

## ***Session 11 Jesus' Compassion: Trusting His Leadership (Lk. 7)***

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

- A. In this session, we will look at Jesus' ministry in Galilee as it happened chronologically—being set forth in Luke 7 and supplemented primarily by Matthew 11 along with Matthew 8:1-13.

*Tonight, we are going to look primarily at Luke 7, although the companion passage that supplements it is Matthew 11. Mostly we will stay in Luke 7 and occasionally make a reference to Matthew 11 that gives a bit more detail to the four episodes here in Luke 7.*

- B. Jesus shows great compassion for those who were considered as outcasts of society (Lk. 7)—such as a Gentile centurion working in the occupying army (7:1-10), a helpless widow (7:11-17), John the Baptist, a preacher considered to have a demon (7:19-23), and an immoral woman (7:36-50).

*What we see is that Jesus shows not only His great power, but also His bold and unique compassion. There are actually four episodes in Luke 7. In each one of them, Jesus is showing His compassion for one who is considered an outcast in society. First, it is a centurion who is a Gentile. He was a Gentile soldier in Israel, a part of the Roman army that was an occupying force. So, they were not really appreciated in Israel at all.*

*Then after that there is a helpless widow. Widows were on the bottom rung of society in many ways.*

*Then there was John the Baptist, but by this point in time he was in prison, and Israel had concluded he had a demon, that his ministry was over, and they moved on past him. Nobody was really standing with John but just a small little handful of disciples. Jesus speaks and vindicates John.*

*Then there is an immoral woman, the one that breaks the alabaster vial of perfumed oil upon His feet. He forgives her much, and she loves Him much. So, the four episodes in Luke 7 all magnify and highlight Jesus with unusual, unique, yet bold and tender compassion.*

- C. Seeing His compassion helps us to trust His leadership without being offended with Him.

<sup>23</sup>***“And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.” (Lk. 7:23)***

### **II. JESUS HEALED THE CENTURION'S SERVANT IN CAPERNAUM (LK. 7:2-10)**

- A. The local elders pleaded with Jesus to heal the centurion's servant (Lk. 7:2-5; cf. Mt. 8:5-6).

<sup>1</sup>***...He entered Capernaum.*** <sup>2</sup>***And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die.*** <sup>3</sup>***So...he sent elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and heal his servant.*** <sup>4</sup>***And...they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for whom He should do this was deserving,*** <sup>5</sup>***“for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue.”*** (Lk. 7:1-5)

*Let's begin with the first of the four stories. The local elders, Jewish elders of Capernaum, go to Jesus. This is very unusual because they plead with Jesus that He would have favor upon this centurion. That is an odd relationship because, again, the Jews did not like the Roman soldiers at all. So this centurion was a very unusual man. Let's read the passage and I'll make a few comments on it.*

*Luke 7:1, “And now when He concluded all of these sayings in the hearing of the people He entered Capernaum.” Remember Capernaum was up north, and that was His “home-base” city. That is the one city you want to understand because that is where He came and went from. That was His headquarters, so to speak. Of*

course, the other important city would be down south, which would be the city of Jerusalem. He goes back to Capernaum, His headquarters. Verse 2, "A certain centurion's servant who was very dear to him was sick and ready to die."

1. **Roman centurion:** A centurion was a Roman officer in charge of one hundred soldiers. The Jews did not like Roman officers since they were part of an occupying military force in Israel, but the local Jewish leaders in Capernaum respected this man and spoke to Jesus for him, as he had financed their synagogue himself instead of taking their money as other centurions did.

Now a centurion was a Roman officer who was over 100 soldiers. Again, the Roman army was occupying Israel, so they did not like centurions; they did not like Roman officers at all. A Roman officer like a centurion would typically be cruel and oppressive. They would take money from Israel and use their power to extort things, money etc. from them. This man was really different. He loved the nation of Israel.

2. Matthew described the servant as paralyzed and in tormenting pain (Mt. 8:6).

He had a servant who was very dear to him and who was ready to die. In Matthew 8, it adds that the servant was paralyzed and terribly tormented. So, he had great pain, was on the verge of death, and was paralyzed, Matthew 8:6 adds.

Verse 3, "so when he heard about Jesus"—this roaming, itinerate preacher who was doing miracles, because news was spreading everywhere—"he sent the elders of the Jews to Him." These are the elders of the synagogue of Capernaum, the local elders, not the elders of the Jews in Jerusalem, not the Sanhedrin, not that level, but just the local leaders. He said, "Please go to him and plead with him for me. He will not pay attention to me. I am a Roman centurion. I am an officer of an occupying army. He surely will not pay attention to me, but maybe he will listen to you."

Verse 4, so these elders came to Jesus, and they were begging Him earnestly. Now this is interesting because these elders in the synagogue have this hot-cold relationship with Him. When Jesus heals on the Sabbath or His disciples are picking grain out in the grain fields, they are really angry at Him. Now this is one of their big money guys who needs help, because this Roman centurion had given tremendous amount of money to build their synagogue, to build their building, and they are saying something like, "Hi, Jesus. Hey, we so appreciate You."

Maybe Jesus was thinking, "It's like, 'Okay, it is a different face than our last conversation,' but I am listening."

They say, "Can you come to help this one guy?"—verse 4—"He is so deserving. He is different from other Romans, particularly Roman officers."—Verse 5—"He loves Israel, and he built us a synagogue." In other words, he provided the majority of the finances for that synagogue. Now most Roman officers took money from Israel, but this guy was giving it. He was very, very unusual.

- B. The centurion felt unworthy to have Jesus come to his house (Lk. 7:6-10; cf. Mt. 8:8-13).

<sup>6</sup>...when He was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying to Him, "Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof..  
<sup>7</sup>But say the word, and my servant will be healed. <sup>8</sup>For I also am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes... <sup>9</sup>When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him... and said to the crowd that

***followed Him, "I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!"<sup>10</sup> And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well who had been sick." (Lk. 7:6-10)***

*Verse 6, and when Jesus was on His way to the centurion's house, "when He was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends." Maybe just a couple hundred yards down the way I am guessing, not far from the house. The friends came out and said, "Wait, do not come to the house! Do not trouble yourself."*

1. ***Not worthy:*** The centurion understood that it would defile a Jew in a ceremonial way to enter a Gentile's home. He did not feel that God owed anything to him for financing a synagogue.

*The trouble was not the distance, because He was almost there; He was perhaps just a stone's throw away from the house. The guy said, "I am not worthy for you to enter my roof." What is going on here is that for a Jewish religious leader to go into a Gentile's house would defile him in a ceremonial way—defiled ceremoniously—which means they could not participate in the Jewish rituals, if they were defiled in various ways. One way was by going into a house of a Roman. So, while Jesus is just down the way, the centurion says, "No, no, You do not have to come in as that is going to defile You and You will not be able to participate in the feast or the sacrifices or the rituals." Well, that was a Jewish law that was added to the books; it was not in the Bible that way, but they added it.*

*The next thing that he was probably thinking was "It is going to embarrass You, Jesus, if You are seen coming to my house and 'fraternizing with the enemy.' This could cause You huge stigma in the Jewish community. So in that sense I am not worthy for you to come into my house." It's an interesting thing because Jesus was almost there. He was just down the road, so he was not speaking of an inconvenience of time. It was the social stigma or the religious defilement that Jesus would incur, or at least the centurion thought that. So, he was being humble saying, "I do not want to bother you with that. A matter of fact, why don't You just speak the word? I know who You are. You are connected to God. You were sent by God. You and God are close. I do not know how it works, but You and He are close. I get that."*

2. ***I too am a man under authority:*** The centurion recognized that Jesus had great authority over sickness because He was under God's authority—thus, he believed Jesus was sent by God.

*He says, verse 7, just "say the word." That is, You do not have to come to my house, bear the social stigma, the religious defilement, etc. You just speak the word from where You are. "For I," verse 8, as a Roman officer, "I am a man placed under authority." That is, I am under the authority of Caesar in Rome. Because I am under his authority I can command Caesar's resources and assets within my boundaries. Because I am loyal to him and under his authority I can command his resources to do my job. He was saying, "I get the principle. I have soldiers under me, and I tell them to go, and they go, and come, and they come because they have to." That is, the whole of the Roman army would back me up if they were disobedient to me because they are under me. What he was saying is, "I know that You have authority over sickness because You are under the God of Israel. You and He are really close. He has all power; He has way more power than the power of sickness. You could speak, and I know it is going to work. I get who You are."*

*Now he did not really understand the fullness of Jesus' identity, but he understood He was sent by God and under God's favor. Now the leaders at Capernaum, the elders who were begging Jesus for this favor to go pray for this man's servant, they themselves did not believe this about Jesus. This centurion who did not have a Bible—they did not have Christian bookstores back in those days—and had no formal training not only understood, but believed.*

3. **Marvel:** That was an amazing insight for a Gentile who did not have training in the Scriptures.

*Verse 9, "Jesus marveled." He said, in effect, "How can a guy who does not go to the synagogue regularly like the others understanding this? He is not trained in the Jewish Messianic prophecies about the Messiah, but he gets how the God of Israel and I operate. That is remarkable!" Verse 9, He says, "I have not seen such great faith." The reason it was such great faith because it had such clear insight with so little training or evidence. It is not like this centurion had seen 100 miracles, but he said, "I just know how this works. I just know that You are like this. I believe the stories I have heard, though I have not seen it with my own eyes."*

*Jesus said, "This is remarkable." Verse 10, and then the guys who were sent returned back to the house. Of course, this paralyzed servant who had been suffering greatly was totally healed, completely healed.*

- C. Matthew included two important truths by Jesus (Mt. 8:11-13)—that many more Gentiles would eventually accept Jesus (Mt. 8:11; 24:14; Rev. 7:9) and believing God's word releases blessing. The Lord releases His blessing related to how we respond to Him with faith (8:13). It is not enough to be casual about God's promises, we must be intentional to engage with faith with what He says.

***<sup>11</sup>I say to you that many [Gentiles] will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>12</sup>But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." <sup>13</sup>Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you." (Mt. 8:11-13)***

*What we read in Luke 7 is found in two places in Matthew: chapters 8 & 11. Remember Matthew is not chronological. Mark and Luke are chronological, and so is John. Matthew is thematic; it is organized according to themes. So, you never know where you are, timewise in the storyline, in Matthew when you are reading straight through because it is according to themes.*

*Matthew tells this story chapter 8, but he adds another dimension to the story that Luke did not include. Remember he is writing particularly with the Jewish people in mind, whereas Luke was writing with the Greeks mostly in mind. Here Matthew wants the Jewish audience to know two additional, important statements that Jesus said. Luke 7 does not include them, but I think they are really important.*

*Jesus is making a point. He says that He is bold about showing compassion to this centurion, this Gentile, this foreigner, this pagan, because he has a heart for God. In Matthew 8:11, He says that this is not an isolated situation, that many Gentiles are going to come. I use the word "Gentiles" though it says, "many from the east and the west." That means the east and the west of Israel, like far in the east and far in the west, around the world. Now most of the Jews lived in Israel obviously. He said that the nations from all around the globe are going to come to the God of Israel. They are going to sit down at a table—at a feast is the idea—with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom—in the resurrection is what He is talking about.*

*Verse 12, "but the sons of the kingdom," that is, the nation that was entrusted with the oracles of God, with the covenants of God—that is why they are called the sons of the kingdom. Romans 9, one nation was entrusted by God with the promises, the Bible, the covenants; the patriarchs were Jewish. These were all given to Israel. So, verse 12, Jesus is saying, "many of the sons of the kingdom"—meaning you are in line to know and to believe but many of you are resisting and you are refusing the Word of God—"are going to be cast out into outer darkness in that day. There will be weeping and there will be gnashing of teeth."*

*So the first point that Jesus made, which Matthew adds to the story, is that this compassion for a Gentile is not a one-off thing. God is going to make it global thing. Many in the earth, many in the nations. Of course, we are seeing that escalating, much of it happening in this generation as the harvest is going forth in the east and the*

west of Israel. Meaning first it was the Western world, and then out in the East in Asia and all over the earth many are coming into the kingdom.

I like how the New International Version puts it. Instead of just saying that they will sit with Abraham, it says that they will sit **at the feast** with Abraham. Beloved, we are going to have physical resurrected bodies, and we are going to have physical meals literally with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, with all of the patriarchs through history. We are going to know them! We are going to have relationship with them and socialize with them.

Jesus was talking about the physicality. They are going to actually sit and have dinners together. Of course, then He says in verse 12, that many of you “will be cast out”—you who are in line, you are sons of the kingdom—meaning you are not guaranteed salvation, but you are in line to know the word, to have a heritage of faith, to be trained in the prophecies, but you are rejecting them.

Then verse 13 Jesus adds another principle that Matthew highlights. Luke for some reason does not focus on this, though it is very important. Jesus said to the centurion, “As you have believed so let it be done.” This is really important. A lot of believers kind of casually overlook this. They think that they do not want to be fanatical about it. The Lord releases His blessing **in relationship to** our response of faith. Not all of our blessing is related to the measure of our faith, but a measure of it is.

Some of the blessing God gives us, and we do not even know what is going on, in terms of us not being actively involved in very intentional faith. It is God is just blessing us. Then there is an arena of blessing in your life that if you believe for it you will experience it. If you do not, you will go without it. Some of the Church gets this; it is called the faith movement. You have heard it, and you may say, “Well, the faith movement...” There have been enough people in the faith movement that have overdone it and exaggerated the doctrines and who use this just to get more money and make an easier, more comfortable life with more money. Their whole focus is on that, so a lot of believers say, “Ah, I do not believe that faith stuff. That is crazy!” because they have seen some extremes.

You do not want to throw the baby out with the bathwater. You do not want to lose this dynamic principle because a few people, not everyone in the faith movement by any means, but a few preachers on TV are really extreme and into error. When God promises you something, if you speak it back to God and say, “I am not going to back down until I see it with my eyes,” and you keep that confession of the Word of God, and you hold on to it, you will see much more blessing in your life. If you say, “Well, I don’t know. God knows my address. He knows where I am at. If He wants me to have it, He will give it to me,” you will still be blessed some, but there are many things of blessing you will not experience in your life. This is a very, very important kingdom principle.

### III. JESUS RAISED A WIDOW’S SON FROM THE DEAD IN THE CITY OF NAIN (LK. 7:11-17)

- A. A large crowd gathered to Jesus in Nain (about 25 miles from Capernaum and 5 miles from Nazareth) in the autumn AD 28. Jesus showed compassion for a widow whose son died. She was in emotional pain as well as financial pressure, having neither a husband nor a son to support her.

<sup>11</sup> ...He went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and a large crowd.

<sup>12</sup> ...a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow...

<sup>13</sup> When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, “Do not weep.”

<sup>14</sup> ...He said, “Young man, I say to you, arise.” <sup>15</sup> So he who was dead sat up and began to speak. (Lk. 7:11-15)

*Let's go to the second example of Jesus' compassion now. The first one was the centurion; He shows tremendous compassion there. Now He goes to the city of Nain. It is about twenty-five miles away. That is a good, rigorous walk—twenty-five miles. He goes to the city of Nain. When He gets there, there is a big crowd awaiting Him. I mean everywhere He goes, a crowd is waiting for Him. I heard one preacher say that Jesus is the only preacher who never called a meeting. He never called a meeting because, everywhere He went, thousands were waiting for Him. That sounds kind of cool. Well, it might be kind of fun for a few weeks, but that is intense. That is an incredibly taxing invasion of His own privacy and rest and so many other things. He was doing this as a true servant.*

*So, verse 11, the second episode of Luke 7, He goes to the city of Nain, about twenty-five miles away. There is a large crowd there. He gets there, verse 12, just when a funeral procession was taking place. They were carrying the coffin of this young man, the son of a widow. Jesus walks right up to the city during the procession. The mother was a widow, and this was her only son. So not only is she grieved because of the emotional pain of losing her son, but now she also has tremendous financial liability and trouble. For a widow in that day there was no welfare system, there was no social security, and there was no government aid. A widow was in a really difficult position if she did not have a husband or children to supply her needs when she was elderly. That was a biblical mandate then—it still is now—that you would honor your parents in their old age. Well, she has lost her only son. She has no source of support, and undoubtedly the love of her heart, her son, her only son, is now dead after she has lost her husband.*

*Verse 13, Jesus stops the funeral procession. He feels tremendous compassion for her, very much like He did for the centurion. Although the word compassion was not used concerning the centurion, but the centurion was deeply troubled that his servant was suffering so greatly. He almost died, and Jesus saves a man from almost dying. Here He goes the next step, and He heals a man that has already died. I mean His reputation just escalates after this. I mean it is dramatic to heal blind eyes and paralytics, but calling somebody back from death is like another level! Well, I mean, healing the blind and the paralytic—those kinds of miracles are really extreme as well, but this takes it to another level now. I mean word goes everywhere.*

*He tells the woman, "Do not weep." Of course, the people around are undoubtedly thinking, "How could You tell her that? How uncaring, how cruel to say this to her!" As if He were saying, "Just get your eyes on the Lord and the resurrection, and you will be together then, so do not worry about it." They are thinking, "Do not say that!"*

*Then verse 14, He looks at the young man, and this is how Jesus often did it: He spoke to the disease, He spoke to the person who was dead and called them back, He spoke to the fig tree, and He spoke to the mountain. Jesus spoke to the person or the object that was going to be the recipient of the miracle power of God. I feel like there is instruction in the way He does this consistently.*

*So, He looks at this young man that is dead. "Young man, arise."*

*The man that was dead sat right up and began to speak. Of course, the fear of God comes over the whole city, and they began to glorify God. You can read the whole story in Luke 7. They are saying, "A great prophet has arisen! God has visited us!" which is true. The visitation of God had come. The Messiah was in the flesh in Israel. Israel did not respond to it, even though they were grasping little by little what was happening.*

#### IV. JESUS SPOKE ABOUT JOHN THE BAPTIST (LK. 7:18-23)

- A. John sent two of his disciples to ask Jesus if He was the Messiah (Lk. 7:18-23; cf. Mt. 11:2-6). John was in prison at this time (Mt. 11:2). Jesus showed compassion in how He answered these disciples. The time was probably in the autumn of AD 28, about two years after he baptized Jesus (26 AD).

***<sup>19</sup>And John, calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to Jesus, saying, "Are You the Coming One...?"<sup>20</sup>When the men had come to Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, 'Are You the Coming One...?'"<sup>21</sup>That very hour He cured many of infirmities...and to many blind He gave sight.<sup>22</sup>Jesus answered..., "Go and tell John the things you have seen...: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised...<sup>23</sup>And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me." (Lk. 7:19-23)***

*Now we are going to go to the third episode of Luke 7. This story, this episode, is very dear to me. I have spent a lot of time on this one. I care about this passage because I think it has tremendous insights. I want to say this humbly: this passage in my opinion is mostly misinterpreted. It is mostly misinterpreted. A very, very common interpretation is that John the Baptist is wavering; he is in prison and he is wavering. He is not sure Jesus is the Messiah and is having doubts. That is how it is almost always taught, not always but mostly.*

1. John knew that his disciples needed to be convinced of who Jesus was. John knew who Jesus was—he saw the dove descend on Him and heard the Father's voice at Jesus' baptism (3:22). John was the greatest prophet and "the Father's messenger" to prepare Jesus' way (7:27-28).

*I think what is happening is something very opposite. John the Baptist is in prison, and he is very aware he is going to die. He already proclaimed to his disciples, "Jesus must increase, and I must decrease." That is, I must phase out of the way, phase off the scene. I know that. I know from God I am decreasing, and I am finished.*

*John had urged his disciples to follow Jesus, but there were a couple of these guys who were really strong-minded, I guess. They would not follow Jesus. "John, we are with you."*

*"Guys, I am here to get you with Him."*

*"We are with you until the end."*

*"I love your heart, but it is sentiment. I am here to get you loyal to Him."*

*So Jesus is moving around Israel. but they are staying with John. They will not go, this little handful. As a matter of fact, a couple decades later, in Acts 19, in the city of Ephesus which is modern-day Turkey, there were some disciples who were John the Baptist's disciples. I mean a couple decades later, they do not even know about Jesus; they are still going for John the Baptist.*

*So it is like John is saying, "Guys, do not do that. I mean I love that you are zealous. I love that you are strong-minded or you would probably not even be listening to me if you did not have that kind of personality. You have to do what I tell you: behold the Lamb of God, there He is." Well, there were probably a few of them that just would not let go. So John is in prison, and I believe John is sure he is going to die. That is just my strong opinion. So, he gets these two guys and says, "Hey, would you guys run an errand for me?" You know he is kind of whispering through the prison window there. "Hey, would you do a favor?"*

*"Anything for you, John."*

*"Okay, good. You know Jesus?"*

*"Yeah, everybody is talking about Him, but we are loyal to you, John."*

*"Yeah, yeah, I know. Would you go ask Him about who He is for me? Would you do that? Would you go on that errand?"*

*"Yeah, anything for you, John." So, the story goes that they go ask Jesus, "Who are You?" Their eyes open, "Oh my goodness! You **are** the One." They come back, "John, He is the One!"*

*John says, "Good, got it. I am glad you got it now." I think that John sent them on the mission for the sake of the disciples themselves, not because John was wavering.*

*Let's read the story. John called two of his disciples, verse 19, and he sent them to Jesus. They ask the question, "Are You the coming one?" You have to read the Luke 7 to get the whole story because I edited it down a little bit for the class and for the notes.*

*Verse 20, when the men came to Jesus, they say, "John sent us on an errand to ask You this question." Now at a casual reading you think John is asking it because he needs the answer. I believe the disciples of John need the answer, not John. That very hour, verse 21, they ask Him, "Are You the One?"*

*He just says, "Guys." Jesus looks at them and smiles. Maybe He's thinking, "I love these guys, and I love John, and I love what is going on here. I get what John is doing." He says, "Guys, come over here." So they stand next to Him—I am adding that to the text—"That very hour," verse 21, "He cured many." He had a bunch of people that were blind, touched them—I do not know if He said, "In the name of Jesus," I do not know if He said, "Be healed, be healed."—and all of these eyes are all popping wide open, I mean they are completely healed. These guys are just blown away.*

*Verse 22, "Go tell John the things that you have heard and the things that you have seen. Go tell him the blind see, right?" Maybe they nod yes. He goes on. "The lame walk. You just saw the lame walk. Lepers just got healed." More nodding. "The deaf are hearing. The dead are raised."*

2. John's disciples were surely acquainted with many Messianic prophecies as in Isaiah 35:4-6:  
***<sup>4</sup>Behold, your God will come... <sup>5</sup>then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. <sup>6</sup>Then the lame shall leap...and the tongue of the dumb sing. (Isa. 35:4-6)***

*Now this is a direct prophecy of the Messiah from Isaiah 35. Every young Jewish boy who went through the synagogue training as a boy or a young child all knew this Messianic prophecy, Isaiah 35. They are thinking, "Wait, this is it!"*

*Jesus is nodding, "Good, you got it."*

*"John, we saw Him! He did Isaiah 35."*

*John is nodding, "Good, you got it."*

*Look now at verse 23. Jesus says, in effect, "Okay, you have seen the miracles, I gave you the Isaiah 35 prophecy, but I want to give you a proverb or a beatitude, a blessing. Blessed are you if you are not offended because of Me."*

*"Well, why would we be offended because of You. I mean You just opened blind eyes. You just fulfilled Isaiah 35, the Messianic prophecy. Why would we ever be offended by You?"*

*Jesus said, "Remember this: blessed are you IF you are not offended at Me."*

*So they go back, and they tell John the story, "He did the Isaiah 35 miracles like the prophecy says."*

*John asks, "Did He say anything else?"*

*"No, not really. Well, some little proverb about not being mad at Him or something, I do not know."*

*John, "What was that?"*

*They said, "Do not be offended at Him. Why would we be offended at Him?"*

*I can just picture this conversation and John saying, "It is important that you get that."*

3. **Not offended:** People stumble over *what God does* and *what He does not do*. Jesus knew that God was not going to intervene to save John (Jn. 3:30). Both Jesus and John understood that this might offend these disciples, so John sent them so that they might see Jesus as Messiah.

*You see, people are offended at God for two reasons: what God does and what God does not do. Jesus knew He was not going to deliver John the Baptist. He was sure He was not. I believe John knew that because he knew his time. He already declared it, "He is increasing; I am decreasing. I am phasing out of the picture completely."*

*Jesus knew that their idea of the Messiah, Isaiah 35: open blind eyes, the lame walk. Isaiah 61: the Spirit of the Lord is upon Me. To do what? Open prison doors, set the captives free. "If He is the Messiah, John, you are going to get set free."*

*John says, "Well, not necessarily." Again, I am adding that conversation in.*

*This is one of the most important teachings of Jesus in the midst of miracle power, because when the power of God begins to increase—most of us here are Westerners—we bring our natural mindset into the equation or into the perspective. We assume that bigger is always better, that easier is always better, always. The Lord says, "No, even when I am manifesting My power there will be times You have to trust My leadership because of things I do that are completely opposite of what you think I should be doing or things I am not doing that you think I should be because I am God." Like, for example, delivering the most righteous man that ever walked the earth, John the Baptist, the greatest prophet. They had a view of the Messiah that would open prison doors because Isaiah 61—also in Luke 4:18—He will set the captives free.*

- B. Jesus showed compassion on the multitude by vindicating John (Lk. 7:24-35; cf. Mt. 11:7-19). This gave them another opportunity to see the implications of John's message (7:31-35; cf. Mt. 11:20). Malachi prophesied of God sending His messenger to prepare Messiah's way (7:27; cf. Mal. 3:1).

*<sup>24</sup>...He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?" <sup>25</sup>...A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed those ...live in luxury are in kings' courts. <sup>26</sup>But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. <sup>27</sup>This is he of whom it is written: 'Behold, I [the Father] send My messenger before Your [Jesus'] face, who will prepare Your way before You.' <sup>28</sup>For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." (Lk. 7:24-28)*

*Jesus now speaks to the multitudes. This is another reason why I feel strongly that John was not confused. First, John is not confused because he saw the Spirit come on Jesus. He heard the audible voice of the Father, "This is My Son." We are going to read in a minute that Jesus said, "John the Baptist was My Father's messenger. My Father trained him and sent him." I am just sure that God was adequate in His training of John. He is*

called, "John's messenger sent by God the Father for Jesus." I am sure that God did not forget to tell John clearly.

Jesus said, "John is the greatest man ever born of a woman." There are many, many men and women that stood strong under persecution. Surely the greatest prophet ever is not wavering in persecution and doubt right now. The greatest prophet has the clearest perception of any prophet ever in history.

1. **A reed shaken:** Jesus realized that the multitudes thought John was wavering. A reed shaken by the wind is a reference to a weak man who was wavering (because of persecution). If John had stopped preaching righteousness, he could have been freed from prison (Mk 6:20).

Verse 24, "He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John." He is going to vindicate John. He says, "What did you go out to see? Did you go out to see a reed shaken by the wind?" A reed shaken by the wind, picture a reed that is really weak and fragile. A wind of even not that great a power can break a reed over. He is saying, "You think he is bending and breaking under the pressure of Herod and the prison? You think he is a reed that is breaking because he is being persecuted?" He would go on, "You do not know John. That is not what is happening here." He says, verse 25, "Did you go out to see a man in soft garments?" He is saying, in effect, "Guys who wear really good clothing are in the king's palace. John is under the king's palace in the prison because he will not compromise."

You know it is interesting that in Mark 6—I have it in the notes there—Herod enjoyed talking to John. He was totally fascinated by John. Herod did not want to kill John. It was the Herodias and the dance and all of that which got him in trouble. We will look at that later; most of you are familiar with that. Herod actually did not want to kill him. He wanted him to be quiet. He wanted him to quit speaking out against him, Herod. "John, be quiet and I will free you."

John says, "No, I am not going to be quiet." John was in prison. He could have easily agreed with Herod and made peace with him.

Jesus said verse 26, "What did you go out to see? A prophet?"—a man who clearly understands God's heart and God's will—He went on, "Yes, he is much more than a prophet. He is much more than a man with supernatural insight."

Verse 27, "This is the one that"—Malachi 3:1—"the prophet Malachi wrote about."

You read Malachi 3:1 and it says this is God the Father speaking, "Behold, I will send My messenger before You." It is the Father talking to the Son. Malachi picks up on that conversation. The Father says to the Son, "I will raise up a messenger. I will train him, and I will send him, and I will be with him."

Jesus said, as it were, "John is much more than an anointed prophet with spiritual insight. He is the messenger from the Father sent to prepare My way. He totally gets who I am. He is not bending now under pressure." He says, more than that or in addition to that, verse 28, "Among those born of woman"—in other words a human; that is another way to say of all humans—"there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist." The greatest prophet ever to walk the earth. He is the Father's messenger. He is Jesus' forerunner, the greatest prophet ever.

2. **Greater than John:** John was the greatest old-covenant prophet, but a new-covenant believer has greater privileges in God than John such as possessing the indwelling Spirit (1 Cor. 6:17).

Jesus pauses, which is interesting, and He continues, "but let Me tell you something: as great as John is as an Old Testament prophet, the greatest prophet of the Old Testament era, he who is least in the kingdom actually has greater privilege than John." It says that he "is greater than John." What it means is "of greater privilege"

and that being because John the Baptist was in the Old Testament under the old covenant. John the Baptist was before the cross. Though John was the greatest of everyone in the old covenant—all those prophets—a born-again believer after the resurrection of Jesus and after the day of Pentecost is greater because God dwells in our spirit. Beloved, the newest believer has more spiritual privilege than John the Baptist because we have the indwelling Spirit living in us.

- C. Jesus declared that that generation did not respond properly to God (7:31-35). Both Jesus and John preached promises of good news described as “we played the flute,” but many did not rejoice at it. They both gave warnings of judgment described as “we mourned,” but many did not repent. Wisdom will be seen by “her children” or the deeds of those who embrace His and John’s ministry.

***<sup>31</sup>And the Lord said, “To what then shall I liken the men of this generation...? <sup>32</sup>They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, saying: ‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we mourned to you, and you did not weep.’ <sup>33</sup>For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, ‘He has a demon.’ <sup>34</sup>The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ <sup>35</sup>But wisdom is justified by all her children.” (Lk. 7:31-35)***

*Well, we have just looked at the passage where Jesus thought the crowd thought John was wavering. Jesus said that he is not wavering. He goes on, “But let me tell you something now. Let’s move away from John. Now let’s talk about you.” He is talking to the generation, to the leaders particularly. He says, as it were, “John is clear; he is not compromising. Are you compromising?” He shifts the conversation.*

*Jesus has just taken this bold stand for this prophet who has been forsaken by the nation. In a minute, we will see that they think he has a demon and that he is God-forsaken. Everybody left him; the crowds are not there anymore. Nobody is listening to him but a few little crazy guys who are loyal to him, fanatically loyal to him.*

*So, in Luke 7:31, Jesus says, “Let Me talk about you. I have talked about John. Let’s talk about you and how you are responding to God under pressure or even under this glorious new hour of salvation history.” In other words, what are the implications that John the Baptist was on the earth? I mean, he was the Father’s messenger who is preparing the way of the Messiah! Salvation history is shifting dramatically, and the implications are very, very serious for that generation.*

*That was a generation in which human history shifted, in that one generation of time. The same thing is going to happen in the generation the Lord returns. It is a unique generation in which all of history shifts in one generation just like it did in Jesus’ time. That generation is coming again. I believe we are in the early days of it right now.*

*Jesus said, “Let Me tell you what I think about this generation.” Verse 31, He said, “They are like children sitting in the marketplace. One group of children is crying out to the other group of children. The first group I believe is representative of John and Jesus; they say to the second group of children, “We played the flute for you.” Now you play a flute at a wedding. You play a flute at a celebrated festive occasion, typically a wedding. “We played the flute but you did not dance.” You did not celebrate. We told you the good news.*

*You did not say that it is time to change your life and that it is glorious. You said, “Oh, so what?”*

*He went on, “Not only did we tell you the good news, we told you the bad news. We mourned for you. It says in one translation, the New American Standard—I like this—“we sang a dirge.” The New American Standard says that, which is a funeral song. When we sang the funeral song, you did not weep. He was saying that we gave you the glorious news and you did not celebrate and respond. Then we told you the terrible news of the trouble*

*is coming and it did not move you either. You did not mourn. You did not take it seriously. You did not become sober. The glory and the gory—neither of them moved you. You were completely unmoved by the good or the bad news.*

*The same thing is happening in this generation. The song of the flute is going out. The knowledge of the great end-time revival, the prayer movement, the Great Harvest, the power of God, pouring out God's Spirit, signs and wonders—that is emerging in the earth and it is emerging in the earth quickly. A lot of believers think, "Cool, back to business as usual." The greatest judgments in human history are coming! The same preachers that preach about the wedding are preaching about the funeral because both of them are happening simultaneously, just like John and Jesus saw happen in their generation. Yet again many of God's people are unmoved by either the intensity of the good or the intensity of the difficult.*

*He goes on in verse 33, "How did you respond to John?" Well, you dismissed him as a fanatic. He came fasting. He was not eating or drinking. He was out in the wilderness. You said that he is demonized. The crowds left him. Nobody is with him now. It is all over. He is deceived. He is a cult leader. He is demonized. He said, "So you dismissed him because he was intense and fanatical." John said the good news **and** the bad news, not just the bad. Some commentators say that John gave the bad. No, John declared the kingdom and the glory of God. I mean John gave the good news. He talked about the Bridegroom is come and he was a friend of the Bridegroom. He celebrated who Jesus was.*

*Jesus goes on, as it were, "Now, I have got a very different approach. I come, the Son of Man," verse 34, "and I am not out in the wilderness as this intense, ascetic, self-denying man in the wilderness like John." Although Jesus did this forty-day fast, He said, "I come eating and drinking. I am socializing, I am interacting. You say, 'He eats too much. He is a glutton. He is a winebibber; He drinks too much. By the way, He hangs out with the wrong people, too. He is a compromiser.'" He said, "One guy is too intense—John. You think I am too lax. We both sang the wedding song, played the flute. We both sang the dirge, and none of you are responding in a way that you should respond."*

*Then Jesus gives this very powerful comment. It is kind of like His second proverb, so to speak, of Luke 7. The first one is "Blessed are you if you are not offended when God does not do things the way you think He is going to. Do not be offended, but trust His leadership." This one is "Wisdom is justified by her children." Another translation—the New American Standard—says, "Wisdom is vindicated by her deeds." What Jesus is saying is, "Though it looks like John missed it, as all of Israel has just forgotten him and written him off as having a demon. They do not listen to his message. They think he completely made wrong choices." He says, "You will see one day, when we are all before the Lord. The wisdom of his life will be fully vindicated. The wisdom of his choices will be openly displayed on that day."*

*The people that actually followed him—their lives that were transformed will bear witness that he walked in the wisdom of God. They are going to kill Jesus, and He knows they are going to kill Him. He also knows, "But on the last day I will be vindicated; you will see My wise choices." Even though eventually, in John 8:48, they ended up saying that Jesus had a demon and they wrote Him off as being demonized, Jesus was saying, "The wisdom of My choices, John's choices, and those of the people that we impacted and their radical responses to God, though they are written off even by the "people of God" in that generation, one day all our choices will be vindicated in the presence of God and seen to be wise by what they produce—eternal rewards, the favor of God on their life." Eternity will show forth the wisdom of the righteous and the way they choose to live. Wisdom will be justified by her deeds eventually, by her children, by what happens down the road. The offspring of their choices will vindicate them when the Lord has brought all of His purposes to pass.*

- D. Jesus rebuked three cities in Galilee—Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum (Mt. 11:20-24). Jesus applied what He just taught about Israel not responding rightly to God (Mt. 11:16-19; Lk. 7:31-35)
- <sup>20</sup>He began to rebuke the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not repent: <sup>21</sup>“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented... <sup>22</sup>But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. <sup>23</sup>And you, Capernaum... will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. <sup>24</sup>But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.” (Mt. 11:20-24)***

Now this is interesting. Remember we are reading Luke 7. The parallel passage is Matthew 11. So, in Matthew 11, Matthew adds another part of what Jesus said that Luke does not record. We are going to go over to Matthew 11:20 for a moment. This is the verse right after Jesus said, “We sang, we played the flute for you, but you did not dance. We sang the dirge, but you did not mourn. Wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.” This is the very next verse.

1. Jesus’ ministry was based in Capernaum—Chorazin was 3 miles north of Capernaum and Bethsaida was 4 miles east of it. Tyre and Sidon were wicked idolatrous Phoenician cities.

Jesus looks at these three main cities. Here He is in Capernaum. Remember that is His home base. Remember the elders of Capernaum just came to him earlier and said, “Hey, our buddy Jesus! Would you help our buddy the centurion who gave us millions of dollars to help our building fund? Hey, everybody is happy!” Jesus is now talking to those elders.

He said, “Well, I just told you that you did not respond when John and I gave you the wedding song, the flute. You did not dance, you did not celebrate, nor did you mourn when we told you the negative. You were not moved by either one of the messages.”

Verse 20, then He rebuked the three cities where He did most of His miracles. He rebuked them. Now He is still about a year and a half away from the cross. He is coming to the end of His time of Capernaum. I mean He is already confronting them as they are rebuking Him on some occasions. Now He is rebuking them openly. They are not appreciating this at all because He is in Capernaum where He has massive crowds.

You see, when He rebuked the cities, He was rebuking the religious leaders in the cities as well as the people that followed them, which was the majority of the people. He rebuked the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done because they would not repent under the preaching of John or the preaching of Jesus. The funeral or the wedding, whatever theme they used, neither moved them.

“Whoa to you, Chorazin!” Chorazin was only three miles north of Capernaum, the main city where Jesus was based. “Woe to you, Bethsaida!” This is a city four miles east. They were just right next to each other. One is three miles north; the other is four miles east. Jesus said, “If the miracles that were done in you”—in those cities—“had been done in Tyre and Sidon”—Tyre and Sidon were up north in Lebanon and Syria, in that area. They were Gentile idolatrous cities that did not know God—“if I did the miracles in those cities, they would have repented long ago, those heathen cities, idolatrous cities.”

Verse 22, then He says something really intense, something we do not really grasp. I do not really know what this means, though I have thought about this for years. I still do not have a good answer for it. Verse 22, “It will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon”—Again, these cities a little bit to the north of Israel that are not Israeli cities; they are Gentile cities, Phoenician cities—“it will be more tolerable for them in the day of judgment,

than for you." That means the day of judgment has many dimensions. Of course, the most important dimension of the day of judgment is the personal account that people will give to God for their life. Then there are cities collectively, and there are generations collectively that have some kind of response of reward and judgment. The judgment mostly is individual, but there are generations and there are cities. I do not know how that works.

I am sure the Lord has got it all figured out, so it will not be confusing to Him at all. That is interesting when I think that Kansas City, Chicago, New York, San Francisco, cities in different time frames will have collective responses from God that will matter somehow. I do not know how that works. Maybe it affects the city's place in the Millennium, the city itself. I do not know.

Then verse 23, He says, "O Capernaum!" In other words, "I am not talking now to Chorazin and Bethsaida, the cities next to you. I am talking to you, My home base." He says, "You will be brought down to hell one day. Like what? They do not like this message at all! Who is this itinerant preacher from Nazareth and what is he telling them? He has no degrees, no theology training. He is declaring future judgment over cities and generations with clarity and boldness. "If the miracles had been done in Sodom and Gomorrah that were done in your city, Sodom would have repented." That is intense when you consider who is saying it. It will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom than for the city of Capernaum in the day of judgment, for Capernaum in that generation. Again, that is intense!

2. The great privilege of seeing Jesus' power brings a corresponding greater responsibility.

There is great privilege in seeing God move. This is something a lot of folks do not think that much about. If God releases power, He demands a higher response of commitment. People are always saying, "We want revival." The Lord says, "I will send revival, but the level of accountability will be commensurate with the level of the power I gave a city or a people or a generation." That accountability will be on the last day.

There is something in God's kindness and wisdom where revival and accountability and what happens that He gets it all in a way we do not get. He would say, "I know what I am doing when I am restraining and when I am releasing the greater moves of My Spirit. I have a bigger picture that you do not have."

3. There are different degrees of judgment in hell and varying degrees of reward in heaven.

Then there is another principle, that there are greater degrees of judgment in hell. Of everyone that is in hell, that go to the lake of fire, some will have a more severe judgment than others—even in the lake of fire. The Bible is really clear on that. The same is true in heaven. Though we all have free access to the City, there will be those called great and those called least in the New Jerusalem. Their capacity in the glory of God in their resurrected bodies will differ and vary. The Bible is really clear about that as well.

## **V. A SINFUL WOMAN WASHED AND ANOINTED JESUS' FEET (LK. 7:36-50)**

- A. An immoral woman anointed Jesus' feet while He dined with a Pharisee in Galilee (Lk. 7:36-38). This perfume was probably bought with the proceeds of her sin—prostitution.

<sup>36</sup>...He went to the Pharisee's house...<sup>37</sup>Behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner...brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil,<sup>38</sup>...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. (Lk. 7:36-38)

*We will go to the final episode, the fourth one, and we will end with this one. This is the immoral woman who anoints Jesus' feet. Again, the first one we looked at was John. The compassion regarding John was that he had been forsaken by the nation, written off as demon possessed. Nobody was listening to him. He was in jail. The nation all thought he was compromising and losing his way. Jesus spoke up for him. Jesus had a couple other messages to add. There was a part of it where Jesus was speaking up for him as well.*

*Partly He was showing compassion on John's disciples as well in saying something along the lines of, "Hey, you are not forgotten. You are in this with Me. You had the big movement, and now it has kind of dwindled down to nothing. I love you, and I am going to bring you into My purposes." Here there was a compassion being shown by Jesus even to those few disciples who would not let go of John.*

*So, we will end here in Luke 7 with this final story. Jesus, verse 36, went to a Pharisee's house, He had dinner there. There was a woman in the city who was a sinner, which typically means a prostitute, not always but that is the idea that most people understand. Though it does not say it super clearly, that is the general consensus. She had an alabaster flask of fragrant oil. She had this fragrant expensive perfume. The thought is that she used the perfume in her profession. She financed the perfume from her profession. She used a little perfume. Then she used the money from her prostitution to pay for the perfume. So, it was kind of her bank account as well as part of her job and all of that kind of thing.*

*Okay, verse 38, she took it, and she began to wash Jesus' feet. She brought this flask which was worth a lot of money, the oil in there. She washed Jesus' feet with tears. Have you ever seen somebody cry so much that they could actually wash dirty feet, dusty from walking in the ancient world in the sandals, with tears? I think that is intense. Not only intense, but it would be a little bit embarrassing, wouldn't it? I mean what if you are in someone's house for dinner and a stranger breaks in. You have sandals on, and the stranger just starts weeping over your feet in front of this room of people. You might say, "Okay, thanks. Hey, I appreciate you. Hey, ummm, I love you doing this. Hey, could we talk later? Oh, no, no!"*

*When I think of Jesus, of course He is so secure and He so connected with her being connected. What we are going to see in this final episode here is Jesus' heart. He sees her; that is what is so beautiful. He feels for her. Then we see her heart, and then we see the Pharisee's heart. We see three different hearts here.*

*Now she takes her hair and wipes the tears off. Because His feet are dirty, now she has a little bit of mud in her hair. Now she is kissing His feet, mmm-mmm-mmm. Okay. Mmm-mmm-mmm. Oh, hey let's do this, come on. I mean I am really picturing this and thinking, "Oh my goodness!" Then after she gets Him all clean, she pulls out the expensive oil. Because the feet are all clean and are dry now, she puts the really nice perfume on them.*

B. Jesus told a parable to highlight the power of gratitude in being forgiven (7:40-42).

***<sup>40</sup>And Jesus answered...<sup>41</sup>"There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. <sup>42</sup>And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?"... (Lk. 7:40-42)***

*So, the Pharisee is really embarrassed. He is troubled. He is saying, "If You were a true prophet, You would know who she was." Well, Simon the Pharisee, you do not have to be a prophet. Everybody in town knows what job she has. It does not take a prophet to get that. Simon is writing off Jesus. "You obviously are not a prophet or you would not let this woman touch you because she will defile You." Again, it is that ceremonial defilement; if you are touched in a wrong way, you cannot participate in the feast and the celebrations. That is what they mean by the ceremonial defilement.*

Jesus said verse 40, "Simon, let Me tell you a parable. There is a creditor. One guy owed him 500 denarii, another fifty." In other words, one guy owed about not quite two years' worth of their salary in debt. Another guy about owed two months. Those are kind of approximate figures, just to kind of get your brain around it, not exact figures.

He goes on in verse 42, "They were freely forgiven." The creditor says, "I will free the guy of the two years' of salary." So if they made 50,000 a year, that is a 100,000. The other guy, if they made 5,000 a month, that is 10,000. "I will forgive the 100,000 and the 10,000. I will just forgive them equally, freely." Jesus asked, Which one will love more?" The idea is, which one will be more grateful?

- C. Those who understand that they have been forgiven much will love God much (7:44-47). Jesus was probably the only man who ever stood up for this woman. I believe that He felt more than she did as she washed His feet with her tears—Jesus felt joy in knowing that this was a breakthrough for her heart—in feeling clean and loved by God. She was the only person mentioned in the Scripture to wash Jesus' feet; paralleling the time He washed the feet of His disciples to honor them (Jn. 13:5).

***<sup>44</sup>Then He turned ...said to Simon, "...you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears...<sup>45</sup>You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in.<sup>46</sup>You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil.<sup>47</sup>Therefore...her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little."<sup>48</sup>Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."<sup>49</sup>And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?"<sup>50</sup>...He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace." (Lk. 7:44-47)***

1. The person who is forgiven much will love much. Any who lose sight of the magnitude of being forgiven will lack gratitude and thus lose the ability to remain zealous in their love for God (7:47). Gratitude sustains our love. We must not allow our gratitude to wane by losing sight of *how much better* God treats us compared to how we deserve to be treated.

***<sup>19</sup>We love Him because He first loved us. (1 Jn. 4:19)***

2. The redeemed and all creation is "washed by His tears" and beautified by "His fragrance."

Verse 44, Simon the Pharisee answered, "Well, I guess the guy that was forgiven the 100,000, the two years of salary type thing, the 500 denarii, sure."

He said, "Simon, here you are, one of the religious leaders." The idea is, "I am the Son of Man. I am God in flesh. I am in your home." I mean, imagine having God in the flesh in your home, the Son of Man. This religious leader knew all the prophecies, and Jesus was fulfilling them right in front of him! He went on, "You did not even give me water for My feet. This lady used tears. You did not kiss Me; you did not greet Me with a warm affection"—like saying, "O brother. it is so good you are here! O, I love it!"—"none of that. This lady has not stopped kissing My feet." That is another subject for another time but she would not stop. It is her radical extravagance. Verse 46, "You did not anoint My head. She anointed My feet with perfume."—with real expensive stuff. Verse 47 is the key principle, "Therefore, her sins which are many are forgiven, for she loved much." To whom little is forgiven that person loves just a little bit. Let's read verse 47 again. To the person that is forgiven much, they love much; that is what it means. The person who thinks they are forgiven a little, they love little. Everybody has been forgiven a lot when they are forgiven, they love much.

- D. Jesus pronounced that she was forgiven (7:48-50). Jesus called her to *walk in peace* or in the assurance of being fully forgiven and established in relationship with the Most High God.

***<sup>48</sup>Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." <sup>49</sup>And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" <sup>50</sup>Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace." (Lk. 7:48-50)***

*One guy might say, "Uh, you know, I do not really think about that that much anymore."*

*To the degree that those who understand they have been forgiven much, they love much. We all, every believer, have been forgiven a lot. Those who stay in touch with it—I do not mean they just had a scandal a month ago, but they look back even years ago—they say, "Wow, I am getting a way better deal than I deserve."—they will love God much. They will have gratitude.*

*The people who lose sight of how much they have been forgiven will lack gratitude. I do not care if you have not walked in those sin issues for ten, twenty, thirty years; you walked in it at one time. You have been totally forgiven. The person who loses sight will lack gratitude. When they lack gratitude, they lose the ability to be zealous in love. Our love is directly related to our sense of gratitude.*

*Whenever I have a situation where a person is not treating me right, and I want to say, "Oh, I am not being treated right," what the Holy Spirit wants me to do is to take a step back, turn my attention on the Lord, and say, "I am getting a lot better deal from You, God, than I deserve. I can handle this bad deal with what's-his-name because I am getting such a good deal with You. I love You. My gratitude of being treated well by You forgiving everything so overpowers my annoyance in being mistreated and my offense in the little guy who does not have power over me like You do."*

*That is what Jesus is telling Simon the Pharisee. He says, as it were, "Figure out what is really going on here."*

*Then He says to the woman, in verse 50, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace." What a great statement! You know, all of us we have been saved. Many have been forgiven, but they do not go in peace; they walk in condemnation.s*

- E. The is no condemnation in Christ because of what Jesus did on the cross (Rom. 8:1).

***<sup>1</sup>There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus ... (Rom. 8:1)***

*Romans 8:1, "There is no condemnation." There is no condemnation. There is some of you right now who are fully forgiven, but you are not walking in peace. The Lord would say, "Go in the peace. Go in the assurance that My heart is bigger than you can imagine. My heart is bigger than your sin."*

*The finished work of the cross, the meditation of the finished work of the cross, beloved, it awakens such zeal in our heart! Again, if the guy over there offended me, I turn my attention to the great deal I am getting from the Lord. I am getting such a better deal from God than I deserve. I can endure the guy over there not treating me the way I deserve to be treated.*

*The Lord would say, "Yeah, the big picture is I am treating you so much better than you can get. Get lost in that narrative, not in the little narrative. When I forgive you, do not let the devil lie to you. Do not walk in some kind of religious condemnation or shame."*

*"Well, poor me! Woe is me! You know that I just want a little cabin on the edge of glory. I do not want to bother anybody." Get rid of all of that! Walk in peace, because I have got good news for you: the least in the kingdom of heaven has greater privileges than John the Baptist in the Spirit. We have full forgiveness. We have the*

*indwelling Spirit. We live in the new covenant era. Beloved, it is the time for us to give everything to the Lord and to walk in peace and confidence and gratitude. Amen and amen! That is my story, and I am sticking with it!*

*Amen, let's stand.*

*Oh, we love You, Jesus! We love You, Jesus.*

*I want to call forth two different responses. The Word of God and even preachers and singers are singing the wedding song: a great revival is coming. Others are singing the dirge: trouble is coming. Both of them are the biblical message. Some of you are not responding. Your life is unmoved by both messages. We do not choose one or the other. We take them both, and our hearts are moved. But for some of you, it is business as usual. It is just, "I am caught up in my life."*

*The Lord would say, "I really, really want you to pay attention."*

*I want you to respond tonight to the Lord. You do not have to come up here to do it. In your own heart say, "You know what? I need to pay attention."*

*Beloved, we are in a generation more dynamic than even the first coming—the generation of the second coming. I mean there are greater shifts going to take place on the earth.*

*Then for others of you, you have been fully forgiven, but you are living under condemnation for yesterday's sin, and the Lord says, "Go in peace."*

*Others of you tonight, you are saying, "I want the Lord to touch my body. He is the God that heals and has compassion. I need Him to touch my heart or my body in a different way."*

*So, I want to open up the ministry time up here and invite any of you to come forward who want ministry for anything. Go ahead and come on up.*

*You are beautiful, Jesus! Oh, You are beautiful, Jesus!*

*The Lord wants us to respond with a whole heart. I believe we live in the most important time in history. We are in the early days of that hour, that generation. He is the Compassionate God. Anybody can obey with a God of compassion like Jesus. His way, His leadership is so tender. The message of Luke 7: He is so compassionate. He can help us in our weakness to respond. He will give us a second chance, a third chance, 100 chances.*