

A Woman's Encounter with Jesus

TEXT: Luke 7:36-50

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Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. 37 And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, 38 and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil.

39 Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner." 40 And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." So he said, "Teacher, say it." 41 "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. 42 And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?"

43 Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have rightly judged." 44 Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. 45 You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. 46 You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil

47 Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little." 48 Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." 49 And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" 50 Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace." Luke 7:36-50 (NKJV)

THE NARRATION

Two people different people... He was looked up to... But She was looked down on. He is a big man, a student of theology,... a leader in the church... But She's a prostitute. He makes a living making rules... promoting standards... But she's made her living breaking them. He's hosting an exclusive party... **But she's crashing**

I can imagine that she didn't sleep well. As the sun came up uncertainty still filled her mind.

**Was she going to go to see Jesus... Save her from her bad state Or does she ignore Him?
"I will go..." "I won't go..."**

“I must respond to His love... mercy...and grace.” “But I don't belong with that group of people.” Back and forth this lady dealt with her indecision.

Meanwhile, across town, to the neighborhood of the rich is Simon the Pharisee. He was early getting ready for a party.... A big social event at his house. The Rabbi... the newest teacher is his guest... Jesus of Nazareth... was coming to his house for dinner... Simon knew that... Other Pharisees... The religious community... High Jewish officials... Would be there to watch and listen to his house guest... This party would elevate him... There would be... A scrumptious meal... A time for questions... Some in-depth scriptural insights... Perhaps a miracle or two.

At Simon's house the guests began to arrive. They were greeted with... • A kiss... • Foot washing... • And heads were anointed with oil. They escorted them to a predetermined place at the banquet table. Somehow, we are not sure whether by accident or intentional, Jesus arrived without receiving the kiss... The foot-washing... Or anointing

As everyone took their places around the table... There was a lot of interesting conversation... Good food... And sure enough, as intended, Jesus is the center of attention.

We can imagine Him holding the banquet guests in awe as He answers questions on a variety of religious, Political...And social issues. As she arrives, she can hear voices inside... All male voices... She doesn't belong here.

Wrong side of town... An all-male gathering... A religious gathering at that. She thinks... This is crazy... and almost turns back. But... Driven by love... She pushes open the door... Instantly!!... All eyes are fixed upon her... Eating stops... Conversation stops... You could have heard a pin drop. Everyone is staring at her. What is she doing here?

She makes her way to Jesus... and kneels at His feet. She had this speech she had rehearsed over and over... but now the words would not come... Her face flushes... Her hands begin to shake... She begins to cry
Tears start streaming down her cheeks.... What is she going to do?... What can she do?

Even more embarrassing, her tears are falling on Jesus' feet. With nothing else available, she begins to brush away the tears with her hair. Too embarrassed... Too ashamed... To look up and approach his head, she breaks open an alabaster bottle. What was no doubt meant for a head anointing... becomes a foot washing.

The smell of the perfumed oil instantly PERMEATES the whole room. Now...Simon is more than a little nervous and anxious. He waits for Jesus to say something... to condemn this intruder. But nothing happens. All you can hear are her Sobs

The moment is pregnant with possibilities... What's happen next?

Simon began to think privately... If this Jesus were a true prophet, he would know what kind of woman this is and would... Stop her... Condemn her...Have her immediately escorted out of the room.Perhaps even suggest a stoning.

This woman is a sinful woman... We can imagine... Everybody in the room knows her... and knows her sin. Simon is probably thinking... I am sure glad she didn't come over here and anoint my feet!! I believe we can assume the other self righteous guests were thinking the same thing. Hello, Jesus knew just what they were thinking. He interrupts the absolute silence by saying...

Simon, I want to tell you a story... There was a money lender, and two guys owed him money. One man owed him the equivalent of 50 days' wages... two months. The other owed him 500 days wages... almost two years. Neither one of them could pay the debt. So, in his grace and mercy, the money lender forgave them both... Just canceled their debt completely... NOW, tell me something Simon..... Which one of these two appreciates it the most? Which one has the greatest love?

Simon almost chokes... just above a whisper... we hear him mumble... Well, I suppose the one who was forgiven the greater debt. Jesus looked at the woman, but He continues to talk to Simon. Simon, do you see this woman? Simon is angry, thinking how did this prostitute get in my house... Of course I see the woman.... Everybody sees her....

We can't help but see her.... She is the problem... We wish we didn't see her.

No... Simon... DO YOU SEE this woman... REALLY SEE...THIS WOMAN? Do you see that she is a person?... Do you see a soul created in God's image?... Do you see that she has value to God?... Do you see that in every way... She is just like you Simon...

EXCEPT... Except... She is responding properly to ME... To God's love... Mercy... and grace... Simon...I came into your house and... You didn't wash my feet... You didn't greet me with a kiss... You didn't anoint me.

But this woman has not stopped doing all these things to me since she arrived in the room.

Then Jesus looks at Simon and says... This woman loves much... Why do you suppose she loves much?... Because she has been forgiven much... Her sins which are many have been forgiven. She has no guilt... no shame.

Then Jesus turned to the woman and says... Your sins are forgiven... Your faith has saved you... Go in peace .

NOW... the room is a -buzz with conversation and whispers. Who is this guy that thinks he can forgive sins?

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John record sixty encounters Jesus had with other people...either individuals or groups. Eight of these were with people of high standing... the social elite. Twelve encounters were with average folk... Much like us here this morning.

And forty were with the hurting, the poor, hungry, sick, handicapped, bereaved... the outcast and downtrodden... the losers of His day. Yet He related to each of them... He had something to say that would change their lives... And He has something to say to us this morning about changing our lives.

WHAT WE CAN LEARN...

LET YOUR THOUGHTS GLORIFY GOD

VS.39... “the Pharisee .. he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner.” Brethren Sin is not just in deed. Sin has its beginning In the heart... In the mind. Solomon: As a man thinks in his heart so is he. Prov. 23:7 We are what we think... Not just what we do.

Jesus said: It’s from the heart that come the issues of life... A good person is good because he thinks good thoughts...An evil man is evil... because he has evil thoughts. Matt.12:34-35. Simon was having the wrong kind of thoughts... And Jesus challenged his private thoughts...

And He is challenging ours this morning. Right thinking always precedes right living...While evil thoughts lead to sinful behavior. We can’t read this narrative without understanding that we must control our thinking...? We must see ourselves as the sinners we are

This lady knows her sin... Simon thinks he has no sin. She is willing to acknowledge her fault... Simon acknowledges nothing.

Until we are willing to admit our sins... we can never be saved. Some of us here this morning need to admit our sin and submit to New Testament baptism. Some of us need to confess our faults... And ask for the prayers of the church.

All of us need to see ourselves as the people we are really are... In need of daily forgiveness.

Simon and his guests never saw their own sins... They Only saw those of the woman. We must stop seeing and pointing to the faults and sins of others... And see ourselves as WE really are.

We must stop seeing the sins of others as being worse than ours... Because they're not! Yes, this woman was probably a prostitute, but the men in this narrative are the ones who were responsible for the crucifixion of God’s only Son.

You see, Scripture teaches that all sin has the same effect... It separates us from God. And... and...that separation will continue... UNTIL...Until... we see ourselves as we really are... Sinners in need of God’s continuing grace.

It is John who tells us... If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. But, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:8-9

Understanding forgiveness prompts a proper response to God’s love and grace. Read 41-42 *"There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?"* **Luke 7:41-42 (NKJV)**

Simon invites Jesus to his house... But There's no customary courtesies... He does nothing to make Jesus feel welcome to his home. No kiss of greeting... No foot-washing... No oil for his head.

Why?... Why?... Simon never understood forgiveness...

Do we?

On the other hand, The woman does everything that Simon didn't! She puts her cheek to his feet... She has no water... But she does have tears for the remorse for her sins... She has no towel... But dries his feet with her hair. Her prized possession... perfume... is used to anoint his feet.

Luke says the aroma is as inescapable as the irony of her behavior. Brethren, this woman is thirsty for God's love... mercy... And grace. She drinks deeply of His forgiveness... While Simon doesn't even know he's thirsty. People like Simon don't know what to do with grace... They define it... Analyze it... But never really drink of it.

Instead, They rely on their own good works and rule keeping. While she seeking forgiveness... Simon puffs up. While she displays her immense love... Simon has no love to offer. And while her sins are forgiven... Simon never even asked for forgiveness.

Why the difference?... Why this enormous contrast? The answer is found in the 747 principle... Read... Verse 47 ... Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven--for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little.

God help me... help each of us... to understand how much we have been forgiven, so that we, like this lady, Will... Give You our life in proportion to Your loving forgiveness... It was Paul who said... In view of God's MERCY... In view of God's love... In view of God's GRACE... Here is how we ought to worship... Offer your bodies as living sacrifices... Holy and pleasing to God.

We must accept His forgiveness. Her sins which are... MANY... Have been forgiven. Scripture says... God no longer winks at sin... His love doesn't gloss over sins... Grace is not a license to sin.

Paul deals with this kind of thinking... What shall we say then? Shall we go on sinning... So that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin... How can we live in it any longer? **Rom. 6:1-2.** If this immoral woman can be forgiven. If Paul's murdering Christians for their faith can be forgiven. **1 Tim. 1:12-16.** If the Jews guilty of killing the Son of God can be forgiven. Then any and all our sins can be forgiven when plunged beneath the blood of Christ.

Scripture has God saying to us... *Come now, let us reason together says the Lord. Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow... Though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.* **Isa. 1:18**

The invitation this morning is for us to respond to his offer of absolute total forgiveness and salvation. Come...: Be saved by grace through faith... **Eph 2:8** . Be clothed with Christ in

New Testament Baptism. **Gal 3:2.** Believe Jesus Christ and be Baptized. Brethren do not be like the Pharisee – who is not thirsty of God's forgiveness

For those of us as Children of God, let us take this encounter with us... understanding that we live under God's amazing grace each day. For Christ's love compels us... Because we are convinced that He died for us all... And because He died for us all, those who live should no longer live for themselves... But for Him who died and was raised again. 2Cor. 5:14-15

Indeed, when our hearts are Truly touched with what God has done for us through Jesus... Then, and only then, will we be compelled to do everything... Everything...God asked us to do.

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNT

THE NARRATION IS ABOUT 2 CLASSES OF PEOPLE – The self-righteous and the sinner.

OUR THOUGHTS MUST GLORIFY GOD- Evil thoughts are bad.

We must see ourselves as the sinners - It humbles us before God.

Understanding forgiveness MOVES US TO SEEK God's love and grace - Earnestly looking for forgiveness from God.

Accept His forgiveness – Is motivation to live a righteous life.

DECIDE NOW SEEK JESUS!

What are you waiting for?

Stand up for the truth today!

Be baptised now to wash away your sins

Reduce the number of the many unsaved “saved” Christians in the world.

Let the saved keep walking to remain saved!

If God has spoken to you in this narrative, respond to His voice as we stand and sing.

Songs of The Church Hymn 220