

Lesson 1: The Two Debtors

Reference: **Please Read:** Luke 7:36-50

Theme: Comparison- A heart of gratitude between a Prostitute (Inferred) and a Pharisee

Context: Jesus was invited to dinner at a Pharisee's house only to be scrutinized

Introduction:

For Jesus, being invited by a Pharisee into his home for dinner is more than just a social call. No doubt Jesus was on display to be questioned, examined and inspected. Further down in verses 44-47, we see it was Jewish custom to honor guests which Jesus did not receive:

- The Pharisee did not even provide the most basic of courtesies to Jesus
 - o A servant to wash his stinky and dirty feet- since they recline with feet raised
 - o A complimentary kiss or greeting is given to guests to welcome them
 - o Perfumed oil to anoint a person's head to smell and look good
- Jesus the Son of God was honored not by the religious establishment, but a sinner

Jesus's Feet Anointed by a Prostitute

1 Timothy 1:15-16

Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners — of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life.

- I love this Scripture above, it shows the heart of God for the world
 - o Jesus, the Lamb of God who came to take away the sin of the world- John 1:29
 - o Romans 3:23, *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"*
 - o That means everyone has sinned and is need of a Savior- no exceptions!

Question: "Sinner: 'if I try to be a good person doesn't that improve my position with God?'"

- Took an amazing amount of courage for this woman to do this in front of these men
- In small towns in Judea, everyone knew everybody- she was no doubt an outcast
- Clearly her desire for forgiveness was greater than what others thought about her
- She represents the total sold-out, don't care what people think kind of repentance

Prov. 29:25, "Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe."

What True Repentance Looks Like

The subject of repentance is essential to the unbeliever and believer alike; however, folks have a different definition of repentance and to whom it applies, let's briefly examine this together.

Question: "What's your understanding of repentance; what does it look like to you?"

Definition of Repentance:

- Greek word for repentance is *metanoia* – to change one's mind, a correction
 - o A reversal of one's decision, to turn and go in another direction
 - o A transformative change of heart; think differently and reconsider
- Mark 1:4- John preached a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins
- Matthew 4:17- Jesus preached, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."
- Mark 6:12, "The disciples went out and preached that people should repent."
- Acts 17:30, Paul stated "But now God commands all people everywhere to repent."

My definition of repentance in the New Covenant is found by this Spirit inspired Scripture:

Acts 20:21, "I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus."

- Repentance for the Unbeliever
 - o First they hear the Gospel Message- **Please Read: Acts 2:36-39**
 - o Romans 2:4 talks about the "Goodness of God that leads us to repentance"
 - o As a result they come under the conviction of the Holy Spirit- John 16:7-11
 - o They are enlightened of their need of a Savior- Hebrews 6:4
- At this point they call upon the Name of the Lord and are saved- Acts 4:12

Joel 2:13

Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from permitting calamity.

- **Please Read: Romans 3:9-26** for a reality check on true human nature
- Sadly, so many are deceived and find no need for a Savior or the Bible
- "There are many 'good' religions in the world with commendable morals & ethics"
 - o For many, heaven and hell are just religious metaphors
- Just live by the golden rule, don't try to hurt anybody and live life the best you can

Question: "Does this rationale sound familiar? What's wrong with this kind of thinking?"

If an individual feels there is nothing seriously wrong with him or her (“I’m okay and you’re okay” attitude), that overall they are a good person at heart that tries not to hurt anyone. They’ll say, “Sure I make mistakes from time to time, but I’ve never killed anyone or done anything serious.” This humanistic convenient philosophy of moral relativism tries to justify and water down the reality of sinful human nature that frankly is rotten & Satanic at the core.

James 2:10, “For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.”

- Ps. 36:2, *“For in his own eyes he flatters himself too much to detect or hate his sin.”*
- In Luke 18:18-19 Jesus stated that no one is good except God alone
- **Please Read: Luke 18:9-14**
- True repentance is an acknowledgment that I’m a sinner in need of a Savior Jesus
- Without accepting this revelation from the Spirit, there is no salvation to receive
 - o Understanding God’s goodness in His Great Plan of Salvation
 - o Acknowledge a lost condition in sin and utter hopelessness without Jesus
 - Matthew 19:25-26- It is impossible for man to save himself
 - o Call upon the Name of Jesus, by His Grace through faith- no works required

The Two Debtors – Luke 7:40-43

- Prov. 22:7, *“The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.”*
- Being in debt in ancient times was a serious matter- debtors prison Matthew 5:25-26
- Now a denarii was a small silver coin in Roman currency
- Bible refers to it as a day’s wage- Matthew 20:2; John 12:5 (300 denarii- 1 yr wages)
- So 500 denarii is comparable to 1 ½ years wages versus 50 denarii almost 2 months

Question: “Have you ever been relieved from debt, what did it feel like?”

- The greater the debt cancelled, the greater the gratitude
- That is why Jesus came, to call sinful humanity to repentance
- The problem with religious people, they think they are righteous and don’t need help
- Pride comes before a fall, the lies create a deception that blinds them from the truth
- They are arrogant and sanctimonious- Jesus made a point to expose the hypocrisy
 - o If folks don’t know they are sick, they won’t seek a doctor- Matthew 9:10-13

Note that repentance is not just for those who are unsaved, but for Christians as well. Godly repentance is mentioned in 2 Corinthians 7:8-11 and in Hebrews 6:1; turning from the old lifestyle we had before Christ; keeping a clear conscience and quick to repent – 1 John 1:9.