

Recap

Good morning, Church! My name is Blake Haynes, and I am the assistant Student Pastor here at Fellowship. That's usually all I am but today I am taking on the new role as the official *recapper* of last week's sermon. Y'all know what a recap is if you watch TV. It's that helpful little part at the beginning of the episode that reminds you of everything you forgot from the previous week. Well, that's exactly what I'm doing today, the only difference is you don't have the option to press skip. We need these occasional recaps or reminders because we can be so forgetful. I mean let's be real, how many of y'all, in the 45 seconds since I introduced myself, have already forgotten my name? Be honest! The fact is God's people are notoriously forgetful, and we have to be reminded of truth over and over again. I mean that's why we have the book of Deuteronomy. Deuteronomy just means "second law" or "repeated law," and the whole book is just Moses giving a recap of God's commands for the people of Israel as a reminder for them as they began to enter the promised land. And so, as we enter into this new series, I just want to take this opportunity to remind us of some truth from last week's Scripture and to point out the 'why,' not just behind this series, but the 'why' that has to be behind everything we do as a church. Sound good? Are y'all ready to get Deuteronomized?

So last week we started the new series Building Tables which is all about making time for relationships and hospitality and ultimately sharing the love of Christ with those around us. Caleb kicked us off by leading us through a great passage from Luke chapter 7 that really demonstrates this idea. If you remember, Jesus is invited to dinner by a Pharisee named Simon. It's unclear from the text as to why a Pharisee invited Jesus to his table (the two don't usually get along). It might've been to try to set up Jesus or trick him as the Pharisees repeatedly attempt to do in each gospel account. Regardless of the reason, it's evident that Simon doesn't treat Jesus with even the usual hospitality a guest should receive. On the other hand, while Jesus was there, a woman, who had a notorious reputation as a sinner, and had likely been a prostitute, came to Jesus while he was at the table. She kneels at his feet and begins to weep. Her tears are falling on Jesus' feet and she begins to wipe them clean with her hair. Then she takes out an expensive bottle of perfume and pours it on Jesus' feet. She does all of this to treat Jesus with the highest honor she can. Meanwhile, Simon's just sitting there watching all this go down and he ain't having it. He's saying, "does Jesus not know what kind of person this woman is? Isn't he supposed to be a prophet, why would a prophet let this trash touch him?" Now we'll pick up in Luke 7, verse 40.

⁴⁰ Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to tell you."

"Tell me, teacher," he said.

⁴¹ "Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴² Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?"

⁴³ Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven."

"You have judged correctly," Jesus said.

So, the point of the parable is pretty straightforward; when you have been forgiven much, you will love much. But I want you to notice something in that parable, even the person that owed the 50 denarii still owed a great debt that he couldn't pay. A single denarius equaled

a day's wage, so it was 50 days salary he owed. Now, I work in ministry so 50 days salary comes to only about 50 bucks for me, but for most people, 50 days salary is several thousand dollars. That is an incredible amount of debt to just have wiped away! So, Jesus wasn't implying that the Pharisee didn't have as much need for forgiveness as the woman. His point was that a sinner that realizes their debt and is forgiven will naturally love the one who has forgiven them. Simon didn't see his need for forgiveness, so he showed no love toward Jesus. But the woman on the other hand realized she was a sinner and loved Jesus because she knew she had been forgiven of so much.

So, it's not that some of us need a little forgiveness and some need a lot. God's Word is clear "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" Romans 3:23. Everyone has rebelled against God. The woman, the Pharisee, you, me, all of us have sinned, we still sin, and we will sin again and there's not a single thing we can do to even make a dent in our sin debt. All we can do is receive by faith the forgiveness that's offered to us in Jesus Christ. And it's only when we start to realize just how great our need for forgiveness is, and in turn realize how much greater and deeper God's love and grace is, it's then that we can be transformed and be freed to share that love with those around us. So, we have to recognize how much we've been forgiven in order to share the love of Christ with others. In other words, we've got to come to the cross before we can go build tables. The cross is the only reason we have anything worth sharing, and if we start to lose our focus on the cross then we'll forget why we're supposed to be building tables in the first place. This is the gospel, and it has to be at the center of this sermon series and at the center of everything that we do. Martin Luther said, "we need to hear the gospel every day because we forget it every day." So, this is our reminder, this is our own little Deuteronomy. Let's keep our focus on the cross.

Communion Intro

In just a few moments, Fellowship, we are going to invite you to the table of the Lord to take communion. The Lord's table is a place for sinners in need of forgiveness and Jesus invites all who would receive that forgiveness by faith in Him. 1 Timothy 1:15-16 says this:

¹⁵ Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. ¹⁶ But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life.

I love how plainly Paul puts it. He says, "here are the facts! Let's get it straight. Jesus didn't just come to be a good person or as an example on how to be nice, he came to save sinners and I am by far the worst one! And if he can save me then there's not a sinner out there that he can't save." Lewis Sperry Chafer, the founder of Dallas Seminary where I'm a student said it this way, "Anyone can devise a plan by which good people may go to heaven, only God can devise a plan whereby sinners, who are His enemies, can go to heaven."

This is grace and this is what's offered to us at the Lord's table. You won't find an offer like this anywhere else.

If you're listening to this and you haven't trusted in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, I want to invite you to do so this morning. If you feel something tugging on you, something gnawing at your soul to get right with the Lord, do not wait! Come talk to me after the service or find another pastor or anyone for that matter. We'd love to talk or pray with you. Just don't put it off, we're not guaranteed tomorrow.

For those of you that have trusted in Jesus, I want to invite you to come to the table and receive the elements. There are several tables in the room, as Noah leads us in song, you all can make your way to the nearest table, grab the elements, then make your way back to your seat to remain standing for worship. As Noah leads us, I encourage you to reflect on the forgiveness you've received and worship God for his mercy and grace. Come as we sing.