
A Short Story that Speaks Volumes for Our Lives

Canceled Debts

Jesus said, "Two men owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he canceled the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?" (Luke 7:41-42)



One day Jesus was invited to dinner at the home of a religious leader named Simon. He was a member of the group called Pharisees that believed their good works made them worthy before God; they didn't believe that they needed to be saved from their sins. There was an unexpected guest at the gathering – a sinful woman, a prostitute. She had come to honor Jesus by pouring expensive perfume and even her own tears on his feet. Simon was upset that Jesus was welcoming the praise of this sinful woman. He thought that if Jesus really knew who she was, he would not even let her touch him. The truth is that Jesus knew that she had lived a sinful life. He also knew that her joyful tears were born of his forgiving love for her.

So Jesus told a story to teach Simon and us a lesson about forgiveness. There were two men who were in debt. One of them owed a money lender about three years' worth of wages. The other owed the same money lender about 50 days of wages. Neither was able to repay, so the money lender graciously canceled both debts. Jesus posed a question: "Now which one of them will love him more?" Simon answered correctly that the one who had the larger debt canceled would have loved the money lender more.

Jesus' short story speaks volumes for our lives. We all have a huge debt that we cannot pay. We cannot make up for all the sinful things we do, not by doing more good things or by doing less bad things. We can't cancel the debt of sin by anything we think, do, or say.

But God saw our desperate need and loves us so much that he canceled our debt of sin. He did that by having his Son, Jesus, pay it completely for everyone. The price he paid was his death. As the sinless Son of God, he was able to take all of our sins on himself and suffer their punishment for us. By his death, he canceled the debt of our sin. Three days after he died, he rose from the dead to prove that his sacrifice counted for all of us.

It's springtime and Christians are celebrating the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. What a great time of the year to be reminded that Jesus has canceled our debt of sin and given us new life with him!