV) For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.

Question 14

Romans 5:8 (NIV) But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Question 15

Psalms 99:9 (NIV) Exalt the LORD our God and worship at his holy mountain, for the LORD our God is holy.

Question 16

Acts 16:31 (NIV) “„Believe (trust) in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved...”

John 3:16 (NIV) For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Question 17

Romans 10:9-10 (ESV) “...if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with your heart one believes and is justified, and with your mouth one confesses and is saved.”

Day Five

Question 41

Matthew 25:13 (ESV) *“Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.”*

Question 42

Matthew 24:42-44 (ESV) *“Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. ⁴³ But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁴ Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”*

Question 49

Matthew 24:6-8 (ESV) *“And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. ⁷ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. ⁸ All these are but the beginning of the birth pains.”*