

How Much Do You Love?

Luke 7:36-50 Sunday AM, April 6, 2025

Prelude – Scripture: Luke 7:31-50

(NASB95) “To what then shall I compare the men of this generation, and what are they like? 32 “They are like children who sit in the market place and call to one another, and they say, ‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not weep.’ 33 “For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, ‘He has a demon!’ 34 “The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ 35 “Yet wisdom is vindicated by all her children.” 36 Now one of the Pharisees was requesting Him to dine with him, and He entered the Pharisee’s house and reclined at the table. 37 And there was a woman in the city who was a sinner; and when she learned that He was reclining at the table in the Pharisee’s house, she brought an alabaster vial of perfume, 38 and standing behind Him at His feet, weeping, she began to wet His feet with her tears, and kept wiping them with the hair of her head, and kissing His feet and anointing them with the perfume. 39 Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet He would know who and what sort of person this woman is who is touching Him, that she is a sinner.” 40 And Jesus answered him, “Simon, I have something to say to you.” And he replied, “Say it, Teacher.” 41 “A moneylender had two debtors: one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. 42 “When they were unable to repay, he graciously forgave them both. So 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 judged correctly.” 44 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 she, since the time I came in, has not ceased to kiss My feet. 46 “You did not anoint My head with oil, but she anointed My feet with perfume. 47 “For this reason I say to you, her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much; but he who is forgiven little, loves little.” 48 Then He said to her, “Your sins have been forgiven.” 49 Those who were reclining at the table with Him began to say to themselves, “Who is this man who even forgives sins?” 50 And He said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

Three weeks focusing on John the Baptist. First, John imprisoned, facing imminent death with plenty of time to think. He expected opposition as he was to come in the spirit and power of Elijah to prepare the way for the Lord, but how could there be such defeat in the presence of the Messiah? **“Are You the Expected One, or do we look for someone else?”** To be faithful to the end, he took his uncertainties and doubts to God. Jesus reassured him, and we’d do well to note His focus. Note the works done and compare them with the words of God-sent long-dead prophets about the Messiah. John, don’t just trust your feelings, experiences—trust my eternal Word and purposes and you will see power, purpose, and gospel truth showing My love and care in the face of what looks hopeless. Turning to the crowd, Jesus gave them the same message. What feelings, needs did John fill drawing you to His message? You came to hear a prophet? Widening their perspective to show the trustworthiness of His eternal word, He said, John was not just a prophet. **27 “This is the one about whom it is written, ‘BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER AHEAD OF YOU, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY BEFORE YOU.’** Look to this One to whom John pointed. This is God’s promised redeemer. This is ALL you need to bring you back to God, to live a life under God for His glory. Some accepted His words—others rejected them. Last week, Jesus spoke of these who rejected. When the music of celebration played, they didn’t dance, neither did they mourn with the music of sorrow. Announced by John the Baptist and evidenced by Jesus, the incarnate deity, heaven had come to earth. You misjudged them both. **Yet wisdom is vindicated by all her children.** Church, heed the warning and do the work required to have your emotions and desires tied to the life of God’s kingdom. **Blessed are those who do not take offense at me.** Know the blessing of faith in God.

*Hymn #4 (Red): Praise Ye the Triune God!

Do you really mean it, Jesus? Those who come to you for reconciliation and deliverance will receive it? Today, one known for unholy deeds comes behind Jesus while He lay eating in the home of a Pharisee—she wept on His feet, dried them with her hair, and anointed Him with perfume—what went through her mind? It’s hard to focus on her because of the noise surrounding her presence and actions—do you know who she is, what she is known for? She dares invade the personal space of One supposedly holy? Jesus spoke to their thoughts, drawing attention to the great gulf between God and man AND God’s ability and willingness to offer reconciliation. Noting her repentance, gratitude, and love, Jesus said, her sins which are many are forgiven. Do you live before God as One forgiven much? Sing the worship of every Christian as they contemplate God’s mercy in the face of our sin.

*Hymn (Powerpoint): Depth of Mercy *Pastoral Prayer: Pastor Jahn Choir: Come Thou Almighty King Scripture: Psalm 32:1-11

(NASB95) A Psalm of David. A Maskil. 1 How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered! 2 How blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit! 3 When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away Through my groaning all day long. 4 For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer. Selah. 5 I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD”; And You forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah. 6 Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray to You in a time when You may be found; Surely in a flood of great waters they will not reach him. 7 You are my hiding place; You preserve me from trouble; You surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah. 8 I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you. 9 Do not be as the horse or as the mule which have no understanding, Whose trappings include bit and bridle to hold them in check, Otherwise they will not come near to you. 10 Many are the sorrows of the wicked, But he who trusts in the LORD, lovingkindness shall surround him. 11 Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you righteous ones; And shout for joy, all you who are upright in heart.

Offering: *Doxology:

Two different focuses today. **49 Those who were reclining at the table with Him began to say to themselves, “Who is this man who even forgives sins?”** In the face of these thoughts, Jesus looks right at the women and says, **“Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”** Where is your focus today? On the credibility of God and His means of revealing Himself and providing for His own, or on our need to be reconciled to God and gratitude for His provision. The gospel does not merely rescue you from hell, it brings you to God in a way that leads to praising God for His mercy and provision. Do you feel the weight of all that separates you from the holiness of God? Do you know the joy, the treasure of sins forgiven? Imagine how this woman left Jesus that day! Join her in praising God for His power and willingness to forgive your sins. Church Glory in Our Redeemer.

*Hymn (Powerpoint): I Will Glory in My Redeemer

Message: “How Much Do You Love?” Luke 7:36-50

*Hymn #364: My Jesus, I Love Thee

The Lord’s Table

Let’s seal what we’ve celebrated. Affirm our mutual tie to the cross of Christ and go embracing a cruciform life.

*Hymn (Powerpoint): Beneath the Cross of Jesus

*Prayer