



# Love and Forgiveness

**“...Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much....” (Luke 7:47).**

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Love is an important factor in forgiveness. It was love that made God to give us “... his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). It was through this act of love that God paved the way for the forgiveness of sins. While on earth, Jesus taught that love for God and man is the greatest commandment as all the law and the prophets hang on it (Matthew 22:35-40). Romans 13:10 concludes that “... **love is the fulfilling of the law**” - and that includes all laws relating to forgiveness.

In this text, we see how love leads to forgiveness. “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. **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, **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. **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. **40** And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. **41** There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. **42** And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? **43** Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. **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

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them with the hairs of her head. **45** Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. **46** My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment **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. **48** And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. **49** And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? **50** And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace” (Luke 7:36-50).

We note from here that:

- 1) This woman was a sinner and social outcast at the time of loving Jesus. So was Rahab when she hid the spies; and Ruth when she chose the God of Israel. Therefore, it was love that preceded, and indeed paved the way to her salvation. Being drawn by the love of God, she poured out her love for Christ unreservedly (vs 40-43).
- 2) God being love, responds positively to acts of love towards Him. Peter commands “And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins” (1 Peter 4:8). Therefore the shortcut to forgiveness is love.
- 3) This woman's faith “worketh by love” (Galatians 5:6), and opened the door to her salvation (vs 50).
- 4) That faith works by love is not a license to multiply sin so as to earn greater forgiveness (Romans 5:20-6:2).
- 5) Religiosity may be pious and sanctimonious but love is practical and relevant.