

Ad - 20090101 [B1]: The Released Life

Author: Festo Kivengere
Place:
Date:
Event:
Theme: The Released Life
Text: Luke 7:36-50; Romans 7:12-25

Comment: Tape No. 101

Index:

- p. 1 Begin at Calvary
 Person and work of Jesus
- p. 2 Fresh touch
 Woman sinner
- p. 3 Simeon, the Pharisee
 Woman sinner uninvited
- p. 4 Ticket of invitation - Jesus alone
 Can't impress God
- p. 6 Jesus melts people not freeze them
 Disintegrated life - now whole
- p. 7 Jewish women traditions
 Jesus accepts the blame
 Woman candidate of grace
- p. 8 Acquitted
 Mercy covers
 Count Zinzendorf - "on mercy"
 Restored to fellowship
- p. 9 Released-reconciled
 Accepted in Jesus
- p.10 Bankrupt
 What is sin?
- p. 11 German Athiest - wished God dead
 Released
- p. 12 Bright but confused student finds God
- p. 13 Shares Jesus
 FK defines "humdrum"
- p. 15 Difficult young boy released from mean character
- p. 16 Count Zinzendorf on "the blood of Jesus" as cover
- p. 17 Closing Prayer

Luke 7:36-50

Rom. 8:12-25

Speaker: Festo Kivengere

Theme: The Released Life Tape #101

Luke 7:36-50

(Weak start).....Fundamental, simplest but the most profound thing you can discover. May I ask you to remember that when God guided us to begin with what we began with today, this is my firm belief that any understanding of the message of the new Testament must begin at Calvary but in order to get into what the Lord did, his actions and miracles, his actions in the parable, we who are now Christians should better begin at Calvary. This throws tremendous light on the entire New Testament. That's why having begun with the intervening love of God, in Calvary, that love which stepped in when nothing else could have stepped in. That mighty action of God speaking to our situation, we bound in chains and fetters, prisoners of ourselves, we needed that word, therefore we begin at the cross and now we can enter into the incidence of the New Testament. Now, we can examine if you like, the relationship of the Lord and certain souls and shall we, please take our stand beside each incident. If the New Testament is going to be a reality, you don't have to look at it at a distance. The question of distance must be forgotten. You are deeply involved for Jesus died for you. No matter where you are, what your experience is, no matter whether you are a friend of a Christian, no matter whether you are one of those who are walking along and you can hardly understand. Your case is included in that mighty love. You've got a room there. There is a place for each and everyone. So we come to Luke, chapter 7, the Released Life for a Pauper. I don't have to read it again for it was beautifully read to us by the pastor. I'm going to call your attention to where it all begins. If we are going to be blessed shall we ask the Holy Spirit to refocus our attention upon the person and the work of Jesus

Begin at Calvary

person & work of Jesus

Christ. This may sound, some Christians, as if it were too simple. Now, if it do occur to you that any incident that you find in the New Testament sounds hum drum, overtrodden ground, then you need a fresh touch from heaven. There is nothing that you can ever consider to be hum-drum or stereo-typed when the eternal son of God., starts there, you must come trembling with excitement. If only the Holy Spirit can open your eyes. Every step near should make each heart tremble. For we turn in the presence of the eternal love and no one can turn thereand remain the same, saint or sinner, it doesn't matter. So we come now to the incident recorded for us in Luke. And this is centering on the Person of Jesus Christ. And the case is a very ordinary case. Luke has a way of putting things, very, very unusual but very human. So he gives some incidents, like Luke 15, or like Luke 19 or like Luke 7, in this particular incident, we are in confrontation with the Son of God in the most usual manner, invited to meal just as you would invite him to your home and I hope before the mission is over you will invite him to the circumstances which make your life. Please let us ask God to release from making the New Testament events too spiritual for us, putting them away in the ^{clouds} / ^{out} and what we come/with is speculation and theologizing and we never come down to earth. Luke comes down to earth. There is a woman ^{the} in/society. Have you ever found a more lonely case? There she was, walking alone in the streets of the lonely town burdened to the core, an outcast in society, hating herself, and yet has nothing to do about it. She even got to the title of being known as the woman who was a sinner. She did not give herself the title, her sin gave it. And ^{couldn't, she} she/could not do anything about it to change. And so the Master comes to

*Fresh touch**Woman -
Sinner*

The Released Life.

this particular village or town, or house. Invited by a pharisee, of all people. An ultra religious Jew, a conservative Jew, a student of Torah, a first rate moralist. You could never have found someone more opposite to the woman than this pharisee in every respect, they could never meet at all. The woman had nowhere to meet the pharisee. Everything about the pharisee, simply gets her out. And the fact that she was a woman also added because they were a separate group of people among the Jews. Because, perhaps they needed it, the liberation movement which is in the United States. However, they didn't have to work hard on that. Another one had come on on , into this affair. They didn't have to put their pi_____around and grope in darkness for liberty. NO, the _____had come For love, the kind of love I'm talking about, the love which loves the unlovely, the overcoming the undefeatable love of Jesus have come into the situation. The pharisee invited the teacher, the teacher comes with his disciples. And they sat in the pharisees house.

you,
Now let me call/your attention to the fact, Now does this stranger wander into the house. She's not invited. Maybe she came on the usual custom that when there was an important person in the home, all sorts of people took advantage of it and wandered in. Could she wander where the men were sitting. Does Luke tell us that she came wandering in just at a random Did you get that. Don't you feel that in the New Testament she came with a tremendous purpose. She even came prepared. And Luke puts it here. He says, when she heard that Jesus was having a meal at the pharisees home, she decided to come. That was her only invitation card for her.

*Simon
the pharisee*

*uninvited
woman*

The Released Life

That was the only ticket in which she could have ventured to come, in near. Otherwise she had no chance. She was too bad for the pharisee. She was too bad for herself. She was guilty of rebellion. Ashamed of herself broken character, morals all over the place. Where could she come? Where could come and be accepted. There was no way. There was no ground. There was no road. There was no bridge. Everything was broken. Until she heard Jesus is at the pharisees home. That name. Maybe it is familiar to you.. It can easily be familiar to me as a preacher. And that/^{is}my misery when it is like that. That name, the name that charms our fears. The name which sets the captive free and lights up the dungeon of the miserable. That name became the ticket for the poor lady. Broken hearted, broken morals, utterly dejected, a criminal indeed. And she came and stood, where? Not before Peter, not before Simon, not before Thomas. She directly came to Jesus with the most im....most precious/^{perfume}she had. She came exactly as she was. Her and and all perfume and everything. Sinner as she was she came exactly as she was. Nothing left behind. Nothing worth her work. No pretensions anymore. Not even attempt to impress God. She simply came to be impressed. God is not interested in being impressed by us. This is the miserable experience of most of us who grow in Christian things. We become _____ without knowing it and what remains is we have a kind of righteousness which is like debit and credit. All the time. We put in this we get that, we put in that we get that. And God sits in the market waiting for you to impress Him. What a miserable thing can you find a more misunderstanding on on Christian pretenders. But most of us do it. There we are, the dollars are there. Just like rabbis you know, put more goodness and God sees at you and then the

Ticket of invitation Jesus

can't impress God

The Released Life

dollars goes up. Could easily be as good as Islam. This woman came with no account. No account at all. She simply came upon one credit. And that was Jesus. The choir sings the song, was beautiful. Beautiful. Jesus, His blood and righteousness, it covers me from head to foot. This is the only garment. Apart from that everything is just rugs and fetters. My accumulated righteousness, says Isaiah, is just filthy rugs in the light of his eternity. I can't come in. The woman never did. She came upon the person of Jesus Christ and she came straight to him. Yes, she came straight to him. And you know where he stood, Luke tells us that she came and knelt behind. What a lovely place for you and for me to be in. Not in front. That's not my place. Behind. She's in the behind Jesus Christ. She's in the behind his righteousness. Not hiding my sins. You would see, she never hid her sin. You can never hide one sin once you come anywhere near. If you have managed to keep one sin it's just because you are at a distance from him. In that love, you cannot hide one sin. This is the light which shines and makes people tremble. She comes, she picks up her place behind, not in front, she was not good enough in the front. And none of us is. So she took her place, the rightful place for you and for me, for a sinner like her behind Jesus Christ, and down lower enough at his feet. And then what did she do? She stood there, oh, what a candidate of grace and mercy. Oh my, talk about righteousness, she has none. But as soon as she stood in that, nothing to cover, nothing to pretend, nothing to present, and where she stood a beautiful candidate of eternal grace and grace began to act on her, plus, you heard she stood behind weeping and yet no one beat her. Even if you have brought twenty five, five thous-

sand words. Even if you had produced the entire six hundred and thirteen laws of the pharisees at that time. They could never have produced tears. They could have simply made her drier and harder and more miserable. But she stood now in the presence of eternal love. And in the light of that heart of love, she melted. The mountains have hardened. The accumulated shame, the nakedness of her sinful and more goo...more wickedness and helplessness. Everything melted in the presence of Jesus.

You know Jesus freezes people, he melts them. This _____. Introduce her her to Simon, she would have completely frozen to death. Introduce/to society. She would have been stripped naked and left a spiritual cup lying there. Introduce her to Jesus Christ. And the heart which was cold takes new life and begins to vibrate. And in the heart which was hardened by sin enters new life which melts the guilt and a release begins to take place. What a wonderful experience.

This lady stood there, not a word. Tears flowed down her cheeks as she knelt and she show her tears she was just saying, no one would have accepted me. And yet He has accepted me. No one would have put up with me, and yet He has put up with me. I don't know how. I came just wondering because the name of Jesus attracted me. I never expected this. I am accepted. I put together. I am cleansed. I am covered. Now I can accept myself. I'm no longer....in pieces. My disintegrated life is now integrated by His love. My broken life is now put together, mended and recreated. That was love, restoring, releasing. Every part is being released. Her sins are now forgiven Her burdens are melted. And she begins to flow. She undid her hair. She forgot the custom. When Jesus begins to move, you

Jesus
melts
people
from
the
heart

disintegrated
life - now
whole

The Released Life

can forget your custom, _____. And when the Holy Spirit breaks in a society, you know sometimes people are upset, because customs are interrupting. This lady opens her hair which a Jewish lady never did in the public. It was terrible. As soon as a girl became a grown up person and becomes a woman, they tie their hair never to undo it. Now she does, she undoes, she loosened her hair and begins to wipe the Saviour's feet. The Tears which fell upon her cheek. She has loosened. You see, release is coming and she no longer tied in knots. She begins to pour oil and hair and tears. and not only that, she began to kiss ~~his~~ feet, repeatedly, as Luke puts in Greek. She repeatedly continues kissing the feet. And you know what happened, immediately, Simon had the usual attitude of the religious people. Up, as she wept, he became harder. The woman was melting, Simon was becoming harder and harder. Religion can harden people, you know. The outcast is melting because of love. The religious is becoming frozen because the woman is too bad for him.

*Jewish woman
tradition*

in
And/them, who took the blame. not Simon, not the disciples. Jesus accepted the blame. He was criticized before the woman. He was misunderstood for her sake. He admitted in silence and acceptance that the woman was also one for whom he was going to die. That redeeming love had come for such as her. And no matter what everybody says she was accepted and acceptance cost the Master reputation, name and everything. You know, you can never be released without a price. Redemption and release always go with a price. The woman stood there, I said a candidate of grace, why? Because as she stood there in the presence of God, she was

*Jesus
accepts bl*

*woman
candidate
of grace*

The Released Life

guilty, accused. She needed someone kind enough to acquit her. Set her release. Jesus did that. In forgiving her, she was acquitted. She stood there not only as a criminal needing to be acquitted. She stood there as a debtor. All the eternal debt, the unpayable debt that woman owed and you and I owed. Who on earth would have paid? So the Master used that illustration. So stood as a debtor. Eternally owing, but never never penny to pay. Morally. Do you think you have got something to say? Do you think that you've got anything that you can put there in your moral break...wreckages that you have made? Never, never. None of us. Empty-handed. Nothing in my hand I bring simply to thy cross I cling. Naked I come to you for grace. Foul. I want to be clean. I am naked I want a dress. That's what ^{Zinzendorf} / was singing about. That's what the woman would have sung. And mercy covered her. And the debt was beautifully paid for Jesus died for her.

Yes, grace had come from God. God had made the provision sufficient for the lady. That's why Zinzendorf said, His mercy in us / ^{were} as many as the sand, on the se....on the seashore. Yes your, your redeeming love. Your atonement would have been himself for millions and _____ now. So the Lady stood there, yes as a criminal needing acquittal, as a debtor with nothing to pay. And accepting forgiveness. And not only that. She stood a stranger. As she walked into the house, what a stranger. People regarded her as a sinner. Circumstances, society, a stranger to God a stranger to herself a stranger to everybody. She needed someone to say, you can be restored into friendship with God. And that's exactly what Jesus did. He

acquitted

mercy covered

*Count Zinzendorf
"many"*

*Restored to
friendship*

The Released Life

brought her back home. He accepted her and in Him she was accepted fully. Before God and before man. For he whom Jesus accepts no one can keep out. When he _____ embrace a poor man, a poor woman, a broken hearted sinner, no one, not angel can stand in the way, accepted in the beloved. She was the friend of God and as far as she was concerned, she was concerned a friend of everyone who has that care except of course she couldn't be possibly a friend of Simon. He was too good for her. And then not only that she needed a little more, not only to be reconciled, not only to be brought into friendship with God with herself with everybody. She was released from estrangement.

*Released
Purposed*

How many of us have been released from estrangement? Do you know you can be a stranger in a church? Do you know you can walk with a big Bible in your hand and still be a stranger? Do you know that Christians are suffering from estrangement? And keeping each other at arms length? over there? Oh, I can't have fellowship with you until you are good enough. Who is good enough? If you wait until I'm good enough, forget it. You will never see me until we get to heaven. You can never have fellowship with me on those grounds of good enough. If you say, I am going, I can't have fellowship with her until she is good enough, then you are not having fellowship with a person, you are having fellowship with an idea. Your own idea of goodness not the person.

*Accepted
- yours*

Jesus accepted that woman as she was. And in accepting her, she made her feel she was wanted. Do you make people feel they are wanted? Do you know what makes me and you wanted? Accepted in Jesus Christ, we know

The Released Life

we are wanted and then we know how to keep each other at arms length. Released to meet other people. Released to meet Jesus and in Him we meet society and in Him we meet the black and white.

My friend said a special, a special note, you know he used black notes for me, I love that (laughter) Beautiful. I hope the pianist and the organist did not _____ the black song only...as we sang. I hope they played both black and white. Otherwise we would have had a lapse side with the kind of music, won't we? You see, we need ^{we need} to know that Jesus plays both the black and white. And out of the black and white, standing in His presence, no one can stand in His presence and look down upon another. For we are the same. Simon made ^a ~~big~~ mistake. He thought he owed a little without knowing that in both cases the two debtors had nothing to pay. Whether you owed fifteen and the other one owed 500, does it matter if you have got nothing to pay? You are both bankrupt. You are both candidates of mercy. We have nothing to pay. We can't pay for one sin. I can't be released simply because I have committed one sin, that is utter blindness. It's not a question of committing so many sins.

The sin in the Bible is not just to break just one moral law. In the Bible, to sin is to break God's heart. That is why it is very difficult to do anything about it. Had it been just changing your morality and adding a few things to make yourself better, it would have been easy. Many people have done it. The Hindus have done it. The difficult is that when you break God's heart, what can you put there? All you need is

Bankrupt

Sin

The Released Life

mercy to receive you. Two arms to embrace you. Love to forgive and cover you. And that is what the lady got. That evening or that n....day. When she stood in the presence of Jesus, then she was acquitted by grace. Then she indeed had her sins paid for completely. Because Jesus died. Brought into friendship. No longer stranger in the cold, now in the warmth, released from estrangement. And not only that, she needed to know she was a child beloved. She was no longer an enemy of God. You know what you do, ^{with} once you are out of tune / God, you remain an enemy. Guilt makes us enemies. We just hate God because we feel God makes me uncomfortable. That's what the German atheist said. He said, I wish God were dead. Because he makes me uncomfortable. That's what ^{we} sinners do. Once there is guilt, you can't be a friend of God. You need to be brought into fellowship and she was made a child of God, a daughter. And so Jesus said, alright, Simon do you look at that, do you see that woman? After a number, a few sentences, after the parable. Jesus stands at once to see Simon. Look, do you see that woman? As if Simon had not yet seen the woman. Or ^{seen} he had / it was the case of a sinner. A case, a miserable broken, broken-hearted sort of person which is too bad for words. A case. Jesus never sees cases. Jesus sees you as a person. / As someone with a name. Not just a case of a sinner or a rebellious youngster. Not a bit. Jesus regards you as a real person, loved, paid for whom He accepts.

Released from emptiness. Released so that you can be yourself. And stand there. And in fear, I am accepted in the ____, released. And she left the room, Jesus said, alright you can go home. Go home in peace now.

*German
atheist -
Wish God
dead -*

Released

The Released Life

You have been released, you can now go and live.

The other day I was speaking to two thousand young people in my city after being here. We had tremendous time. My team was made up of university students about twenty five of them. Girls and boys, from the medical schools and universities. And they were leading^{these singing}/of songs, they had the guitars, they had everything, they even put on a play as part of the preaching. Among those who came to be released, to be given new direction, to have their debts paid was a young student, a brilliant young man. He was studying an Africanist, from my country. He was studying at Washington in one of the universities. And while he was there, within two months of his graduation, he had a nervous breakdown because of so many miserable experience. He was drugs. He was on every thing you can think of and in the end, the government here and the government there had sent him back. As a useless case or rather as a sick person. Who could no longer manage his studies and yet he was bright, but he came back to Uganda and he was again on over drinking, over-everything. Simply couldn't put himself together. It doesn't mean that he hated God. He simply couldn't put himself together. And he came to the young people's meeting in the stadium. And one day he wanted to talk with me and I went and I have never met a more confused human being this side of heaven. He simply did not know where to begin. He had about twenty-five philosophies on his head, ^{swinging} / round. And we talked, and we didn't get anywhere and I invited him to stay. And he stayed again for the next meeting and the Lord met him. My, what a change. Couldn't

*African young
student in
his
met the
Lord*

The Released Life

believe your eyes. He was sorted out. He was unconfused. He was cleared. He was forgiven and he became absolutely saved that night. Released from those shackles of confusion. Released from his guilt. Released from his seeking without finding. This young man became beautiful. That was in June, only about the twenty-second of June. This year. And do you know what has happened? Since that I met him about four times. And he's going to high schools, universities, whenever he can meet young people he wants to tell them what the Master has done. What the loving Saviour has done. And you know what has happened? He has been used within a few months of his conversion. He's been used to bring others to Jesus Christ. Released for a purpose. And now he's already in Washington, back for his studies. And he told me and he said, now I'm going to change my degree And when I'm through I want to go into the ministry. Because he says, I can't wait, I want to tell as many people as possible. What Jesus can do for the kind of character like myself. There are no ties. Tremendous, release. Do you know what it is all about. As a Christian, and I can see many of you are experienced Christians. What happened. What is the Holy Spirit doing in you. Where did you lose the laughter of your Christian faith? Why is it that it has become hum-drum? Can't you ask the Holy Spirit to take out the hum and leave the drum? Because the.. this hum drum business. You know, the...it's Jesus who can do these kind of things. You know, we Africans had the usual use of drum. A humming drum is no good. It makes you tired. But you know a drum is a beat which excites many Africans. And Jesus can, as we use that English word, "hum-

John Jones

hum drum

The Released Life

drum", a kind of experience which makes ~~you tired because~~ it becomes monotonous. But there are many Christians who go to church and go out, come in until it becomes a hum drum. They sing the songs, choruses and hymns, same preacher, nothing exciting, nothing thrilling at all. No Bible. Excitement is just a beautiful monotony. And of course it doesn't disturb anyone. This kind of experience doesn't disturb anyone. But you know when you met that woman, from where Jesus was, going back home. My, she would ^{be} bubbling. I'm sure she was jumping and singing and trying to compose some choruses, all about Jesus all about His love, all about forgiveness. Tremendous excitement. Did you have to encourage her to be an evangelist? The problem would be how to stop her. She 's so full ^{is} She/so excited. And she's sees the entire world, the villages, the community, they need to know that Jesus is wonderful. They need to know the release of it all.

Do you know that how I came to Jesus, I told you last time. I owe it to a bubbling Christian I met on the road, three hours after being a Christian, three hours only he met me on the road. And just full of word, a few words but his eyes shining, his heart beating, vibrations all over. And he shared with me for the mighty things He had done, three hours ^{within} for he met me, and that evening I came to the Lord. You, see/three hours of his experience of Christ. He managed in a few sentences to communicate. You wonder why they were communicating in love. It's only love which can communicate. It's only when you experience that release that a sentence means the whole world. And that young man is now communicating. You please

The Released Life

pray for him. You know I can repeat story after story. I tell, I told you about that politician this morning, who when he was released, he asked the pastor for reconciliation and the entire crowd was experiencing the touch. A fifteen year old boy came from that crowd I was telling you, so full of emotions and he, and he came running and no one invited him except the Holy Spirit. And I was standing in front there helping in the minis...in this meeting. And this young boy of fifteen came and stood by my side and said, will you put it in English for me because there were other people who could not understand his language. /He was all excited. In fact he put his hand, on his chest and said, Do you know people, my heart is beating fast, and he went "pook", he was crying. What had happened to him, He said Jesus Christ had released a fifteen year old boy who been making things difficult/for other boys and girls.

*Significant
young boy
released*

That was her little word, but how realistic. This was his word, this was where he lived, this was where he walked shoulder with humanity, and that's why Jesus, that's why Jesus released him.

You dont have to look around or very far, You need to be released from where you are. In the church society, you are among the people who rub with shoulders/day by day, they want the experience the release which Jesus can give to those who would stand before him. And tonight, I am inviting as my dear Christian brothers and sisters to enter into what God has provided for you. As I said, if you are just too weak you qualify beautifully. If you are one of those Chrstians with mean characters, you...it doesn't matter, this is where characters are a test. This is where men and women

The Released Life

experience release in Jesus, release in Jesus Christ and this is why the New Testament is exciting. The woman left the crowd. There were critics there were grumblers, there were murmurers in the group. Criticizing Jesus, criticizing the lady, her emotions all over the place. But she walked back home, full of the liberty Jesus gave her, to life, to lift to meet other people, to lift to accept herself, to lift even to accept her circumstances. And this is what I pray that the Spirit of God will do in our midst during the week. That none of us will again live as a hum-drum Christian. America needs Christians who are absolutely released. From within, not who are transitorily released for a time but who are living in the permanent presence of the Son of God. And in your heart the blessed Holy Spirit is day by day applying his releasing power, applying the blood of the Lamb, so that they can say, with Zinzendorf, Jesus, and his blood and his righteousness is now my garment. I am covered all over like that lady. She went home released. May God bless you as you expose yourself to the hand which releases those who are under pressure.

Zinzendorf

We are going to have moments to pray and I am inviting all of you Christians whatever the experience might have been, God bless you, he understands it. What ever failure you might have come on your way as a Christian, God bless you, he knows all about it. All I am asking you is that you bow in the presence of Jesus Christ, but as you bow you let him do his gracious work, you accept your blessed position, a candidate of the eternal grace. Nothing to offer but what I am, accepting what he has for me. And I know you will not go home tonight without His release. You can't go back, having been in His presence, and go back again suffering from guilt, of fear of re-

The Released Life

sentment, or what it may be. Allow him to do his gracious work and after are _____, we don't have to hurry, there is room for talk. There is room for discussing things. There is room for those who feel they need prayer, their own little bit of prayer. This is your time. Let us pray.

We are in the presence of our eternal God. He who died and rose again. On calvary's cross. He before whom you are not a stranger. Avail yourself of His love. Stand where the lady stood., at His feet. Maybe weeping over something. Repenting, turning to Jesus, looking him fully in the face. And thanking Him that He accepts even you, and me.

*closing
prayer*

God our Father, can we ever thank you enough that Jesus came our way. Can we ever express what it means to turn in that releasing presence of the Son of God. We gaze upon the wounded side. We know the blood speaks wonderful message to the guilty conscience. Cleanse Lord, we pray. Release we pray tonite. From feuds and hatred, from those poisonous attitude of pride and self-centeredness. Set us free, that we may move in Aurura, in the state, in schools, in the community, Christians who have left their life in captivity and are walking in the newness of/Christ. May this be the experience of each and everyone here present. This we ask in --Jesus name. Amen.