

6 March 2022

Luke 7:36-50: Thanksgiving and Repentance

The difference between indifference and true repentance

1. A picture of indifference

1.1 It affects core members of the worshipping community

(v37) One of the Pharisees...

1.2 It looks like friendship on the surface

³⁷ One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at table.

Question 1: Have you ever been invited to a meal, but the person inviting you had a specific agenda? How did it feel?

1.3 It leads to dark and dangerous thoughts

³⁹ Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner."

Question 2: Simon judges both the women and Jesus very harshly. Why do we sometimes judge others harshly?

2. A picture of true repentance

2.1 It involves going to where Jesus is

³⁷ "And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment..."

Question 3: The woman shows great courage. Why does she?

2.2 It means a sole focus on Jesus, no-one else

³⁸ and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment.

Question 4: What is being demonstrated here? How can we demonstrate the same attitude to Jesus?

3. The divine verdict on indifference: judgement

3.1 Jesus speaks...

⁴⁰ And Jesus answering said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he answered, "Say it, Teacher." ⁴¹ "A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴² When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?"

3.2 Simon pronounces judgement on himself!

⁴³ Simon answered, "The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt." And he said to him, "You have judged rightly."

3.3 The charge sheet is comprehensive

⁴⁴ Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. ⁴⁵ You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. ⁴⁶ You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. ⁴⁷ Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little."

Question 5: Why did Simon treat Jesus like this?

4. The divine verdict on true repentance: mercy

4.1 Jesus speaks

⁴⁸ And he said to her...

4.2 He delivers a verdict we could not pass on ourselves

⁴⁸ And he said to her "Your sins are forgiven." ⁴⁹ Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this, who even forgives sins?"

Question 6: What does this reveal about Jesus?

4.3 The deliverance is complete

⁵⁰ And he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

Question 7: How does faith save us?

A Prayer

Loving Heavenly Father, thank you that you have sent your son to challenge our indifference. May your Holy Spirit lead us to true repentance. Help us to realise the enormity of your forgiveness, and immeasurable sacrifice of your precious Son for our sins. Help to respond the heartfelt gratitude and devotion, and may words your Son said to that woman be true for us as redeemed sinners. Send us out into the world you have made with the message of repentance and faith in Jesus Christ, that through our witness, others will hear these words: "Your faith has saved you, go in peace". For the sake of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, Amen.