

Title: Who Loves Much

Text: Luke 7: 36-50

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Subject: Who Loves Much

The main point of my text is verse 47. Our Master said, **“Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for [which cause] she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same loveth little*” (Lu 7:47).**

Proposition: To whom much is forgiven, the same loveth much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

Forgiveness—is the tie that binds the hearts of God’s saints with Christ and with one another. This is what motivates us to obey Christ, to live for Christ, to serve Christ, to love our brethren and to forgive one another. It is knowing that our sins which are many are all forgiven by God our Father for Christ’s sake. It is knowing that God continually, every moment of every day, forgives the multitude of our sins for the sake of his dear Son. When a believer sees themselves as the chief of sinners yet continually forgiven by God then there will be love toward fellow believers and even toward unbelieving sinners. The more we behold our own sins—sins of omission as well as sins of commission, sins of heart as well as sins of act—then the less we will focus on the sins of our brethren and the less critical of brethren. The more of our own sins we know to be forgiven by God, the more we love the Lord and his people—***“Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for [which cause] she loved much.”***

Yet, the opposite is true—*“to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.”* Religious folks like Simon the Pharisee who do not see themselves to be great, unprofitable, worthless sinners, love little—*“to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.”*

Divisions: 1) The woman 2) The Pharisee 3) The Lord Jesus

Luke 7: 36: And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee’s house, and sat down to meat.

Our Lord Jesus had begun attracting popularity. Out of curiosity, this Pharisee named Simon, invited the Lord Jesus to his home for dinner. At a dinner like this the important guests sat at the table, others sat along the walls listening. People were free to walk in and sit along the wall to listen. So this was a full house.

Luke 7: 37: And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at meat in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, 38: And stood at his feet behind *him* weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe *them* with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed *them* with the ointment. 39: Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw *it*, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman *this is* that toucheth him: for she is a sinner. 40: And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. 41: There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. 42: And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? 43: Simon answered and said, I suppose that *he*, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. 44: And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped *them* with the hairs of her head. 45: Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. 46: My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment, 47: Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same loveth little*. 48: And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. 49: And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? 50: And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

This was *“a woman in the city which was a sinner”*—meaning her trade was sin. Everyone knew who she was and what she was including Christ. But most vitally: *she knew!* God had revealed to her that even more than her trade, sin is all she was and all she did. God had revealed what great sins he had forgiven her for Christ’s sake. Only God can make a sinner own himself to be a sinner and God *must* do so before we will own our sin. Joseph Hart wrote:

To understand these things aright,
this grand distinction should be known:
Though all are sinners in God’s sight,
there are but few so in their own.
To such as these our Lord was sent;
they’re only sinners who repent.
What comfort can a Savior bring
to those who never felt their woe?
A sinner is a sacred thing;
the Holy Ghost hath made him so.
New life from Him we must receive,

before for sin we rightly grieve.
This faithful saying let us own,
well worthy 'tis to be believed,
That Christ into the world came down,
that sinners might by Him be saved.
Sinners are high in His esteem,
and sinners highly value Him.

THE WOMAN

In this woman we see that to whom much is forgiven, the same loveth much.

One, the greater sin we see God has forgiven us then the more willing we are to own Christ as our Savior. She knew there was a host of people in that house. This woman knew they knew who and what she was. But she did not care, "*when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house*" then she came to where Christ was. The person who does not see themselves a sinner is totally ashamed of Christ and totally ashamed to identify with his people. Such a person will not speak of their sin. But the more sin we see God has forgiven us the less ashamed we are to own Christ as our Savior and the less ashamed to identify with Christ's people. Self-righteous folks need a law that forces them come to God's house. But a sinner saved by grace only needs to see our sin forgiven by Christ. Knowing our forgiveness in Christ we know nothing is worth forsaking assembling in God's house with God's people where Christ has promised to meet with us.

Two, the greater sin God has forgiven us the more precious Christ is to us so the more sacrificial our love will be. She "*brought an alabaster box of ointment.*" This was precious—costly—ointment for her precious Savior. She saw all her great sin purged by the "precious blood of Christ as a Lamb without spot or blemish." But since we cannot pour out costly ointment on Christ himself, the more precious Christ is to us, the more precious will be our brethren who Christ redeemed. God's free forgiveness makes us love our brethren as precious. They are the closest thing to Christ. Seeing our sins forgiven we are willing to give our absolute best for Christ and his people. The self-righteous need a law, a tax, a tithe. God's people only need to see our great sins forgiven for Christ's sake.

Three, the greater sin God has forgiven, the meeker it makes us, "*And stood at his feet behind him weeping.*" To every forgiven sinner, Christ's feet are beautiful

Isaiah 52: 7: How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"

The more sins forgiven, the more beautiful his feet. Also, the more beautiful the feet of them he uses to preach the gospel to us, both his preacher and his people! She "*stood at his feet, behind him, weeping.*" The whip of the law will not create humility. God creates true meekness by making us behold how greatly God has forgiven our sins. These were bitter sweet tears. Bitter because it was her sins that crucified him; sweet because he bore them all away. Those who do not see how great their sin is are proud, self-righteous, arrogant, and hard-hearted—always right, never wrong. But the more we see the greatness of our sins and the greatness of God's forgiveness then the more humbled at Christ's feet we will become. Likewise, the meeker we will be to one another.

Four, the more sin God has forgiven us the more we want Christ to be honored, glorified and adorned. She saw his feet were dirty, "*and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.*" She wanted her Savior to be honored. This poor sinner saved by her Master would not stand for her Savior to be disrespected. She washed his feet with her tears. She wanted him to have all the glory for her salvation—*a woman's glory is her hair*. She laid her glory at Christ's feet and dried his feet with the hair of her head. This dear saint adored Christ for her salvation. Therefore, she kissed his feet and anointed them with that precious ointment. This also will be our desire toward our brethren who Christ redeemed: we want our brethren honored, to have the glory and to be adorned instead of ourselves.

Christ gave the reason for all this when he said, "to whom much is forgiven, the same loveth much."

THE PHARISEE

In the Pharisee we see that to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. It does not mean that Simon was forgiven. He showed no love at all to Christ or to this woman. If we do not see what great sinners we are and have not experienced the saving grace of God then we will do as this Pharisee.

One, the person who does not see himself a great sinner thinks nothing of Christ, "*Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.*" Simon thought Christ a liar. He held him in contempt, saying, "This man." He questioned him being a prophet. Simon did not even extend the common courtesy of the day to our Lord Jesus. A Pharisee watches to accuse. It appears that is the only reason why Simon invited Christ to his home.

Two, the person who does not see himself a great sinner thinks nothing of Christ's people. Simon thought to himself, I know "*who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.*" A proud Pharisee would not have even let

her in the house in the first place, much less have any love for her. If she tried to kiss his feet he would have said, "Stand by thyself, come not near me, for I am holier than thou."

The person who does not see their sin thinks nothing of Christ and nothing of Christ's people.

THE LORD JESUS

Luke 7: 40: And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. 41: There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. 42: And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? 43: Simon answered and said, I suppose that *he*, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. 44: And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped *them* with the hairs of her head. 45: Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. 46: My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment, 47: Wherefore [why did she does this] I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; [for which] she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loveth little. 48: And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. 49: And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? 50: And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

There are degrees of sin and degrees of sinners. We see that in Christ's parable. He describes two sinners while "*one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.*" You and I who have heard the gospel will be judged by God as far greater sinners than those who have not heard the gospel if we reject the word of Christ. But notice, they were both debtors. All are guilty before God.

Also, notice, no sinner can pay his sin-debt because "*we have nothing with which to pay.*" We are sinners. Christ alone is the sinless One. Christ alone had something with which to pay. Christ alone could take the sin of his people and pay the death we owed to divine justice.

Another thing we see is that the only way any sinner is saved is because God "*frankly forgives us*". God forgives his people without condition on our part, by grace alone, by Christ alone, through faith alone!

But those God truly forgives do not see our own sin as lesser than another. We are not as those who compare themselves with themselves in an attempt to justify our sins. We see all our sin is great because it is against the God who loved us and gave himself for us. A true believer who sees the greatness of his sin cannot call some of our sin lesser sin because we see what great price it cost our Redeemer—his precious blood, his life! We cannot justify any of our sin because we see the grace and love it took for Christ to put it away!

As this woman exemplifies that one who is forgiven much will love much, so Simon exemplifies one who does not see themselves a sinner in need of forgiveness, who loves little or as in Simon's case not at all.

But notice, the Lord Jesus honors those who honor him; he defends his people, "*And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment, Wherefore [why did she does this] I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; [for which] she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.*"

Simon's self-righteousness made him too proud to even provide water to wash Christ's feet much less bow down and wash them. But Christ's great, great forgiveness of this woman's great, great sins made her wash his feet with her tears, wipe them with the hairs of her head and kiss feet and anoint them.

Self-righteous pride kept Simon from seeing what a sinner he was and think nothing of the Savior; it made him look upon her sin and accuse her of being a sinner. But seeing her sinfulness in light of Christ great forgiveness made her love him all the more.

Brethren, the more we behold our own evil ways and the more we see God's free forgiveness of our sins the more we will hate ourselves in our own sight for our iniquities and our abominations and love Christ and his people.

Ezekiel 36:31: Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that we not good and shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations.

Seeing our own sins will make us stop looking on others sins and loathing them. Seeing our own sins will make us loathe ourselves and pity our brethren. Seeing our own sins and loathing ourselves is the cure for a critical spirit of looking for sin in others and being self-righteousness toward others. Men who would never say, "I'm so close to perfect that Christ did not have to forgive me much" say it loudly by not forgiving those who trespass against them.

But the Lord Jesus not only defends his child, he assures his child and speaks peace to our hearts, *“And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.”*

Do you know who this is that forgiveth sins? It is the Son of God, Christ Jesus, who put away all the sin of his people. He makes us love him by making us see his great forgiveness of our great sins. He makes us love our brethren by making us see his great forgiveness of our great sins. He defends his own from self-righteous, hard-hearted, unloving Pharisee’s. He continually speaks peace into the hearts of his Redeemed—*“thy sins are forgiven; thy faith”*—apart from any works in us; thy faith that lays hold of Christ alone—*“hath saved thee: go in peace.”*

Amen!