

Luke 7:43

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

Analysis

Jesus's question: 'Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?' (Greek 'tis oun autōn pleion agapēsei auton'). The answer is obvious—greater forgiveness produces greater love. Simon responds correctly: 'I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most' (Greek 'hupolambanō hoti hō to pleion echarisato'). The tentative 'I suppose' (hupolambanō) suggests Simon senses the trap. Jesus confirms: 'Thou hast rightly judged' (Greek 'orthōs ekrinas'). The principle: love corresponds to recognized forgiveness. Those aware of great forgiveness love greatly; those minimizing their sin love minimally. First John 4:19 states 'We love him, because he first loved us.' Our love responds to His grace. Reformed theology recognizes that sanctification (growing in love for God) increases as we grasp justification (our complete forgiveness).

Historical Context

Jesus's pedagogical method—asking question, receiving answer, applying principle—follows rabbinic tradition. By making Simon state the principle, Jesus enabled self-awareness rather than imposing external judgment. Ancient honor culture made this approach face-saving while still making the point. For early church, this principle explained varied passion levels among believers—those who grasped their great forgiveness (like Paul, 'chief of sinners,' 1 Timothy 1:15) loved Christ intensely. Modern application includes deepening awareness of sin's magnitude to increase gratitude for grace.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does increased awareness of our forgiveness increase our love for Christ?
2. Why do some believers love Christ passionately while others seem lukewarm?
3. What practices help us grasp the magnitude of grace we've received?

Interlinear Text

ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Σίμων εἶπεν Ὑπολαμβάνω ὅτι
answered And G3588 Simon he said I suppose that
G611 G1161 G4613 G2036 G5274 G3754

ῳ τὸ πλεῖον ἐχαρίσατο ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτῷ
he to whom G3588 most he forgave And he said unto him
G3739 G4119 G5483 G1161 G2036 G846

Ὀρθῶς ἔκρινας
rightly Thou hast
G3723 G2919