

Sermon Discussion – 9 June 2024

Read Luke 7:36-50

Getting Started *Sharing from personal experience*

Think of the debts you have accumulated and owed in your life. Whether it was financial, relational, etc., we have all been the recipient of a loan of some kind. How did it feel to owe someone something? Did you pay it off? Or was it forgiven? How did either of those scenarios make you feel?

Observation *Discovering the context*

Jesus violated social taboos to reach out to those marginalized not only racially (7:1–10), economically (7:11–17) and religiously (7:24–35) but also morally (7:36–50).

- The kinds of people who were attracted to Jesus during His time on earth often feel rejected by the church today. Why do you think this is?
- In what ways can our community go out of its way to communicate that all are welcome to come and experience God's love?

Interpretation *Discovering the meaning*

1. How was the woman described in verses 36-38? Why did the woman go to the Pharisee's house? How much courage do you think it took for this woman, obviously known by all present to be immoral, to walk into the house of a Pharisee and approach Jesus?
2. In this text, we see two contrasting responses to Jesus: Simon the Pharisee and the woman with a bad reputation. What are the key differences in how each person interacts with Jesus? How do their actions and attitudes reflect their understanding of forgiveness?
3. Jesus's story of the moneylenders describes the joy experienced over cancelled debt. How does this foreshadow the debt Jesus will cancel with his life, death on the cross, and resurrection? How does it foreshadow the response of people to the debt that Jesus paid?

4. Jesus makes the point that the more we're aware of our need for forgiveness, the more we will love Him and be grateful for Him. One practical way to constantly remind ourselves of our brokenness is to regularly confess our sin. Do you think there is enough emphasis on confession of sin in the church today? Why/why not? What habits or practices have helped you to be constantly reminded of your brokenness and need for Jesus?

5. One could read this passage and be left with the impression that the woman's actions (washing Jesus' feet, anointing Him with perfume, kissing His feet) was what led to her forgiveness. But Jesus makes it clear that these actions were a response to His love for her, not a means. He does this by saying to her: "Your faith has saved you" (Luke 7:50). Probably the most common misunderstanding about Christianity is that we are saved by our actions rather than our faith. What steps can we take as Christians to go out of our way to communicate that it is our faith that saves us, not our actions?

Application *Putting knowledge into practice*

- What are some of the reasons why people are not willing to forgive others? Do you struggle to overcome any of these?

- The woman found a way to express her gratitude and love for Jesus by anointing Him with perfume etc. If you feel comfortable, take some time to share with the group one thing you're grateful for right now.