

## **“A Harvest of Love”**

**Luke 7:36-50**

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### **Introduction**

This is Harvest Sunday. It's a time when we thank God for all his provision for us over the past year. So many of you have brought harvest offerings. You want to show how grateful you are to God, and you want to share with others from the material blessings you have received.

There is another kind of harvest that is also very important for us to think about and to celebrate today. It's the harvest of love. From God we have received a huge harvest of grace, love, and forgiveness; and, more than anything else, he wants us bring our harvest of love offerings to him, just as we might bring our material offerings.

But how do we receive God's abundant love? And, how do we make a harvest offering of love?

### **Prayer**

When Jesus was on the earth, he traveled from village to village. He taught people about God. He told them about God's love, and he talked about hope.

Some people could accept his message, and some people could not. Those who believed Jesus' message experienced God's love for them. They experienced forgiveness for all the things they had done wrong. They found new hope for their lives.

One day in particular, Jesus was invited to visit the home of an important local official. His name was Simon. While Jesus was at Simon's home, many people from the village came to see Jesus. One of them was a woman who had a very bad reputation. This woman had done so many things wrong that people looked down on her. They condemned her. They wanted nothing to do with her.

Yet, this woman believed in Jesus. She had heard Jesus say, "God loves you. If you turn away from the wrong you have done, and ask his forgiveness, he will forgive you." This message gave her so much hope that she began weeping from joy.

She brought perfume and poured it on his feet as a way to say thank you to him. As she covered his feet with perfume, her tears flowed on to him as well.

Now, Simon was offended when he saw what this woman was doing. He criticized Jesus for letting this woman touch him. Simon was a proud man. But Simon did not realize that his pride was keeping him from experiencing the love of God.

Let's listen to what Jesus said to him.

When Simon, 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." Jesus answered him, "**Simon, I have something to tell you.**" "Tell me, teacher," he said.

**"Two men owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii (approximately 10 lakhs), and the other fifty (approx.. 100,000 kyats). Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he canceled the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?"**

Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt canceled." "**You have judged correctly,**" Jesus said.

Then 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. You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet.**

**Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little."**

Then Jesus said to her, "**Your sins are forgiven.**" (Luke 7:36-48)

## **Application**

Do you understand what this story is saying to us? The more we have done wrong, the more we can appreciate God's forgiveness. The more we realize how much we need God, the more joy we will feel when we believe God has forgiven us.

This story is not a story about a man and woman. This is a story about two types of people. One type of person is like Simon—proud, self-righteous, and closed. He was not aware of how much he needed God's grace and forgiveness. As a result, he could not appreciate Jesus. And he could not experience the depth of God's love.

The woman represents a second type of person—broken, humble, and open. She knew very well how much she needed God's grace and forgiveness. Her tears showed how grateful she was for God's love. Her tears showed that she loved Jesus, very, very much in return for all that God was doing for her through Jesus.

Sometimes people think that they don't deserve God's love and forgiveness. Sometimes people think that they have done too many things wrong or that they are

unworthy of God. Yet, God's love is not for those who deserve it. It's for those who need it. It's for those who want it.

I am one of those people. I have done wrong things in my life. I've hurt people. I've neglected people. I've disobeyed God's commands at times. I do not deserve God's love or forgiveness. But I need it. I want it. And Jesus said, that if I believe in him and repent of my sins, I can have it. And that's the best of message of hope any of us could ever, ever receive.

This morning, on this Harvest Sunday, which type of person are you? Are you more like Simon—self-righteous, proud, closed to Jesus? Or, are you more like the unnamed woman—broken, humbled, and desperately in need of God's grace and forgiveness? Which person do you want to be?