



Fall Study Discussion Guide #3

Sermon Title: Beware the Leaven of the Pharisees

Biblical Reference: Luke 7:36-50, Luke 12:1

Date Preached: Sunday, November 13th, 2022, @ 11 am

Fall Study Date: Wednesday, November 16th, 2022

Sermon Summary

During a meal with Simon the Pharisee, Jesus addresses some problems in Simon's heart. Only Jesus could see into Simon's heart and address his problems. Simon's heart contained wrong thinking and incorrect assumptions about God's methods. Simon did not understand what pleases God; he did not understand how God receives worship and love from His servants. These problems lead to the death of Simon's love and connection to God. Contrasted to Simon, the woman in the story showed deep spiritual understanding about God. This enabled her to worship in a way that was pleasing to God. Her love for Jesus helped her overcome many obstacles that would normally prevent people coming to Jesus. Jesus receives her act of worship and Simon received a rebuke.

Believers often slip into the same Pharisaical heart attitudes as Simon. Jesus told His disciples to "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees." Leaven, or yeast as we call it today, is a fungus that grows and spreads through the dough consuming sugars and starches to gas making the dough big and puffed up. It is the same dough only now with less substance and a lot of air pockets. The wrong heart attitudes and wrong thinking, or beliefs, can grow in our hearts making us puffed up. If we come to our great Physician, he treats us and helps us keep our hearts pure.

Main Thought

Either our wrong heart attitudes towards God and people can grow, or our love of Christ can grow, but not both.

Quick Review

Reviewing the text from this week's sermon, were there any insights the Lord showed you or anything that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

Were you able to apply any of the principles you learned from our study of the text this week?

My Testimony

Ask a volunteer to read:

Luke 7:47 Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

In this verse we see the Lord rebuking Simon for some of his inward thoughts and his loss of love for the Lord. We also see the Lord commending the woman for her love born out of great forgiveness.

- How have you overcome wrong heart attitudes to maintain your love of Christ?
- Some here tonight had to overcome external fears and pressures from others when they came to Christ or began attending church or began to seriously serve the Lord. How did the Lord help you in this process? What advice would you give to a younger Christian struggling with this?

Digging Deeper

1. Routine without sacrifice or passion

Simon the Pharisee had respect, success, and wealth. He was looked to as a notable Pharisee by the Jews. In this passage we discover that Jesus saw something different as He looked upon his inward thoughts, motives, and attitudes. Read the following passage with the theme of routine without sacrifice or passion in mind.

Ask a volunteer to read:

Luke 7:44 And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.

Luke 7:45 Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

Luke 7:46 My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

Luke 7:47 Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

Discussion Questions:

- What stands out to you in the passage? Why do you think this was significant?
- Why do we naturally start drifting from sacrifice and passion towards Jesus to more of a halfhearted routine? What clues do you find in the passage?
- What stands out to you in this passage about what the woman did to worship the Lord?
- In what ways are people hurt by religion that is routine and halfhearted?
- What are steps we can take to avoid this? What would it practically look like in our lives?

2. Simon could not enjoy Jesus because Jesus allowed sinners to minister to Him

In the text we discover that Simon was sitting across the table from Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Creator, However, Simon's thoughts and attention were occupied critiquing the woman who was worshipping Jesus. Read the following passage with this in mind.

Ask a volunteer to read:

Luke 7:36 And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

Luke 7:37 And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment,

Luke 7:38 And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

Luke 7:39 Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.

Discussion Questions:

- What stands out to you in this text? Why do you think this was significant?

- Why do we like Simon occasionally devote more of our attention to critiquing people, than upon the Person of Jesus and what he has to say?
- How did the woman keep from falling into this common mindset?
- Can you give us an example of how that looks in your life?
- What advice would you give to a Christian who is focusing on what he does not like about others instead of his own heart?

3. Simon had no vision for the salvation of sinners

In this story Jesus notes this woman's fear, sorrow over her sin, and desire of forgiveness. To Simon she is an unwelcome guest. She is a disturbance to the meal and celebration. She is someone to be rejected, rather than redeemed. Read the following verses with these two views in mind.

Ask a volunteer to read:

Luke 7:39 Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.

Luke 7:50 And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

Discussion Questions:

- How would you summarize and contrast the view the Lord Jesus Christ had of this woman and the view that Simon the pharisee had of this woman?
- How do we avoid adopting the attitude of the Pharisee's and maintain the vision that Jesus had?
- What obstacles stand in your way of seeing people with the eyes of Jesus? (Be transparent)
- Who is an inspiration and example to you of someone that lived with Jesus's vision for people? How did the Lord use them? (Either biblical personal or historical)

4. Overcoming fear and laying our treasure at Jesus' feet (37)

Ask a volunteer to read:

This woman had a reputation of being a great sinner. She was not sought after for wisdom; people would go out of their way to avoid her. She was ignored by the religious people at the market and in the temple. People did not want others to think they were associated with her lifestyle. By all earthly accounts, she was considered a failure. Yet in this passage we find she ignored these obstacles. She came to Jesus finding forgiveness and salvation.

Luke 7:37 And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment,

Luke 7:38 And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

- Think of this woman, put yourself in her shoes. Can you tell us about a time you had to ignore the judgment of others and humble yourself to get to Jesus?
- In her story what parallels can we find and in our neighborhood? What parallels can we find in our church?
- How have you seen someone overcome fear of being exposed, or fear of being mocked in their coming to Jesus?
- How has the principle of laying what you have that is valuable at the feet of Jesus, no matter what your past helped you?

Taking It Home

The following questions are intended to be open-ended and encourage members to consider how they felt and what they can do because of discovering the truths and principles in the text:

1. What truth or principle in this text was most impactful for you?
2. How did this truth or principal challenge, change, or affirm your thinking?
3. How will you put into practice what you have learned today?