



19 Minutes With the Messiah

The Two Debtors

(Luke 7:36-50)

Jesus' Body as the Temple
The Living Water
New Cloth
New Wine in Old Wineskins
The Salt of the Earth
The Light of the World
The House Built on the Rock
▶ **The Two Debtors**
The Sower
The Weeds
The Growing Seed
The Mustard Seed
The Yeast
The Hidden Treasure
The Fine Pearl
The Net
I AM the Bread of Life
Becoming Childlike
The Unmerciful Servant
I AM the Light of the World
I AM the Gate
I AM the Good Shepherd
The Good Samaritan
The Friend at Midnight
The Rich Fool
The Wise Servant
The Barren Fig Tree
The Great Banquet
The Lost Sheep
The Lost Coin
The Lost Son
The Shrewd Manager
The Rich Man and Lazarus
The Unworthy Servants
I AM the Resurrection and the Life
The Persistent Widow
The Pharisee and
the Tax Collector
The Workers in the Vineyard
The Ten Minas
The Two Sons
The Wicked Tenants
The Wedding Feast
The Fig Tree
The Householder
The Ten Virgins
The Talents
The Sheep and the Goats
A Lesson About Foot Washing
I AM the Way
I AM the True Vine
The Woman in Labor
I AM the Alpha and the Omega

³⁶One of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, so he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. ³⁷When a woman who had lived a sinful life in that town learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster jar of perfume, ³⁸and as she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

³⁹When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner."

⁴⁰Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to tell you."

"Tell me, teacher," he said.

⁴¹"Two men owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴²Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he canceled the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?" ⁴³Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt canceled." "You have judged correctly," Jesus said.

⁴⁴Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. ⁴⁵You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. ⁴⁶You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. ⁴⁷Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little."

⁴⁸Then Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

⁴⁹The other guests began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?"

⁵⁰Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

1. How did Simon, as a Pharisee, feel about Jesus? Why? What evidence of his feelings is found in this lesson?
2. What do we learn about our Savior from the fact that he accepted the invitation of Simon as well as the gift of the "woman who had lived a sinful life"? What is the lesson for our daily lives?
3. Why was Simon so shocked and upset by the scene at his table?
4. Jesus explained the woman's actions through means of a parable. In the parable, whom does the moneylender represent?

Who are the debtors?

What is the debt?

What does the debtors' inability to repay the debt represent?

What does the canceling of the debt represent?

5. After reading the following passage, explain what Jesus means by being forgiven much and being forgiven little.

"There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one" (Romans 3:10-12).

6. The main point of Jesus' parable is found in his question: "Now which of them will love him more?" What is the main point?

7. In financial terms, how would you estimate the debt of your sins against God? (Circle one.)

\$1,000 or less \$1,000-10,000 \$10,000-100,000 \$100,000-1,000,000 \$1,000,000+

What penalty will ensue if you cannot repay the debt? How much of your debt has been forgiven and cancelled? How? Why? How will you respond?

For Further Study

8. Agree or disagree with the following statements:
- The sinful woman was forgiven because of her deep love for Jesus.
 - Some people caused Jesus to suffer more than others.
 - The Christian church should stop preaching and teaching about sin and hell so much and should focus on things like love, kindness, and forgiveness.
9. Explain the meaning of the word "peace" in verse 50.

Helps: (1) Steeped in self-righteousness and an unwillingness to acknowledge his sins, Simon felt no need for Jesus as Savior and was filled with contempt for him. His attitude was made clear by his lack of common hospitality (offering no kiss of welcome, no water for Jesus' feet, no oil for his head, and apparently no specific seat at his table), his harsh judgment of Jesus, and his disrespectful words ("this man"). (2) Jesus is concerned about the spiritual needs and the salvation of all people—the great "sinner" as well as the proud and self-righteous. (3) Simon was repulsed by the woman's moral character and therefore by her every action as well. He was equally repulsed by Jesus' acceptance of her actions. (4) Jesus identifies himself as the moneylender (verse 48). Every person, being a sinner, is a debtor but is unable to make satisfaction for or offer anything as full payment for sin. Through Christ and his vicarious death, the debt of all sin has been forgiven and cancelled. (5) All people carry an immeasurable load of sin and are equally condemned. Those who acknowledge their sin receive full and abundant forgiveness by faith in Christ. Those who do not acknowledge their sin do not seek forgiveness in Christ and, by their unbelief, do not receive it. (6) The redeemed sinner will express his or her faith in actions of thankful love. (7) (a personal exercise) When a person rightly acknowledges the debt of his or her sin (that it is a debt beyond measure that damns eternally) and that Christ, purely out of grace, has cancelled the debt in full through his sacrifice on Calvary, that person, as Jesus says, will love much. Conversely, when a person, in self-righteousness, does not acknowledge the debt, he or she will not appreciate the work of Christ and will love little. (8) As Jesus' parable indicates, deep love for Christ results from his gracious cancelling of the debt of sin, not vice versa. Because the punishment for every person's sin is the death of hell, only self-righteousness would suggest that one's personal merit or goodness eased Jesus' suffering somehow. Only the condemning message of the law will shatter self-righteousness, instill a proper and full appreciation of the message of God's love and forgiveness, and by it move the redeemed to respond gratefully in love. (9) Because of the forgiveness of sins, there is peace with God. Where there is peace with God, there is peace of conscience, peace of mind, the ability to live at peace with others, peace in time of hardship, etc.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, my debt of sin is immeasurable. I have earned nothing but an eternity in hell. Yet, by your gracious sacrifice on the cross, my entire debt has been cancelled. Precious Savior, moved by your love, may I respond with love. Amen.