

Parable of the Money Lender (Luke 7:36-48)

When reading of a teaching moment with Jesus, the key to understanding the lesson is observing whom Jesus is talking to. In Luke 7:36-48, you are presented with two types of different and contrasting people....

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." (Luke 7:36-48, NKJV)

1. What do you observe about the setting of this passage? Where is this happening?

2. During the first century, honoring a guest is usually shown by a) providing a basin of water to wash his feet (people wore sandals), b) offering scented olive oil for the hair, and c) greeting the guest with a kiss. Observe carefully the actions of the Pharisee and the girl. Write down your what you noticed.

3. During the first century, borrowers unable to repay the lender are thrown into prison until family members can redeem the loan. Note carefully who is the audience of Jesus' parable. What is the lesson of the parable?

Parable of the Money Lender (Luke 7:36-48)
Teacher Notes

When reading of a teaching moment with Jesus, the key to understanding the lesson is observing whom Jesus is talking to. In Luke 7:36-48, you are presented with two types of different and contrasting people....

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1. What do you observe about the setting of this passage? Where is this happening?

Help the student observe the context of the passage. Ask questions to spur their observation of details. What is a Pharisee?

Jesus has been invited to the home of Simon the Pharisee for dinner. It was an honor to host a visiting Rabbi, and Simon the Pharisee had the means to do this in both home and money.

2. During the first century, honoring a guest is usually shown by a) providing a basin of water to wash his feet (people wore sandals), b) offering scented olive oil for the hair, and c) greeting the guest with a kiss. Observe carefully the actions of the Pharisee and the girl. Write down your what you noticed.

Ask the student: what sort of host was the Pharisee? How did he view Jesus? How did the woman view Jesus?

The Bible does not say why the Pharisee invited Christ to his home for dinner; but others knew about the invitation, which may suggest a personal political motive. The Pharisee, with his cordial behavior, did not acknowledge Christ as being God, and perhaps perceived himself to be equivalent in spiritual stature as "a teacher." Simon the Pharisee did not honor Jesus as a guest would normally be.

In contrast, the woman behaved in a quite different manner: a) without invitation, and despite public knowledge of her reputation and social ridicule (likely a prostitute), she came early to the home of a Pharisee to wait for Jesus' arrival, b) she brought an alabaster vial of perfume, c) she stood behind Christ, d) she cried, e) she washed His feet with her tears and hair repeatedly, f) she kissed His feet with her lips repeatedly, and g) anointed His feet with perfume. By her actions, she acknowledged, loved, and revered Jesus.

3. During the first century, borrowers unable to repay the lender are thrown into prison until family members can redeem the loan. Note carefully who is the audience of Jesus' parable. What is the lesson of the parable?

Ask the student: who is Jesus speaking to?

Jesus speaks mostly to Simon the Pharisee (and indirectly to others at the party). Simon was held in high regard socially and religiously and the woman was not; he was "good" and she was "bad."

Ask the student: was the woman asking for forgiveness? Why was she crying?

In the parable, Jesus' question of which debtor would love the moneylender more came **after the moneylender forgave the debt**. The woman did not come to Jesus to ask for forgiveness, she came crying knowing she was forgiven, and she was profoundly grateful. Faith in His promise of forgiveness and redemption was her salvation.