

## **Slide Veterans Day**

**Freedom's never Free**

**Luke 7:36-50**

Very soon Veteran's Day, will be observed throughout this nation & around the world, basically wherever our nation's flag flies, some people will pause to remember the price that has been paid for the freedoms that we enjoy.

**On Nov. 19, 1863, Pres. Abraham Lincoln stood on the battlefield at Gettysburg to dedicate a portion of that land as a national cemetery.**

The featured speaker of the day was Edward Everett, acclaimed as possibly the greatest classical orator of his time. A former United States senator, Governor of Massachusetts, & President of Harvard University, he spoke for more **than two hours to an audience of over 25,000** people. Don't be alarmed, I am not going to speak for anything close to 2 hours. Everett gave a masterful address, broad in its scope & dramatic in its presentation.

Next was a musical interlude by the Baltimore Glee Club. And then, finally, Pres. Lincoln was formally introduced, & the people settled back down in their chairs & on the grass to listen to him. Lincoln spoke simply & clearly. He said:

**"We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting & proper that we should do this.**

**"But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living & dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract.**

**"The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here; but it can never forget what they did here.**

**"It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, & that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."**

Gettysburg does not stand alone in our memory. Time would fail if I sought to mention such places as Valley Forge, Flanders Field, Omaha Beach, Iwo Jima, Pork Chop Hill, & Desert Storm.

We must realize that if freedom is to be carried on from generation to generation if our children & our grandchildren are to enjoy freedom then we must be willing to pay the price, because

"freedom is never free."

**Slide** **"Freedom is never free."** It sounds like a paradox when you say it, but it is true.  
"Freedom is never free."

**Slide** In the same way, **forgiveness is never free**. That, too, sounds untrue at first. But before forgiveness takes place there is always a price to be paid.

With that in mind, I call your attention to **Luke 7:36 50**. This incident, & the parable Jesus shares in it are of particular importance to us. Please listen as I read.

**Slide** **Luke 7:36 50**

**"Now one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, so He went to the ... Pharisee's house & reclined at the table. When a woman who had lived a sinful life in that town learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster jar of perfume, & as she stood behind Him at His feet weeping, she began to wet His feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them & poured perfume on them. "When 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 & what kind of woman she is that she is a sinner.'**

Jesus had been invited to the home of a Pharisee by the name of Simon. That is quite something because the Pharisees saw Jesus as a threat to their power, their teachings, & to their very legalistic way of life. Now to be fair, not all of them saw Jesus in this way, but most of them resented Him & His teachings.

As you have probably heard before during this time period, It was normal, when a guest arrived, to make him feel welcome by going through certain common courtesies.

First of all, His feet would be washed. A guest's feet would be caked with dirt after walking in sandals on the dusty roads. So a servant would greet him at the door with a basin of water, & would wash & dry his feet.

After his feet had been washed, the host would come & greet him with a kiss to make him feel welcome, & let him know that he was an honored guest.

Then it was a matter of courtesy to anoint the head of the guest with some sweet smelling, cooling oil. I'm not sure exactly why, but it was customary to use oil to anoint the head of a guest.

**All of these things went together to say, "You are welcome in our home."**

But when Jesus visited the home of this Pharisee, none of these things happened. Luke says that Jesus sat down at the table without His feet being washed, without the customary kiss, or the anointing of oil.

Then as they began eating an unusual thing happened. A woman Luke calls her a sinner (the word he uses means "**an immoral woman, a prostitute,**" came to where they were eating. Then an amazing thing happens; She fell at the feet of Jesus & started weeping.

Her tears fell on His feet, so she dried them with her hair. Then she broke a vial of expensive perfume & anointed his feet, & began kissing them.

**All the while, Simon the Pharisee was watching. He was greatly offended by what was going on because it was obvious that all the things he had failed to do to make Jesus welcome, this woman was now doing.**

Simon knew what kind of woman she was. So as he judges her, he also judges Jesus. He assumes that Jesus, in not stopping her, is condoning immorality. **Simon thinks, "If this man really were a prophet, He would know she is an immoral woman."**

Jesus knows what Simon is thinking. And Jesus knew more about her than Simon did. When Simon looked at her all he saw was a prostitute, a sinner, someone to be shunned. But Jesus saw her as a repentant sinner, a precious soul seeking some way to express her love & appreciation for what Jesus had come to mean to her.

I want you to notice a couple of things in this passage that you may not have thought about before. Vs. 37 begins with these words,

**Slide** **"When a woman who had lived a sinful life in that town..."** Wait a minute, it doesn't say, **"who is living a sinful life."** It says **"who had lived a sinful life."** That's past tense, isn't it?

Now if your Bible is a study Bible with detailed footnotes at the bottom of the page it will probably point that fact out. My study Bible says, **"She must have heard Jesus preach before, & in repentance she had determined to lead a new life."**

Moving down to vs's we have Jesus' response to Simon's thoughts.

**Slide 40-43, "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 500 denarii, & the other 50. 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.**

For our purpose today, let’s convert this to days worked. **So one owed the equivalent of 50 working days, & the other owed 500 working days.** Using a 5 day work week, **one man owed him ten weeks work & the other owed him 100 weeks or almost two years.**

Jesus says; “then the moneylender tells them, `I know that you don’t have the money, so I am going to cancel your debts. Neither of you no longer owe me anything.’ Now then, Simon, which one will love him more?”

I imagine that Simon was sitting there with his mouth open. **First of all, to think that a moneylender would not collect what was owed him was unreal. Simon couldn’t even imagine that type of thing happening with the moneylenders he knew.**

**Secondly, he was probably trying to figure out why Jesus was telling him that story at all.** It might have been that he saw no point to the story; Still he answers; **“I suppose the one who had the bigger debt canceled.’ `You have judged correctly,’ Jesus said.”**

**Slide** Vs’s 44-47 tell us, **“Then He turned toward the woman & 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 & 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.”**

Surely Simon got the point then. But here is a take home for us today.

**Slide** **EVERY ONE IS IN DEBT - EVERY ONE OF US IS A DEBTOR**

**Every person in this room is in debt to society, to our nation, & to God. We are all debtors.**

I imagine when Simon looked at himself he thought, "God, you’re lucky to have me on your team. I’m pretty special. I have memorized the law & I pray beautiful prayers & I do many significant things for You. I’m a Pharisee & I have mastered the art of being a Pharisee. God, I’m a pretty special guy."

**What Simon forgot was that he was a sinner. His sins were sins of the heart, & he didn’t recognize them as sins. So it was easy for him to forget that he needed forgiveness too.**

**Slide** Isn't it easy for us to forget how indebted we are to those who paid a price to achieve freedom for us? We all are in debt to the hundreds of thousands of men and women who have given of themselves to insure our physical freedom.

**We are in debt to the Lord God almighty for providing a way for us to be spiritually free.**

**Isn't it easy to come into God's house, sing our song, pray our prayers, maybe read our Bibles & forget the price that has been paid to give us this freedom.**

It's easy to put burgers on the grill & sit around enjoying all the material blessings that God has given us, & forget the blood that was shed to give us freedom. This blood came from men and women and from Jesus. Our freedom has had a huge price.

We owe a great debt to those who have gone before. We also owe a great debt to our God who has redeemed & forgiven us. We are all debtors. We all owe a debt.

**Slide WE CAN NEVER REPAY THAT DEBT**

If United States creditors should decide to collect everything we owe all at once, we would be in deep trouble because we owe more than we can pay all at once. Truthfully, we're not even whittling away at it. We're just increasing the debt.

But let's think of the debt of freedom that we owe to our forefathers, and realize that is also a debt that we can't pay. And when I think of the debt that I owe God in heaven for the price that He has paid for my sins, I realize that I can't pay that either. **There is good news!**

**Slide FORGIVENESS IS AVAILABLE TO EVERYONE**

There is Forgiveness available to everyone. Whether it is a sin in the heart or one done outwardly ... sin is sin .. and forgiveness if available, **but forgiveness is not free.**

When God said, "I will forgive you of your sin," it cost God something because before forgiveness there had to be the agony of Gethsemane. Before forgiveness there had to be the death on the cross & the burial & the resurrection. That price had to be paid. The ledger had to be clear before forgiveness could become a reality. But now that it has been paid it's available to all.

**Slide.** Isn't **that also true of our freedom?** The price has been paid. It is available to all in this land. That is why we rejoice at the Declaration of Independence. That is why we rejoice in the Statue of Liberty - because freedom is available to all of us in this great land.

Today, God's forgiveness is available. He offers it to you through Jesus Christ His Son. The price has been paid & He invites you to come. You are invited to the table of our Lord and to receive God's forgiveness?