

7. The older son, too was living for himself. What do you think the older son thought he would gain as he 'slaved' for all those years? Where did it lead him? Have you ever experienced this in your own life?

8. The father forgave his youngest son completely for absolutely everything. Not only did he forgive him, he threw a party! This was full forgiveness, this was amazing love. We can only imagine the son's response to this forgiveness as the music played and the punch was flowing freely at the celebration. Put yourself in this son's shoes and explain how you would feel towards your forgiving father. How would it change you?

9. The elder brother remains outside the party at the end of the passage. Pride can keep us from receiving the Father's love and loving God as he commands us to. Read Luke 18:9-14. What attitude does God want us to have as we come to him.

Getting it into My Life

10. One of the ways we can love God whatever the alternatives is to gaze upon the cross. This is where God the Father says to us - "I love you, I forgive you" by giving his Son to die in our place. Some people gaze upon the cross at communion. Some do this by reading and reflecting on this event in the Bible. How can you gaze upon the cross more this week? How would this impact your love for God?.

11. Practically speaking, what difference would this make in your life if you were to live out such a love for God? What would be the implication?



Loving God Whatever the Alternatives
 Week 2 – Luke 7:36-50

Sunday 21st February 2010
 10am & 6.30pm services

God wants me to _____ him but the alternatives can appear very attractive

We can love _____ more than God
 We can love _____ more than God
 We can love the _____ more than God

Many people choose the alternatives

I can love _____ more than God

Simon showed contempt for Jesus (Luke 7:1 & 44-46).
 He was Judgmental to the woman and Jesus (v 39).

Result – forgiven little, loved little (v 47)

Key sign you love self more than God – _____ , _____ ,
 _____ .

I can love _____ more than God

On another occasion...
 Judas was indignant at Mary's expensive gift (John 12:4).
 He wanted it for himself (John 12:6).

Small Group Preparation

(Following Week 2 of Church-Wide Series)

Result – forgiven little, loved little

Key sign you love self more than God – _____ , _____ ,
_____ .

I can love the status quo more than Jesus

The woman loved Jesus more than safety (Luke 7:37-38).
She loved Jesus more than popularity (v 39).

Result – forgiven much, loved much

Key sign you love status quo more than Jesus – _____ , _____ .

Are the alternatives really alternatives?

So what should I do today to love God?

Understand that I _____
when I have been _____ .

Jesus tells a parable he told often (Luke 7:40-43).

Gaze upon the cross.

_____ the Father's love.
_____ the Father's forgiveness.
_____ a life of love.

“Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven – as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little.” (Luke 7:47)

Love _____ whatever the alternatives.

Ask God to be your ‘everything.’

The alternatives shrink before a forgiving, loving Father.

Getting To Know You

1. What is your favourite flavour of ice-cream? What is the flavour you least like?

Getting Started

2. What insight, principle, or observation from this weekend's message did you find to be the most helpful, eye-opening, or troubling? Explain.
3. Why do you think most people find it difficult to love God?
4. In the above passage it seems that the woman may have responded with great emotion because of how she witnessed Jesus, an invited guest, was being treated by Simon the Pharisee. How do you respond when people make fun of God? Have you ever felt compelled to act or intervene for the sake of God's name?

Getting into the Bible

5. Read Luke 15:11-32. As you read can you identify ways in which the sons chose loving alternatives to loving their father? Which alternatives did they choose from the alternatives mentioned in the weekend message?

Loving self rather than their father
Loving things rather than their father
Loving the status quo rather than their father

6. Living for ourselves can seem so attractive! What do you think the younger son thought he would find as he began his journey of ‘self discovery’? (v 13). Where did it lead him? (v 14-16)? Have you seen this happen in your own life or in the lives of others? Write down an example.