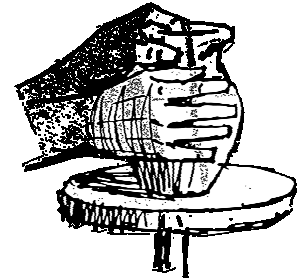


His Workmanship: Westside

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works."

—Ephesians 2:10



Vol. XXIV

March 22, 2015

No. 12

Isaiah 64:8

Forgiveness Is Not Free, Luke 7:36:50, by Melvin

Before forgiveness takes place there is always a price to be paid.

"Now one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, so He went to the Pharisee's house and 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, and 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, and 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 and what kind of woman she is that she is a sinner,'" Lk 7:36-39.

Jesus had been invited to the home of a Pharisee named Simon. That was unusual, because the Pharisees saw Jesus as a threat to their power, their teachings, and their very legalistic system. They saw Jesus as their enemy. Not all of them did, of course, but most of them resented Him and His teachings. But this Pharisee invited Jesus to his home. We're not sure exactly why, but he did invite Him. And Jesus accepted the invitation.

It was customary, 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 and would wash and dry his feet. After washing his feet, a servant anointed the head of the guest with some sweet smelling, cooling oil as a matter of courtesy. Then the host would come and greet him with a kiss to make him feel welcome and let him know that he was an honored guest. All of these things went together to say, "You are welcome in our home." But when Jesus visited the this Pharisee's home, none of these things happened. Jesus sat down without His feet being washed, without the customary kiss or the anointing of oil.

As they began eating, an unusual thing happened. A woman, "*an immoral woman, a prostitute,*" came to where they were eating, probably an outdoor patio to take advantage of the evening breezes. She fell at the feet of Jesus and started weeping. Her tears fell on His feet, so she dried them with her hair. Then she broke a vial of extravagantly expensive perfume and anointed His feet and 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 judged her, he also judged Jesus. He assumed that Jesus, in not stopping her, was condoning immorality. Simon thought, "*If this man really were a prophet, He would know she is an immoral woman,*" v. 39.

Jesus knew what Simon was thinking. He 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 and appreciation for what Jesus had come to mean to her. He saw her future, her possibilities.

Notice a couple of things in this passage. Luke 7:37 begins with these words, "*When a woman who had lived a sinful life in that town...*" It doesn't say, "*who is living a sinful life.*" It says "*who had lived a sinful life.*" That's past tense. She must have heard Jesus preach, and in repentance she determined to lead a new life. In v. 47 Jesus said, "*Her many sins have been forgiven.*" We can safely conclude that Jesus had met her before, had already forgiven her, and she had become one of His followers. That's why she had followed Him there that evening.

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“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace,”
—Ephesians 1:7

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Jesus then told a parable. Two men owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed the equivalent of 50 working days, and the other owed 500 working days—or ten weeks and 100 weeks, almost two years.

Jesus said, *“Simon, neither of them could pay their debts. So the moneylender told them, ‘I know that you don’t have the money, so I am going to cancel your debts, and you no longer owe me anything.’ Now then, Simon, which one will love him more?”* vs. 40-43.

Simon was probably sitting there with his mouth open. First of all, to think that a moneylender would not collect what was owed him was unthinkable. Simon couldn’t even imagine that type of debt cancellation happening with the moneylenders he knew. Second, he was probably trying to figure out why Jesus was telling him that story at all. He couldn’t see any point to it. But he went ahead and answered the question Jesus had asked, saying, *“I suppose the one who had the bigger debt canceled.”* *“You have judged correctly,”* Jesus said,” v. 43.

“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.’” vs. 44-47. What lessons can we learn from this?

I. **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, and to God. We are all debtors. If we were to talk about *atonement* or *regeneration*, some of us might scratch our heads. But everyone knows what

being in debt means. We are debtors.

An important asset when we’re in debt is a good memory—because if we don’t remember to whom we owe money and when to pay our installments, we’re going to have all kinds of trouble. Simon’s problem was that he had a poor memory. When Simon looked at himself, he might have thought, *“God, you’re lucky to have me on your team. I’m pretty special. I have memorized the law, and I pray beautiful prayers, and I do many significant things for You. I’m a Pharisee, and I have mastered the art of being a Pharisee. God, I’m a pretty special guy,”* cf. Lk 18:9-14. What Simon forgot was that he was a sinner. His sins were sins of the heart, and he didn’t recognize them as sins. So it was easy for him to forget that he needed forgiveness, too. Isn’t it easy for us to forget how indebted we are to Jesus, Who paid a price to secure freedom for us? Isn’t it easy to come into God’s house and open our Bibles and forget our sins? We sit around enjoying all the material blessings that God has given us and forget the blood that was shed so that we could enjoy the freedom that is ours as citizens of the kingdom of Christ. We also owe a great debt to our God who has redeemed and forgiven us. We are all debtors. We all owe a debt.

II. **We can never repay that debt.** If my creditors should decide to collect everything I owe all at once, I would be in deep trouble because I owe more than I can pay all at once. I can whittle away at it, but I couldn’t pay it all back if everybody wanted their money at the same time. 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.

Luke tells us that the woman came to Jesus and fell at His feet. She wet His feet with her tears and dried them with

her hair. Then she anointed Him with oil. It was an expression of gratitude and love. We may say, *“Well, that’s the way to pay God back.”* But she wasn’t paying Him back. All she was doing was saying, *“Thank you, Lord. Thank you for forgiving my sins.”* That’s all we can do, too. We can never pay God back. But we can roll up our sleeves and go to work. We can worship and serve, we can cry and pray. We can seek to reach others for Jesus. We can do all that, but we will never—even if we work 20 hours a day the rest of our lives—never be able to pay the debt that we owe our God.

III. **Forgiveness is available to every-one.** All of us are spiritually in debt. We can never repay the debt. Therefore, since we can’t pay it, we stand in need of forgiveness from it. And the good news is that forgiveness is available to everyone, but forgiveness is not free. *Forgiveness always costs something.* For the moneylender it cost 550 denarii to forgive those who were indebted to him. Forgiveness always costs something.

When God said, *“I forgive you of your sins,”* 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 and the burial. That price for sin 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. The price has been paid. That is why we rejoice—because freedom is available to all of us.

Robert McCormack was a sergeant in WW I. He nearly lost his life while saving the life of Major Henry Parkin. Both men survived the war. From that day on, until he died 25 years later, in

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God makes my heart clean in 2015 "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." —Ps 51:10

Forgiveness, from p. 2

April of every year Parkin wrote McCormack a letter of gratitude. The last letter Parkin wrote contained this brief note: "Dear Bob, I again want to express to you my appreciation for another year of life which I would not have enjoyed had it not been for you and the price you were willing to pay to save my life. I want you to know I am grateful."

Today, God's forgiveness is available. He offers it to you through Jesus Christ His Son. The price has been paid, and He invites you to come. Will you accept His forgiveness?

Presbyterians, from p. 4

about rules like not stealing, murdering, or fornicating and rules banning Jews from eating animals that ate dead carcasses or didn't have split hooves.

- Jesus explicitly refers to Genesis 2 and creation to give the definition of marriage as between a man and a woman, Mt 19:1-6. He states that the alternative to this arrangement is celibacy, Mt 19:10-12.

- In Rm 1 Paul tells us that cultures are given over to homosexuality as judgment of idolatry. He is talking about how nations work in human history. Cultures that are dominated by theological inversion (worshipping the creature rather than the creator) are beset with sexual inversion. In a culture dominated by God-deniers, the leading deniers may not necessarily be the same ones who practice sexual inversion. But it is still obvious that homosexual actions (as opposed to temptations or inclinations) are

Discipleship Here At Home

sinful in the Bible.

- People who give in to homosexual temptations and refuse to repent of that lifestyle "will not inherit the Kingdom of God." The church, says Paul, is made up of ex-homosexuals—along with ex-thieves and ex-drunkards and ex-addicts and ex-blackmailers—who have been forgiven and declared right with God, 1 Cor 6.

Homosexual practice is condemned as a perversion of sex in all the Bible, and marriage is defined as between a man and a woman. The fact that polygamy was tolerated for a time does not change the message. People who practice homosexuality need to stop and entrust themselves to Jesus in order to inherit eternal life.

Why the quest for a religious permission? Why don't those Presbyterians just give up and stop calling themselves Christians? Part of the reason is that there is no secular rationale for homosexual marriage. A major plank of contemporary atheism is Darwinian evolution—which makes homosexual marriage impossible and hurtful to the species. The premise of homosexuality is that it is just as healthy to have a sexual relationship with a person of the same sex as it is with a person of the opposite sex. According to evolutionary theory, the brains and personalities of men and women are based on millions of years of evolution in which they needed to mate with the opposite sex and raise children to survive into adulthood. So how can same sex be as good as opposite sex on evolutionary assumptions?

The only thing that really justifies homosexual marriage is a superstitious belief that whatever two people want to do together *must* work out to the good of all involved, including any children adopted from a heterosexual union (because, believe it or not, homosexual unions don't produce children). So demanding homosexual marriage as an institution requires a bit of superstition.

PRAY FOR healing, protection, help

- **Nell Free**—rehab recovery for broken hip; Arvada Care & Rehab, 6121 W. 60th Ave, Arvada 80003, rm 7, bed A

- **Ed Fink**—prostate cancer; treatment for brain tumors

- **Pat Wilkes**—surgery recovery for torn shoulder tendon

- **Bill Dennis**—at Bear Creek Rehab Ctr, 150 Spring St, Morrison 80465, 720-550-4695

- following infected knee drainage; pseudo-gout
- **Sandra Perry**—possible kidney failure, may need dialysis or transplant; heart valve issues recently diagnosed; neuropathy from diabetes

- **Kaylee Chavez**—age 10, at St. Jude's in Memphis for brain cancer treatment; donate at www.youcaring.com, type her name at top

- **Judy Strand**—to schedule heart valve surgery; hep C; approved for liver transplant

- **Chris Bennett**, former member—all tools for biz stolen; recovering from fall, fractured pelvis

- **Buford Wrather, Cheryl Reames's dad**—stroke, complicated by Parkinson's; in CO Springs

- **Sylvia Chapman, Brett's grandmother**—third stage pancreatic cancer; chemo

- **Judy Sartin**—cold; rotator cuff injury; spinal stenosis; arthritis

- **Brittany Tope's mother**—breast cancer in spine; pain in broken ribs which tumor has injured; grandmother—on dialysis

- **Kim Howell's niece Tonya Robison**—delivered 32-week, 2 lb, 5 oz **Malachi Taylor Robison** 2 wks ago; in NICU in Louisville, KY, at least a month

- **Patty Barber**, friend of Sandra Perry—hematoma

- **Kenny Boyd's coworker Kim Phillips**—asks our prayers for heart problems

- **Rick Robbins**, friend of Howells—brain surgery

CHRONIC CONDITIONS

- Logan Corray; Addison Tope; Christian Harrod; Rocco Jr; Tim Huelsman**—asthma

- Nell Free**—pacemaker, heart; back pain

- Autumn Hadders**—epilepsy; celiac disease

- Jonathan Hadders**—RA

- Danielle Huelsman**—vertigo, CV syndrome

- Hannah Huelsman**—polycythemia, thickening of blood; heart murmur, acid reflux, chest pain

- Kirk Johnson**—MS

- Menards**—aging; **Lloyd**, diabetes, weak;

- Virginia**, macular degeneration; high BP

- Cheryl Reames**—diverticulitis; fibromyalgia

- Lynda Szymanski**—COPD, lung weakness

- Travel K. Boyds** in FL; **Howells** and **Reingro**

- vers** on Mexico cruise out of L.A. to celebrate

- Howells'** 30th anniversary; **Shreves** in San Francisco; **Campbells** in IL. **Westin Cox** and

- boys travel to Nassau, Bahamas, Tues-Sat.;

- Topes** to AZ 3/27-4/3.



Exposing current thoughts & trends *culture wars*

Presbyterians Redefine Marriage, by Mark Home

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) approved redefining marriage in the church constitution last Tuesday to include a "commitment between two people," becoming the largest Protestant group to recognize gay marriage formally and allow same-sex weddings in every congregation. After all regional bodies vote and top Presbyterian leaders officially accept the results, the change will take effect June 21. The denomination has nearly 1.8 million members and about 10,000 congregations.

It is a big deal that Presbyterians redefined marriage because it shows rebellion against truth and it will mean increasing ignorance of the Bible. Basically, when people want to learn something, they look it up on the internet. All too often, what they *really* want to learn is "Why I am right." The Presbyterians' endorsement of "gay marriage" will feed that lust for misinformation. If you have a child or grandchild struggling with same sex temptations, you had better pray they talk to you about it before they do "research" on the world wide web.

Thus, there is an ongoing effort to pretend that the Bible really supports homosexual practice and homosexual "marriage" rather than simply throwing the Bible out as a false document. It would be far more honest to stop pretending the Bible is even ambiguous on the matter and simply tell people that the Bible is a false document and that the God portrayed in it is a non-existent god. But somehow a great many people would rather lie about the Bible and lie about God. So now the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is doing more to feed that need to disobey God and pretend that we aren't disobeying him at the same time. (By the way, there are other Presbyterian denominations, and many of them have not lied about the content of the Bible as the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has done.)

Here are a few points about the content of the Bible:

- The creation account (Gen 1 & 2) defines marriage as heterosexual.
- The Ten Commandments presuppose that marriage is heterosexual.
- What you hear about how "the Old Testament also condemns shellfish" is anti-intellectual garbage repeated by the ignorant to spread ignorance. Yes, Israel was supposed to abstain from certain animals, but God-fearing Gentiles were never expected to follow those dictates (which is why Christians don't, either). There was not any confusion

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meets at
13789 W. 8th Avenue
Golden, Colorado 80401
720-295-4530

Pastors

Larry Campbell (303) 246-8810
DeWayne Howell (303) 973-7283

Preacher

Jim Reingrover (303) 973-5102

info@thechurchingolden.com

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Westside-Church-of-Christ/276475819148309>

Assembly Schedule

Sunday

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
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Sunday morning

• **adult Bible class, Daniel: Determined to Walk with God**, chapters 10-11, Jeff Wilkes

• **Sermon**, "Forgiveness," Westin Cox

Sunday afternoon

• Lessons from the Life of Christ, "How Jesus Grew Up and Conducted Himself in the World," Kory Tope

Wednesday night class: Daniel: Determined to Walk with God, chapter 12

Feeding on His Word Reading

Everyone is invited to an open Bible reading of Matthew this evening, March 22, at 4 pm, light supper to follow, at the Reameses' home. See **Joel Walker** for schedule.