

Dear Heavenly Father,

### *Praise*

When Jesus' mother and brothers came to see him, Jesus used the occasion to teach his disciples that his true family were those who did your will. I praise you today for the privilege of calling you my Father. How wonderful to be adopted into your family as a fellow-heir with Christ! He is my Lord and Savior, yet he is also my brother and friend. Praise the Lord!

### *Today in Your Word*

Today you told me more about Jesus' ministry near Galilee. The story of the sinful woman and the Pharisee is fascinating. At some point in the recent past, the woman had encountered Jesus and her "many" sins had been forgiven (cf. Luke 7:47a). When she heard that Jesus was at Simon's house, she showed her love and gratitude by anointing Jesus' feet. Simon condemned Jesus in his heart for not seeing what the woman was, but Jesus revealed that Simon was the one who was blind. He told Simon a parable to illustrate that those who have been forgiven show it by their gratitude and love. Simon had not offered Jesus the common courtesies due a guest, yet the woman had. Jesus' point was clear: the woman's love was a sign that her sins had been forgiven, while Simon's rudeness was a sign that his sins had not been forgiven. This teaches me that love and gratitude flow out of a heart that has been cleansed from sin. If there's no love and gratitude, it's a sure sign that there has been no forgiveness. It also shows me the seriousness of sin. Some have sinned more than others, but in the end, we have all sinned, and thus we have all been forgiven much. We should therefore all love much. When the scribes and Pharisees heard the people wondering if Jesus was the Messiah, they said, "He is possessed by Satan, and casts out demons through Satan's power" (Mark 3:22). Jesus quickly showed how foolish this claim was, and he warned them that if they knowingly persisted in attributing the work of the Holy Spirit to Satan, they would commit a blasphemy that would never be forgiven. Instead of heeding Jesus' warning, they answered him, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from you" (Matt 12:38). This was not a respectful request made in faith, but a sneering demand made in unbelief. Jesus perceived in them the same evil, unbelieving heart that characterized the wilderness generation (cf. Ps 78:19–20), and he refused to give them a sign except the sign of Jonah (a reference to his resurrection). He rebuked them further by saying that they would be condemned by Gentiles in the judgment, and if they did not repent, they would be like a man exorcised of demons who is later repossessed. Jesus' ministry among them would be for nothing if they didn't accept him as their Lord and Savior. Indeed, they would end up worse off than they were before!

### *Reflection*

Jesus said, "Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters" (Matt 12:30). This teaches me that there is no neutral ground—either I'm for you or I'm against you.

### *Request*

Father, I ask that you would fill my heart with gratitude and love for you. Help me remember that I have indeed been forgiven much!

### *Thanksgiving*

Thank you for the blessings that come from serving you. My desire is to be a disciple of your Son, Jesus Christ. May I always follow where he leads me!

In Jesus' name, Amen.

*Suggested Hymn: "[What Manner of Love](#)" – Daniel S. Warner.*

*Meditation Verse: Matthew 12:50.*