

Luke 7:36–50

- ³⁶ Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat.
- ³⁷ And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil,
- ³⁸ and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil.
- ³⁹ Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner."
- ⁴⁰ And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." So he said, "Teacher, say it."
- ⁴¹ "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty.
- ⁴² And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?"
- ⁴³ Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have rightly judged."
- ⁴⁴ Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head.
- ⁴⁵ You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in.
- ⁴⁶ You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil.
- ⁴⁷ Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little."
- ⁴⁸ Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."
- ⁴⁹ And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?"
- ⁵⁰ Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

"Loving Him More" Luke 7:36-50

INTRO:

Recently, I've been haunted by an old hymn we sometimes sing. It is the hymn, ***"More Love to Thee, O Christ."*** Let me just read two verses: ***"More love to Thee, O Christ/ More love to Thee/ Hear Thou the prayer I make/ on bended knee/ This is my earnest plea/ More love, O Christ, to Thee/ More love, O Christ, to Thee/ More love to Thee/ More Love to Thee."*** The second verse reads: ***"Once earthly joy I craved/ Sought peace and rest/ Now Thee alone I seek/ Give what is best/ This all my prayer shall be/ More love, O Christ to Thee/ More love to Thee/ More love to Thee."***

Does your heart ever cry out like this? Do we want to love the Lord Jesus more each day? I find my heart craving this. The more I thought about this, the more I thought this is something we need to meditate upon. Our study will revolve around two questions.

I. How Did We Come to Love Him in the First Place?

II. How Do We Learn to Love Him More?

I. How Did We Come to Love Him in the First Place?

A. If we are going to learn to love Him more, we have to love Him in the first place. How did we come to love Him in the first place? We find the answer to this question in the record of a visit Jesus made to Simon the Pharisee's house in **Luke 7**.

1. In our text we read how Jesus was invited to Simon's house and a woman, known as a sinner, followed Him there. What she did brought to the surface the prejudice in Simon's heart. (vs. 37-39)

“And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, ‘This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner.’”

Simon was certain no one could hear his inner thoughts. However, Jesus knew what he thought and the Lord Jesus answered him out loud. (It must be disconcerting to carry on a conversation with someone who can hear what you are thinking!)

2. We learn how we came to love the Lord Jesus in the first place from our Lord's mini parable in **verses 40-43**.

“And Jesus answered and said to him, “Simon, I have something to say to you.” So he said, ‘Teacher, say it.’ ‘There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?’ Simon answered and said, ‘I suppose the one whom he forgave more.’”

When we come to the Lord Jesus as our Savior it is because God has caused us to become aware we are sinners. We are like another Simon, Simon Peter in **Luke 5:8**

“When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, ‘Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!’”

I love this text because it contains the contradictory motives which grab our hearts when we are saved. **(1)** Like Peter, we realize we are sinful people and the Lord ought to depart from us. **(2)** At the same time, we fall at His feet, hoping against hope that He will not send us away! And then because we come in faith to Him, He cleanses us from our sin. He imputes His righteousness to our account, and He saves us for all eternity. Because the Holy Spirit has made us acutely aware of our sin, we are like the man in the parable who has been forgiven the five hundred denarii debt! We love Him much and it begins to show in our hearts and lives.

3. This is what happened to the woman who was a sinner. While Jesus can look at the heart, the evidence He presented to Simon, the Pharisee, is all stuff Simon himself could see. (vs. 44-47) He could conclude based simply on her actions that something had happened to her.

“Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.”

4. Lest we fall into the error of thinking that this is somehow a works salvation, our Lord added **verse 50**.

“Then He said to the woman, ‘Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.’”

B. When the Lord saved us, the Spirit of God worked in our hearts to cause us to love the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the natural result of salvation. So much so that the Apostle John wrote in **1 John 4:19**,

“We love because He first loved us.”

We love Him because He loved us. We love other believers because He first loved us.

1. People who truly know the Lord as Savior unsurprisingly love Him and this love shows in their lives. This fact is often lost on some today. The Scriptures are not silent on this reality. Let me just show you two examples to make my point.

2. First, **Romans 8:28**

“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.”

How are the saved described in this verse? As those who love God.

3. Second, from the negative perspective we have **1 Corinthians 16:22**.

“If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come!”

A sure sign demonstrating a person does not know the Lord Jesus is that they do not love Him!

C. If loving the Lord Jesus is an automatic thing which God the Spirit produces in us when He saves us, does this mean we don't need to do anything to maintain and deepen this love relationship?

1. No! The Holy Spirit Who teaches our hearts to love the Lord Jesus in the first place, also makes us want to love Him more.

2. Are those of us who have been married a while satisfied to let your love for your spouse remain stagnant? Love is an on-going process. It must grow to live. This all leads to our second question.

II. How Do We Learn to Love Him More?

A. First, we need to understand that our relationship with the living God must be guarded and cultivated!

1. God, Himself, warns us our love relationship with Him must be maintained. Consider **Joshua 23:11**

“Therefore take careful heed to yourselves, that you love the LORD your God.”

Again, **Proverbs 4:33** warns us,

“Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.”

Solomon wrote this because there are things which would draw our hearts away from God and cause us to not love the Lord Jesus Christ more!

2. What are those things which can turn our hearts away from God? The Apostle John described them in **1 John 2:14b-17**

“I have written to you, young men, Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one. Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world; the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”

3. I included a part of **verse 14** in this quote because it tells us to whom John specifically addressed this warning. He wrote to those who thought themselves the *“young men in the faith.”* These were the ones who were vibrant and growing in their relationship with the Lord. They experienced spiritual victories. Notice he described them as those who *“have overcome the wicked one.”* Yet, they were also the ones who could become victims of the world's charms. Remember Demas? **2 Timothy 4:10**

“For Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica.”

The world is the promiscuous lover. The world would destroy our love for Christ! Be on guard! Keep watch! Don't let the world seduce you away from the Lord Jesus.

B. Second, we learn to love Him more through exposure to the Word of God. Did you ever notice how **Deuteronomy 6** is put together? In **verse 4** we have a revelation about the very character of God.

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!”

Then follows the command in view of the revelation. How do we respond? We choose to love the Lord our God.

“You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.”

Now how do we do this? **Verses 6-9** tell us.

“And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

When we are saturating our lives with the Word of God, we learn to love Him more. I learned to really love mountains when I saw them in New Hampshire. I am told that I would even love them more when I see the Rockies! So it is that when we see the majesty of the person of our Lord as He is revealed to us in His Word, we begin to fall in love with Him even more.

C. Finally, we learn to love Him more as He walks with us through the difficult areas of life. Let me turn your attention to **Romans 5:3-5**

“And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”

The only word that is hard to understand in this chain is *“character.”* The Greek word is *dokime*, which means *“that which is proven through a test.”* It speaks of something obtained through the process of testing. That is why the KJV translates this word experience. The end result of this chain is hope, not a “hope so” hope, but a certainty that God will accomplish His purpose in us. And this hope does not disappoint because *“the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.”* This can mean the

love that God has for us or the love that we have for God. I think it is a little of both. When we are loved, we tend to love in return. Trials and trouble have a lot to do with our growing in love for our Lord. This is why the third verse of "More Love to Thee" says what it says!

*"Let Sorrow do its work/
Send grief and pain/
Sweet are Thy messengers/
Sweet their refrain/
When they can sing with me/
More Love, O Christ to Thee/
More Love to Thee/
More Love to Thee."*

So, do we really want to learn to love Him more? I hope and pray the answer is yes!

(1) Then guard your heart, **(2)** seek His face in the Word, and **(3)** be aware of His working in the trials that come into our lives. For this is the way to have more love for Him!

Hymn #208 Alas! and Did My Savior Bleed