

# Luke 7:47

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

## Analysis

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This verse presents the profound paradox that forgiveness produces love, not vice versa. The Greek perfect tense 'aphēōntai' (are forgiven) indicates a completed action with ongoing results, showing that the woman's love flowed from her realization of forgiveness already received. Jesus corrects Simon the Pharisee's assumption that love earns forgiveness, instead teaching that awareness of one's great sin and great forgiveness produces great love. This demonstrates the Reformed doctrine that justification (forgiveness) precedes sanctification (love), and that those who think they need little forgiveness will produce little love.

## Historical Context

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Set in a Pharisee's house during Jesus' Galilean ministry, this account features a woman 'who was a sinner'—likely a euphemism for a prostitute. Her extravagant act of anointing Jesus' feet with expensive ointment and her tears scandalized the Pharisees but revealed her profound gratitude for forgiveness.

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

## Study Questions

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1. How does your awareness of your own sin and need for forgiveness affect the depth of your love for Christ?
2. In what ways might you be like Simon the Pharisee, minimizing your need for forgiveness and thereby limiting your love?

## Interlinear Text

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|           |              |          |           |              |          |           |       |
|-----------|--------------|----------|-----------|--------------|----------|-----------|-------|
| ὥ         | χάριν        | λέγω     | σοι       | ἀφίεται      | αἱ       | ἁμαρτίαι  |       |
| Wherefore | G5484        | I say    | unto thee | are forgiven | which    | sins      |       |
| G3739     |              | G3004    | G4671     | G863         | G3588    | G266      |       |
| αὐτῆς     | αἱ           | πολύ·    | ὅτι       | ἀγαπᾷ        | πολύ·    | ὥ         | δὲ    |
| Her       | which        | are many | for       | she loved    | are many | Wherefore | but   |
| G846      | G3588        | G4183    | G3754     | G25          | G4183    | G3739     | G1161 |
| ὀλίγον    | ἀφίεται      | ὀλίγον   | ἀγαπᾷ     |              |          |           |       |
| little    | are forgiven | little   | she loved |              |          |           |       |
| G3641     | G863         | G3641    | G25       |              |          |           |       |

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 John 4:19** (Love): We love him, because he first loved us.

**1 John 3:18** (Love): My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

**Isaiah 1:18** (Sin): Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

**Romans 5:20** (Sin): Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

**Galatians 5:6** (Love): For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

**Ephesians 6:24** (Love): Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

**Isaiah 55:7** (Parallel theme): Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

**1 John 5:3** (Love): For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

**Acts 5:31** (Sin): Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

**1 Timothy 1:14** (Love): And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.