

THE MINISTRY OF THE LORD JESUS

Lesson Twenty-Three

VIII. Gospel Presentation (4): The Forgiving Savior and the Loving Sinner (Luke 7:36-50)

Burden to Impart:

In this lesson we see that the Lord Jesus is only truly known and loved by those who have believed in Him and trusted in Him to be their Savior, the One who forgives our sins. A formal, cold or merely religious acceptance of the Lord will not issue in the forgiveness of sins, nor will it produce love for Him. When we truly believe in Him and receive Him as our Savior, our sins are forgiven and washed away. This causes our hearts to be filled with love and appreciation of Him.

Memory Verse: For this reason I say to you, her sins which are many have been forgiven, because she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, he loves little.

Luke 7:47

Facts to Teach:

1. A curious Pharisee one day invited Jesus to his house for a meal. He did not invite Him over because he loved Jesus and wanted to be with Him, but simply to investigate a little closer into the matter of who Jesus was. The self-righteous, proud Pharisee was intending to "check out" the Lord. Instead, he was "checked out" and fully exposed by the Lord.
2. An uninvited woman came to Simon's house, humbly weeping at Jesus' feet and washing the dust and dirt off. She dried His feet with her beautiful long hair and she anointed His feet with costly ointment. All of this seemed too much for Simon. He felt disgusted, not only with this emotional, uninvited, sinful woman who was disturbing his formal dinner, but also with the Lord Jesus who allowed her to touch Him and pay such attention to Him. Simon felt he knew more than Jesus. He doubted that Jesus could truly be a prophet for He apparently didn't even know that the woman touching Him was a sinner.
3. The Lord Jesus, however, taught Simon that day that He is more than a prophet: He is the sinner-loving and forgiving Savior. He knew the woman's heart of repentance regret and love, and He knew Simon's heart of pride, self-righteousness and judgment.
4. The Lord did not answer back Simon harshly with a rebuke. Rather, He spoke a parable to Simon to help him realize that he also was a sinner who owed God something which he could not pay. Whether his debt (sin) was great or small, he can do nothing nor give anything to remove it. God alone can forgive it. So Simon, just like the sinful woman, needs God's mercy and forgiveness. (He should not feel he is so good, nor that the woman was so bad.)
5. The Lord Jesus then showed Simon the striking contrast between his cold, formal, heartless invitation to dinner and the woman's tender, warm, loving attention to Him.
6. The Lord then explained to Simon that the woman's great love was because of gratitude, because her many sins had all been freely and graciously forgiven by God. She loved much because she had been forgiven much. She had faith in the Lord Jesus (not just curiosity) and believed in Him as her Savior (not just a prophet) so her sins were forgiven. So many sins were so freely pardoned that her grateful heart was filled with thanks, appreciation and love. The fact that

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6. (Continued)
Simon showed so little care toward the Lord revealed that he had little love, for he had only a small amount of faith and had experienced very little (if any at all) of God's forgiveness.
7. The Lord's word, "Your sins have been forgiven" were spoken to assure this loving, repentant sinner's heart. She had already believed in the Lord and loved the Lord; therefore she should have the assurance from His Word that she was indeed forgiven. The result of God's forgiveness is that we may go on in peace.

Use This As A Final Inspiration To The Children

1. When we believe in the Lord, regardless of how bad or how many our sins are, we are forgiven immediately and freely.
2. We should be assured of God's forgiveness, believe His faithful Word and love Him to the uttermost, as this woman did.
3. Our response to the gospel, which tells us of God's love toward us, should be a pouring out of our love, our life, our all upon the Lord Jesus, as is seen with this forgiven sinner, and also in Matthew 26:6-13.

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Conclusion of the Lessons

The following four lessons are a set which will conclude the series of lessons on the Ministry of the Lord Jesus. These four lessons do not just teach how the Lord met every man's need, they present the gospel to the class. During this last month the main burden is not to just teach gospel truth, but to lead the children to the Lord if they have not already opened themselves to Him in prayer and asked Him to be their Savior. Lead the children gently, not forcefully. Present the gospel tenderly, not threateningly. Allow the Spirit to work; observe and respond to how He touches the children. Some may be unable to open up in a classroom environment. Be exercised, be sensitive, be believing for the salvation of each one. Do not let their behavior influence you, whether good or bad. Our Savior God desires that all men would be saved.

- Lesson 20 God's Invitation and Man's Excuses for Refusing Salvation (Luke 14:15-24)
- Lesson 21 The Rich Man and Lazarus: The Destinies of Two Persons (Luke 16:19-31)
- Lesson 22 The Loving Father and the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-24)
- Lesson 23 The Forgiving Savior and the Loving Sinner (Luke 7:36-50)

(Portions of the outline in Lessons 20 and 21 were taken from GOSPEL OUTLINES, by Witness Lee, Published by Living Stream Ministry, Anaheim, California)