

Luke 7:40

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

Analysis

Jesus addresses unspoken criticism: 'And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee' (Greek 'Simon, *echō* *soi* *ti* *eipein*'). Though Simon spoke only mentally, Jesus responds, demonstrating prophetic knowledge the Pharisee doubted. The formal address 'Simon' and courteous request permission to speak show respect despite addressing criticism. Simon's reply 'Master, say on' (Greek 'Didaskale, *eipe*') grants permission. The title 'Didaskale' (teacher) acknowledges Jesus's authority while maintaining distance—not personal discipleship language. Reformed theology observes Jesus's method—gentle confrontation through parable rather than direct accusation. Proverbs 15:1 states 'A soft answer turneth away wrath.' Jesus's wisdom appears in how He addresses error—firmly yet graciously, using illustration to enable self-discovery of truth.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern courtesy required indirect communication, especially when addressing error. Direct confrontation brought shame; parables enabled learning without public humiliation. Rabbis frequently taught through questions and stories. Jesus's method—asking permission, using parable—follows these norms while subverting assumptions. The name 'Simon' without honorific contrasts with the woman's honor-bringing actions. Early church adopted Jesus's model—speaking truth in love (Ephesians 4:15), correcting opponents with gentleness (2 Timothy 2:25).

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus's respectful yet firm approach to Simon model appropriate correction of error?
2. What is the value of using parables or illustrations rather than direct confrontation when addressing error?
3. How can we develop wisdom to know when direct rebuke versus gentle illustration is appropriate?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰπέ πρὸς αὐτόν Σίμων ἔχω
And answering G3588 Jesus said unto him Simon I have
G2532 G611 G2424 G2036 G4314 G846 G4613 G2192

σοί τι εἰπέ ὁ δέ φησίν Διδάσκαλε εἰπέ
unto thee somewhat said G3588 And he saith Master said
G4671 G5100 G2036 G1161 G5346 G1320 G2036

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