

Luke 7:36-50

Introduction

The Christian life is a response to God's grace

It is a life lived out of a deepening understanding of God's grace, and we're all in process in growing in this

The Passage

I. A time of testing by Pharisees (v. 36)

- A. Issue: Jesus, are you going to be with the law keepers or law breakers?
- B. Simon doesn't show usual respect to Jesus upon entering (no kiss, water, oil)

II. The woman's extravagant gesture (v. 37-39)

- A. She has heard Jesus' message: "Repent, come to me and you'll have forgiveness" That message is so different from the Pharisee's message. It's so freeing.
- B. She's come to thank him and anoint him (her plan probably wasn't to wash his feet), but then she sees that he has not been given the usual courtesies (he's been scorned), so she begins crying and honors him the way they should have honored him. So she does the things they did not do.
- C. To undue hair like that would have been very inappropriate (seductive). Only something a wife would do for husband in privacy. Grounds for divorce if done in public. She is pledging loyalty to Jesus in this act.
- D. Pharisees want him to distance himself from her and be appalled

III. Jesus' response (v. 40-50)

- A. The parable (v. 41-43)
 - A man and two debtors = Jesus, Pharisee, and woman
- B. The key connection between being forgiven and loving (v. 44-50)
 - Having many sins forgiven = loving much
 - The woman has sins of commission
 - Simon has sins of omission
- C. The gospel is for people like her who know their sin and

Conclusion

I. The more deeply we take in the gospel (forgiveness of sins) the more we will live lives of love (the Christian life is about responding more deeply to God's grace)

II. We need to regularly revisit the gospel (especially in confession of sin: 1 John 1:9)

- A. Ontological forgiveness: (our sin past, present, future forgiven once and for all)
- B. Existential forgiveness (experiential act of reliving the truth of our forgiveness)
- C. As we continue to confess our sin, our self awareness of sin will deepen, but so will our awareness of forgiveness. Our ego will shrink and we will have more

room for others and will come to appreciate the cross more. We will have more love.

III. Prayer of Confession

Most merciful God we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed by what we have done and what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbor as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways to the glory of your name. Amen.

Discussion questions

1. How did understanding the cultural context enhance your understanding of the passage?
2. Explain the connection between forgiveness and love that Jesus is making in v. 47. Have you seen that connection play out in your own life?
3. Historically, are you a law keeper or law breakers? When it comes to sin, are you a “committer” or an “omitter”?
4. When you are aware of your sin, are you able to invite God into the truth of your sin and experience his forgiveness? What is that experience like for you most of the time?
5. What other coping mechanisms do you use when you’re feeling guilty due to sin (e.g. staying busy and distracted, making resolutions to do better next time, doing various forms of penance, etc)?