

A LESSON ON FORGIVENESS // Luke 7:36-50

From the series, The Gospel of Luke

As we continued our study of Luke this week, we focused on a familiar story that explains the significance of forgiveness. In light of this story, we learned that with much forgiveness comes much love of Jesus. In other words, forgiveness changes people.

1. The Pharisee and his party (vs. 36-37, 39)

The Pharisee invited Jesus to his party in order to set Jesus up for examination, expecting Jesus to fail. However, Jesus turned the tables and examined the Pharisee, instead.

2. The woman and her ways (vs. 37-38)

- a. Luke portrays the woman as a “woman of the city,” or in other words, a sinner. Some believe she was living in sexual immorality, perhaps as a prostitute.
- b. Evidently, she had a previous encounter with Jesus, perhaps while he was traveling and preaching earlier in Luke. Somewhere along the line, the woman had come to grips with her sin *and* with her Savior. That is why she wanted to be with Him and express her love.
 - i. Note that she was weeping during her encounter with Jesus. She lost all sense of social construct in her moment of adoration.

3. Christ and His commentary (vs. 40-48)

- a. We all have a debt we cannot pay. When someone forgives a debt, they take it on themselves – like Christ did for us.
- b. When Jesus asked the Pharisee, “Do you see this woman?” He was asking if he was capable of seeing her the way God sees her – as a forgiven sinner.
- c. The woman loved much because she was forgiven of much. Jesus did not have to tell the Pharisee why he did not treat Jesus better. When compared to the woman, it is clear that he had not been forgiven and did not love Jesus.

4. The people and their perception (vs. 49-50)

- a. The major question is: who is Jesus?
- b. If you have met Jesus, you have met forgiveness. We cannot find peace until we have found forgiveness.
- c. Forgiveness changes people.

We see from this story that forgiveness can truly and radically change a person. If we have received forgiveness from Christ, we ought to be encouraged and empowered by the reminder of the power of forgiveness. If we have been forgiven, we are changed.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does this passage show us about God?
2. Pastor Neal explained that perhaps the woman’s action of pouring out ointment was like pouring out her old life at Jesus’ feet. Is there a part of your life that you need to leave at Jesus’ feet?
3. To you, what is it like to be forgiven?
4. How might this passage encourage us as Christians? How might it challenge us?