

## ***Wonderful Salvation in the Gospel of Luke***

*Now a certain one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He entered into the Pharisee's house and reclined at table. And behold, there was a woman in the city who was a sinner. And when she learned that He was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster flask of ointment. And she stood behind Him weeping and she began to wet His feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head, and she kissed His feet affectionately and anointed them with ointment. But when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he said within himself, This man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what sort of woman this is who is touching Him, because she is a sinner. And Jesus answered and said to him, Simon, I have something to say to you. And he said, Teacher, say it. A certain moneylender had two debtors: one owed five hundred denarii and the other fifty. But since they had nothing with which to repay, he graciously forgave them both. Which of them therefore will love him more? Simon answered and said, I suppose the one whom He graciously forgave the more. And He said to him, You have judged correctly. And turning to the woman, He said to Simon, Do you see this woman? I entered into your house; you did not give me water for my feet, but she, with her tears, has wet my feet and with her hair has wiped them. You did not give Me a kiss, but she, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing My feet affectionately. You did not anoint My head with oil, but she has anointed My feet with ointment. For this reason I say to you, Her sins which are many are forgiven, because she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, he loves little. And He said to her, Your sins are forgiven. And those who were reclining at table with Him began to say within themselves, Who is this who even forgives sins? But He said to the woman, Your faith has saved you. Go in peace. (Luke 7:36-50).*

### **THE GOD-MAN'S FORGIVENESS OF SINS**

#### **Both Sinners Indebted and Forgiven**

The Christian life begins with the forgiveness of sins through our faith in the Savior. This account in Luke is focused on forgiveness. Therefore we must ask, for whose sake did the Man-Savior go to the Pharisee's house? Did He do this for the sake of the Pharisee or for the sake of the woman? I believe that He did this for the sake of both the Pharisee and the woman. The Lord's word here indicates that both Simon and the woman were sinners. Simon considered the woman a sinner, but did not consider himself a sinner, and he doubted that the Savior knew that she was a sinner. But the Savior's parable indicated that both Simon and the woman were sinners, debtors to Him.

According to verse 42, when the two debtors had nothing to repay the moneylender, he graciously forgave them both. This indicates that all sinners have nothing to repay their debt to God their Savior. The Lord's word here also indicates that the Savior had already forgiven them both. Who is this who even forgives sins?" Simon did not realize that this Man-Savior was the very God, the One who has authority to forgive man's sin. The Man-Savior was the incarnation of the forgiving God.

#### **Faith, Love, and Peace**

In verse 42 the Lord Jesus asked Simon which of the debtors would love the moneylender more as a result of having been forgiven by him. This indicates that love to the Savior is the issue, not the cause, of His forgiveness.

"But He said to the woman, Your faith has saved you; go in peace." The forgiven woman had not only love toward the Lord but faith in Him, a faith that operated through love (Gal. 5:6) and issued in peace. The faith which saved her brought her to the Savior in love and resulted in her going forward in peace.

Faith, love, and peace are three crucial virtues in experiencing and enjoying the Savior's salvation. Faith is brought forth by knowing the Savior in His saving power and virtue. Love comes out of this faith and issues in peace to follow the Savior.

In this case we need to pay attention to the three matters of faith, love, and peace. When as a young Christian I read this chapter, I thought that the woman's love for the Savior was the cause of the forgiveness of her sins. I thought that He forgave her because she loved Him. This understanding is not correct.

In verse 50 the Lord said to the woman that her faith, not her love, had saved her. Furthermore, regarding the two debtors who were forgiven by the moneylender, the Lord asked, "Which of them therefore will love him more?" (v. 42). This indicates clearly that love is the issue of forgiveness. Concerning this, we need to pay attention to the word "therefore" in verse 42. This word proves that love comes after forgiveness instead of preceding it.

What, then, is the cause of the forgiveness of sins? From verse 50 we see that the cause is faith. It was the woman's faith that saved her. Her sins were forgiven not because of her love but because of her faith. Therefore, faith comes before forgiveness, and love follows faith.

It is very important for us to see that forgiveness comes before love. We should not think that our love is the cause of the forgiveness of our sins. On the contrary, love is the issue, the outcome, of our faith. When we believe in the Lord, our faith becomes the cause of the Lord's forgiveness of our sins. Then as a result of having our sins forgiven, we begin to love the Lord. Hence, love comes out of faith.

Love issues in peace. First we believe in the Lord Jesus, having faith in Him. Then we are forgiven of all our sins, and this brings in love for the Lord. As we love Him, this love issues in peace. We, then, may walk in peace. To walk in peace means to live in peace, to have a life of peace. When we walk in peace, we have our being in peace and live a peaceful life. This means that when we believe in the Lord, we love Him and live a life in peace. This is the Christian life.

*(Adapted from the Life-Study of Luke.)*