

Forgiveness Rains Love

Luke 7:36 - 47

Nutshell: Those who know Jesus love Him for their forgiveness.

I. Context: The Pharisees' rejection of God's counsel.

II. Text

Luke 7:36 And a particular one of the Pharisees had been requesting Him that He eat with him. And going into the Pharisee's house, He was seated (reclined).

Literal Standard Version with modifications

The next four outline items, III. - VI., are based on the 4 uses of Scripture listed in 2 Tim 3:16 AND the 3 depictions of preaching in 2 Tim 4:2.

III. Teaching

A. An outline of Luke to this point

I. About this Letter: So you'll know about this Jesus, 1:1-4

II. The Messiah is born! A boyhood turning point, 1:5 – 2:52

III. John proclaims repentance for Christ's coming, 3:1 – 20

IV. Messiah's Entry Credentials: Baptism and Genealogy, 3:21–38

V. His Initiation: Fasting and Temptation, 4:1 - 13

VI. His Self-Introduction and Hometown Rejection, 4:14 - 30

VII. Jesus: the FIRST MAN with absolute authority **in** Scriptures, and **over** angels/demons, sickness, and nature, 4:31 - 5:11

VIII. Turning-Point Healings, 5:12 – 32

A. Repatriating a leper, 5:12 – 16, touching the unclean outcast to preview His taking of our exile into Himself

B. Forgiving sin, 5:17 – 26, thus declaring His Deity

C. Healing/ renewal of a man's (Matthew's) soul, 5:27 – 32

IX. New and Old Covenants:

A. NC = OC *replacement*, ~~patch-up~~, 5:33–39. NC: Law in ♥.

B. 6:1-11, OC Sabbath *strict*, but intended as a *help*.

X. Picking the 12, 6:12-16; teaching / etc., incl. Tyrites, 6:17-19

XI. Jesus' teaching manifesto: the **SERMON ON THE PLAIN**

A. The Sermon on the Plain gives the *earthy* evidence of the *spiritual* traits in the Sermon on the Mount, Matt 5-7. Here, the

poor are literal and the rich are their haters. But Christ's disciples are to love their haters.

- B. Christ's disciples are to give generously, living by pity
- C. Only right teaching can produce right living, always convicting *self* first. Only building squarely, exclusively on Christ will survive the floodplains life is lived in.

XII. Messiah & His Mission Portrayed in His Interactions

- A. Forecast: A **Gentile** seeks Jesus for a healing, Lk 7:1-10
- B. Forecast: Hope still held out to **Israel**: Nain widow, 11-17
- C. Recheck: But is this ↑ the Messiah? Just a healer? 18-23
 - 1. John very reasonably expected Christ to judge the world, as was prophesied
 - 2. Jesus' healings looked forward to the **Cross**, the ultimate source of ETERNAL HEALING for the elect
- D. John was not the oddball the people perceived, 7:24-26
 - 1. No, John got to see firsthand what all the former prophets had only been able to foresee: Messiah, 27
 - 2. Greater still all who will see King Jesus on earth, 28
 - 3. The crowd agreed, excepting the Pharisees, 29-30
- E. Jesus then likened that generation to children demanding their playmates to accept their games' terms, 31-35
 - 1. They had rejected John and Jesus on opposite (and inaccurate) terms
 - 2. Jesus said that Wisdom was vindicated by everyone she birthed, including both John and Jesus

B. This is the most interpersonal encounter so far in Luke

C. Luke 7:36, Luke has kept a running narrative on Jesus and the Pharisees

- 1. *The first instance* was perhaps the most noteworthy and unusual, 5:17, Pharisees from all around were attending Jesus' teaching, and God's power was present to *heal* them- apparently *any* of them with *any* ailments! God definitely started off on the right foot with the Pharisees!

Kid-speak: Jesus went to dinner with a Pharisee. Who were the Pharisees? People who *thought* they understood the Bible, but they *didn't*.

- 2. 5:21, *At that same event*, they proved themselves. They ruled Jesus a blasphemer for saying He forgave sin.

3. Last time, we talked about Jesus' dinners with tax-collectors, 5:30
 - a. These were salvation celebrations!
 - b. But Pharisees present ("their Pharisees"- assigned; 'parishioners') questioned an event *hosted* by a tax-collector *with* unapproved guests
4. Then they asked Jesus about fasting, 5:33, from which Jesus' disciples were exempt until His ascension
5. 6:2, They showed their misreading of the Sabbath
6. 6:7, They watched for Him to heal & break *their* Sabbath
- ◆ 7. 7:30, They rejected God's counsel for their lives. Today will be an example of that.
8. Luke will record *two more* dinners with Pharisees after this! 11:37; 14:1

Kid-speak: Even though the Pharisees were stubborn, did Jesus give up on them right away? No.

- D. 7:36, "And a particular one of the Pharisees," indicating that he my gave been a little different. Jesus will favor him with an extensive exhortation. His name was Simon, v 44.
- E. "Had been requesting Him to eat with him," but perhaps their schedules hadn't jived to this point
- F. "And going into the Pharisee's house, he was seated"
 1. Jesus would have had a general caution that He was not being baited in some way, e.g., Prov 23:6-8.
 2. But Jesus models an approachable spirit for us

Luke 7:37 And see- a woman in the city who was a sinner learned that He reclined in the Pharisee's house. (*She had* received [lit., having received] an alabaster container of ointment.) **38** And she was standing at His feet, behind *Him*, weeping. She began to wet His feet with tears, and she was wiping *them* with the hairs of her head. And *she* ardently kissed His feet and was anointing *them* with the ointment.

- G. There were *three different times* when women anointed Jesus in some way
 1. This one was first. In the next one, 6 days before Passover, it is Lazarus' sister Mary, Jn 12:1-8
 2. The third one is recorded in both Matt 26:6-13 and Mk 14:3

- 9. This one was at the home of Simon the Leper (ours with Simon, a Pharisee), two days before Passover.
- 3. Did our instance inspire the last two?
- H. 7:37, “And see- A woman of the city who was a sinner”
 - 1. “See” (behold) often presents something unexpected
 - 2. This kind of dinner required no engraved invitation. Maybe she was assumed to be a servant of another guest.
 - 3. Luke presents the “sinner” part as fact, indicating that she was a notorious sinner. She had a reputation in the city.
 - a. Gossip is a sin too, but this seems to refer to a woman’s misuse of her sexuality: a peak sin, Eccl 7:26
 - b. Mary Magdalen shows up in 8:2. This is not she.
- I. “Learned that He reclined in the Pharisee’s house. (*She was one* having received an alabaster container of ointment.)”
 - 1. She had come into possession of a container of perfumed ointment, probably expensive
 - 2. She had an act of love in her heart for Jesus, so when she saw a way to deliver it, she devised a plan.

Kid-speak: There was lady who used to take money from men to do bad things. She heard Jesus talk about God’s forgiveness, so she stopped being bad and came to thank Jesus.

- J. “And she was standing at His feet, behind Him.” Reclining at table, His feet were behind Him. She stood over His feet.
 - 1. “Weeping.” She was weeping for her sins, which, Jesus will say, are many.
 - a. She had heard Jesus’ teaching, which would have included a call to repentance from sin, Matt 4:17
 - b. *Crucially, she had learned that repentance truly brought a former sinner into favor with God*, for she was bringing a thank-you gift, Isa 55:7
 - c. Jesus was just repeating the OT, e.g., Ezek 18:23
 - 2. “She began to wet His feet with tears”
 - a Remember, she was standing. Her falling tears would have begun falling on His feet.
 - b. The word for “wet” is “sends rain” in Matt 5:45. Her head was like a cloud opening in sorrow and thanks.
- K. “And she was wiping *His feet* with the hairs of her head”
 - 1. Oops! Got your feet wet. Best I can do is use my hairdryer.
 - 2. She had obviously now knelt down

- L. “And she ardently kissed His feet and anointed them with ointment.”
1. ‘Here is the Man who said God could forgive even *my* sins! I thought I was defiled beyond being reclaimed.’
 2. This is the regular word for “kiss” + an intensifying prefix. It is also used of Judas’ kiss, Matt 26:49.

Luke 7:39 But the Pharisee who invited Him, having seen *this*, spoke within himself, saying, “This *one*, if he were a prophet, would have known who the woman *is* who touches him, as well as where *she’s* from, for she is a sinner.”

- M. And now Simon’s worldview is betrayed
1. ***He cannot see the repentance that has taken place in the woman!*** He’s looking right past it!
 2. He can at best see Jesus as a more advanced version of himself: a guardian of God’s religion and a morals instructor in God’s name. Add ‘insider’ knowledge to that (a prophet), and you’d know if a person was a wrongdoer.

Kid-speak: The Pharisee (named Simon) saw the woman crying and thanking Jesus, and he thought that God must not be talking to Jesus, or Jesus wouldn’t let a bad woman do that.

- a. Simon *should* also have been an instructor in sorrow for sin → repentance: a lesson from the sacrificial system and part of God’s outright teaching, e.g., Ps 51:16-17
- b. And he *should* have known that THE Prophet would be the summit of the sacrificial system, Isa 53
3. Putting these blindnesses together, Simon concluded that Jesus wasn’t even as discerning a moralist as himself
4. To be sure, a Christian *is* a moralist, but a **contrite moralist**, basing his morality on a confession of immorality: “I can be good, now that my defilement *has been* cleansed/as my defilement *is being* cleansed.”
 - a. Simon *should* have had a window to see the woman in the same category as himself: not in every way, but in one basic way at least
 - b. Which shows that the woman had understood Jesus’ teaching better than Simon
 - c. But, again, Jesus was teaching nothing different than the

OT. Simon followed a *contorted* OT.

- d. Specifically, the ceremonial law had become a means of self-cleansing rather than an alarm over self-defilement (a big warning in Hebrews)

Luke 7:40 And answering, Jesus said to the man, "Simon, I have something to say to you."

And he said, "Instructor, speak."

41 "There were two debtors to a certain creditor: the one owed five hundred denarii and *the* other fifty. **42** But they not having anything to pay, he pardoned both. Then which of them do *you* say will love him more?"

43 And answering, Simon said, "I suppose *it's* that *one* whom he pardoned more."

And He said to him, "You have judged rightly."

44 And turning to the woman, He said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house. **YOU** did not give water for My feet, but **SHE** wetted My feet with tears and wiped *them* off with the hairs of her head. **45** **YOU** gave Me no kiss, but **SHE**, from *when* I entered, did not stop fervently kissing My feet. **46** **YOU** did not anoint My head with oil, but **SHE** anointed My feet with ointment. **47** For this reason I say to you, Her numerous sins are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, he loves little."

N. "Answering" what Simon said *to himself*. Jesus *was* a prophet!

O. Two debtors to the same creditor, *just as* all men's sins indebted them to God as Judge

1. A denarii was a day's wage

2. *She* had committed many more sinful acts

- ★ 3. But *he* was just as surely in debt and equally unable to pay

Kid-speak: Simon thought that he was good and the woman was bad. He couldn't see that the woman loved Jesus because He taught her that God could wash away her sins.

4. The Lake of Fire has levels of penalty, but the *duration* of the sentence is the same for all of them

- a. Those with lighter retribution won't say, "Well, has it worse" (assuming they can even know the punishment of), because they will be thinking of their *own* evil and

unrepentance that had flouted a gracious God

- b. Those with less *imposed* anguish, whose conscience was presumably more active, might have greater *inner* anguish that they should have followed their conscience *all the way* (back to God)
- c. (The conscience is not basically a *personal* compass. It is a *God*-implanted, *God*-oriented compass.)

P. Simon may have been like the rich, young ruler, whom Jesus loved- sincere, as men go, Mk 10:21

1. Simon may have conscientiously applied God's law to his life, avoiding offenses of deed *and* thought

☞ 2. But where that turns evil is when it is mine: my offering to God, on which basis he will accept me. That is utter delusion.

3. The Pharisee had never learned to say: I am at root a sinner. He saw the Law as merely self-improvement, not a condemnation alarm.

Kid-speak: Simon thought he had made himself good enough to go to Heaven, but could he do that? No. The woman knew she was bad, but she asked God to wash away her sins. Would she go to Heaven? Yes.

Q. The parable doesn't mean that Simon was cleansed from sin

1. Jesus framed the parable so Simon could *put himself in the story* by answering the question

a. Simon *should* have seen himself as one who "loved little," therefore, ignorant of how indebted his own sin made him

b. But he didn't

2. "To whom little is forgiven" means that God's forgiveness had been **general**, as it is for all men (Mal 3:6 of Israel; Gen 15:16 of Gentiles), not **specific**, as it is for those who acknowledge their own sins, Ps 51:4

a. But **general** forgiveness is only temporary, as in the Day of Atonement

‡ b. "Forgiven little" = *not forgiven enough!*

R. It is **love towards Jesus** that differentiated the woman and Simon. Simon could pile up acts of 'righteousness' he had done. The woman outclassed them all with 3 acts of love.

1. Her 3 acts were momentary. Her love had begun beforehand and would continue afterwards, because love continues.

2. But would she fall short in the acts of righteousness

Scriptures demanded? No. She would equal Simon in those, but she would **understand** them.

Kid-speak: If you know who YOU are (a sinner), and you know that JESUS is the one who can take away your sins, what will you do? You will love Jesus with everything you have.

S. Simon had not failed as a host by forgoing water, a kiss, or oil. But by comparison, he didn't see Jesus as his cleanser of sin, or even as an announcer of that message.

1. Jesus was pressing on Simon who He was, in view of the upcoming Cross
2. If Simon knew, he would have been like the woman. He *should* have known.

V. For the Walking Wounded (1 Thess 5:14, "Uphold the strengthless")
Jesus has an eye for those carrying baggage.

VI. Conviction (2 Tim 4:2, "Convince, rebuke"): **What have I done wrong?**
How have I lost righteousness?
Does my life show that I know forgiveness in Christ?

VII. Correction/ Realignment (2 Tim 4:2, "Exhort/encourage"):
How will I correct my error? How will I regain uprightness?
I will frame actions in specific terms of love for God.

VIII. Schooling in Righteousness: **How will I avoid the error and follow Christ?**
Our starting place as Sinner cannot be forgotten.

Wrap-up: We can imagine noble Theophilus being challenged in his view of typically unacceptable society. But we may be challenged that way too.

But our main problem is matching up our expressions of love for Jesus with our heart of love for Him.

If the expressions are lacking, the heart is as well.

If the heart is there, the expressions will follow.

Which of my expressions are weak or missing?

(An example would be private singing, Eph 5:19; Col 3:16.)