AS 1 COMMUNITY GROUPS: Winter Sessions 2015

To Be Happy In Jesus! (Thanksgiving)

Luke 7:36-47

[36] One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. [37] And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, [38] and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment. [39] Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner." [40] And Jesus answering said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he answered, "Say it, Teacher." [41] "A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. [42] When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?" [43] Simon answered, "The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt." And he said to him, "You have judged rightly." [44] Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. [45] You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. [46] You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. [47] Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little."

Teaching Points: *(Take turns reading through these statements)* 1) Our happiness does not depend on how much we have but how much we think we deserved, 2) The more keenly we feel ourselves to be sinners and are forgiven, the happier we will be.

Discussion Questions: *(Take turns reading and answering these questions)*

1. Think about the last time you felt truly thankful. What were you thankful for? How did you express it?
2. What point was Jesus making in telling a short story in vv. 41 to 42? How is this related to how the woman was treating Jesus versus how the Pharisee (Simon) was treating Him?
3. Do you think Jesus is saying that the woman is the bigger sinner than the Pharisee in this case and that's why she is more thankful when she is forgiven than the Pharisee? Why or why not?
4. Think about this statement: "Heaven is full of bad people who are forgiven. Hell is full of good people who are unforgiven." How does this defy the popular (or common) thinking? Where is the gospel (good news) in this?
5. Why would the world's way of boosting our self-esteem - "you deserve better" - ultimately fail to bring happiness to us? Then, what would? (bring happiness to us in light of these versus?)
6. How do you think a thankful heart is related to joy? Does this explain to some degree why we have not been joyful at times? Discuss.

Depending On Christ

Christian happiness and freedom come from knowing that we deserved death and hell. And yet Jesus received what we deserved (hell) and gave us what we didn't (heaven). The more keenly we become aware of this fact, the happier we will be.