

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Luke 7:36-50**.
- B. Over the past several Sundays I have been talking about the power of forgiveness. Tonight's lesson continues that theme.
- C. There are three miracles of Luke, chapter 7:
 - 1. The physical healing of a servant (7:1-10).
 - 2. The raising of a young man from the dead (7:11-17).
 - 3. The forgiveness of sins to an immoral woman (7:36-50).

I. **FORGIVENESS: WE ALL NEED IT.**

- A. No one can battle Satan alone and be victorious (see Rom. 3:10, 23).
- B. Everyone who has reached the "age of accountability" is guilty of sin (Rom. 7:10).
...and this commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me;
- C. Sins may be:
 - 1. Against the flesh (1Cor. 6:19).
Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.
 - 2. Done by commission (Mt. 5:37).
"But let your statement be, 'Yes, yes' or 'No, no'; and anything beyond these is of evil."
 - 3. Done by omission (Jas. 4:17).
Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do, and does not do it, to him it is sin.
 - 4. Done publicly, others privately.
- D. But one needs to remember that we are all guilty of sin, whether we feel guilty or not!
- E. Simon, did not feel the need for forgiveness, the immoral woman did.

II. **FORGIVENESS IS THE GRACIOUS GIFT OF GOD.**

- A. See **Luke 7:40-42**.
- B. Forgiveness comes by way of God's grace. Without grace there can be no forgiveness. God has extended grace so that we might be forgiven (Eph. 2:8-9).
For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast.
- C. In the parable, both debtors were unable to repay. No matter how good we think we are, we are too spiritually bankrupt to ever pay God back for our sins.
- D. Forgiveness also comes by the way of our faith. Jesus said (7:50) that this woman's faith had saved her. This completes the instruction of Eph. 2:8 where Paul says we are saved by grace through faith.
- E. **The two debtors.**
 - 1. The first debtor is Simon. He owed little but was also forgiven very little by X.
 - 2. The second debtor is the immoral woman. She owed much, and was forgiven much.
- F. Unfortunately, Simon correctly understands the story but fails to apply it to himself. He even goes so far as to challenge Jesus' authority to forgive sins, completely missing the point that he had sins to be forgiven and sat in the presence of the One who could forgive them.
- G. And it cost Jesus His very life to make the statement of 7:48.

III. **FORGIVENESS IS TO RESULT IN A CHANGED LIFE.**

- A. When we experience the forgiveness of God in becoming a Xian, we not only be different in God's sight, but it should cause us to live differently as well.

- B. Notice what the woman did (see 7:37-38):
1. Brought an alabaster box of perfume.
 2. Gave Jesus water w/her tears.
 3. Gave Jesus kisses of affection.
 4. Gave Jesus oil for His feet.
- C. The woman did not receive cheap forgiveness; neither did she give cheap worship! Our forgiveness is not cheap, it cost Jesus His life. May we return faithful worship to Him.
- D. God has always rejected cheap worship:
1. He rejected the strange fire brought by Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10:1-2).
Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective firepans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on it and offered strange fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. **2** And fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD.
 2. Israel's worship was rejected because there was no righteousness (Amos 5:21-25).
"I hate, I reject your festivals, Nor do I delight in your solemn assemblies. Even though you offer up to Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept them; And I will not even look at the peace offerings of your fatlings. Take away from Me the noise of your songs; I will not even listen to the sound of your harps. But let justice roll down like waters And righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. Did you present Me with sacrifices and grain offerings in the wilderness for forty years, O house of Israel?"
 3. Malachi warned the priest about bringing the imperfect lambs and less than a tithe to God (see Mal. 1:7-10; 3:8-10).
- E. God rejects cheap worship today too:
1. The reluctance of giving of our time to be in Bible class and worship.
 2. The reluctance of giving of our financial resources (breaking our own alabaster box).
 3. The reluctance of being involved in the specific ministries of the church.
- F. Our faith and forgiveness should motivate us toward wholesome worship:
1. A crucified life of faith (Gal. 2:20).
I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
 2. A sacrificial life of service (Rom. 12:1-2).
Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship. **2** And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that *which is good and acceptable and perfect.*
 3. A thankful life of obedience (Col. 3:17).
Whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. Three sermons in the last four weeks on forgiveness:
1. We are to forgive because Jesus has forgiven us (Col. 3:13; SMS on 4-11).
 2. We are to forgive others so that God will forgive us (Mt. 18; SMS on 3-21).
 3. Tonight, X's forgiveness should prompt us to living a faithful life (Lk. 7).
- B. The level of our involvement in the Lord's work and worship is one way to see our amount of appreciation for His forgiveness of our sins.
- C. Forgiveness: everyone needs it, it came at a great cost, and it should result in a faithful life.
- D. Two debtors in this story... which one is most like you?
- E. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring-Xians.