

THE MINISTRY OF THE LORD JESUS

Lesson Twenty-three

GOSPEL PRESENTATION (4):

THE FORGIVING SAVIOR AND THE LOVING SINNER

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 their 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 are forgiven, because she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, he loves little.” (Luke 7:47).

Facts to Teach: (Scriptural reading: Luke 7:36-50)

1. A curious Pharisee one day invited Jesus to his house for a meal. He did not invite Him because he loved Jesus and wanted to be with Him, but simply to investigate a little closer into the matter of who Jesus was. This 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 He is more than a prophet; He is a 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 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 could 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, or that the woman is 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 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) of God’s forgiveness.

7. The Lord's word, "Your sins have been forgiven," was 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 lesson 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.

(Continued)

QUESTIONS FOR LESSON TWENTY-THREE

1. Simon received the Lord Jesus in his house with a very warm and loving welcome. (Luke 7:44-46)

True ____ False ____

2. The sinful woman who came into Simon's house without being invited loved the Lord Jesus very much. (Luke 7:47)

True ____ False ____

3. How did the forgiven woman show her love toward the Lord? (Luke 7:38)

4. Do you think that Simon realized he was a sinner who needed Jesus' forgiveness? (Luke 7:39)

5. What do we need to do in order to have our sins forgiven? (1 John 1:9)