



Living Walking Serving

FAITH AND GRACE CHURCH

**LEARNING FROM THE MASTER
(JESUS CHRIST- OUR CHIEF CORNERSTONE)**

STUDY 20-30: THE PARABLES OF JESUS – PARABLES NO. 5

Text: Luke 7:36-48

Parable No. 5 – The Moneylender (Luke 7:41-43)

The parable is only 3 verses; the 10 verses before and after put it in context.(Vs. 36-48)

What options did the moneylender have with people who owed him money?

The moneylender could demand payment, possibly in a form other than money such as livestock or valuable objects. He could have the debtor put in prison until the debt was paid by his family or friends. Or he could actually make the debtor his slave. Or, of course, he could forgive the debt, which was actually required in Old Testament law: at the end of every seven years, creditors were to cancel all the debts they were owed by fellow Israelites. (See also Exod. 22:25)

Depending upon the amount owed, a moneylender might have quite different responses, which is, of course, true today also. The loan of 500 denarii was a huge amount, equivalent to about two years wages for a day laborer.

Jesus' parable about the moneylender seems an odd response to the Pharisee who was thinking that it was strange that Jesus allowed a sinful woman to touch him.

What was Jesus actually saying to Simon?

- (a) you can't know grace because you don't think of yourself as a sinner,
- (b) you are a bigger sinner than the woman but you don't know it,
- (c) you may have sinned less than the woman, but you still need forgiveness,
- (d) the more you've sinned, the more your love for God,
- (e) the more you've been forgiven, the more your love for God.

The parable and the narrative clearly interpreted each other. We could very easily identify the sinful woman of the story as the debtor forgiven much in the parable. We could also compare Simon the Pharisee with the debtor forgiven little.

We can see the incredible graciousness, mercy, and forgiveness of God, like the creditor who forgave both debtors. Thus, the theme of the parable is one of God's forgiveness and grace.

To apply this parable to our lives, we also must see the incredible forgiveness of God. For some, seeing God's mercy is easy because their past is like that of the sinful woman or the debtor with the large debt. They know their past made them unworthy to be in relationship with God; and yet out of His great love, they have been welcomed into His presence. Out of incredible gratitude and love, they respond lavishly, honoring Jesus in every imaginable way. However, some of us have "grown up in the church." We are much more like Simon the Pharisee, who was compared to the debtor with the smaller debt. Like Simon, we too have

difficulty seeing that we need forgiveness. Also, like Simon, we perhaps fail to honor Jesus. He is simply not the number 1 "guest of honor" in our lives. We struggle to realize that our "little debt" is still beyond our ability to pay, which puts us on equal ground with those that have "big debts." We stand in need of a Savior, who is willing to forgive, if only we will accept His grace. Then, we can respond to Jesus in love, out of gratitude for what He has done in our lives.

The basic theme of this parable is one of God's forgiveness and grace and the love for God that should come as a result of this forgiveness.

We need to ask ourselves if we love Jesus in a way that acknowledges what He's done for us. The more we recognize the depth of God's forgiveness toward us, the more we'll go out of our way to worship, sacrifice, and obey. When we understand the grace that He extends toward us, devotion will be our natural response.