

SINNER SET FREE

Luke contrasts two people from opposite ends of society: a wealthy, respected religious leader, and a known prostitute. When their paths crossed with Jesus, we all learn valuable lessons.

Luke 7:36-50 records the woman who washed Jesus' feet with her tears and precious ointment, and wiped them with her hair. The religious host of the meal was aghast, and thought to himself that if Jesus was a prophet, He would know she is a sinner. But Jesus knew his thoughts.

DEBTS FORGIVEN - Jesus replied to the man with a story: A certain moneylender forgave debts of 50-days wages and 500-days wages. Who would love him more? Simon, the Pharisee who hosted the meal, supposed it was the one who was forgiven more. But did he get the point?

He would have known Psalm 103, "*Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name, who forgives all your iniquity, for He does not deal with us according to our sins.*" But perhaps he didn't think of his sins as a debt that he owed to God. That's how Jesus presents it in Matthew 18:21-35, and in Luke 11:4, "*forgive us our debts, as we forgive the debts of others.*"

PUBLIC SHAME - Then Jesus spoke to Simon, "*Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has wet My feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave Me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss My feet. You did not anoint My head with oil, but she has anointed My feet with ointment.*"

Simon didn't see the reality of the woman, but now everyone saw his public shame. RK Hughes notes, "Her culture reminded her of her guilt wherever she went, but now guilt was gone! She felt pure, wahed! So she wept, humble tears of ongoing repentance and ongoing joy. Her life had been constant rejection, but she received Jesus Christ and she was received by God."

SINS FORGIVEN - Jesus said to Simon, "Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But he who is forgive little, loves little." Jesus shows Simon that He is more than a prophet. He not only knows her many sins, but He knows she is forgiven.

Jesus says to the woman, "*Your sins are forgiven.*" Those at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "*Who is this, who even forgives sins?*" As Psalm 103 says, "*so great is His steadfast love, as far as the east is from the west, so far does He remove our transgressions from us.*"

YOUR DEBTS? - The woman came that day because she put her trust in Jesus as the Christ, the promised Savior. She was a sinner who had no hope in good works to save herself, but only in God's grace. "Do you love Jesus? He is pure, utterly sinless, holy, perfect," observes Hughes. "Yet this sinful woman sensed from Him not condemnation, but forgiveness, that freed her to pour her love upon Him. This is the way Christ receives all sinners who come to receive Him."

Then Jesus said to her, "*Your faith has saved you; go in peace.*" Works can't save you. Faith is acting on what you trust, your belief. Then works follow faith. Ephesians 2:1-10 explains how we are dead in sins, and are saved by grace through faith, and then we will do good works. She put her trust in Jesus and expressed it openly. And Jesus acknowledged her faith in Him.

FORGIVEN MUCH? - "She had been much forgiven, so she loved much. Her love was the effect of her forgiveness, not the cause, the consequence not the condition, the result not the reason, the fruit of her forgiveness, not the root," explains JC Ryle. How are you like the sinful woman, burdened with a debt of sin you cannot pay? How are you like the inhospitable host, who sees the sin of others but not his own self-righteousness? Who can save you? Only Jesus!

"The more we understand how great our own forgiveness has been, the more spontaneous our love for Christ should be," notes RC Sproul. Do you have emotion from your salvation? Can you weep or sing or pray for joy, even in church? If you love Him, your life will show it (Psalm 107:2).

YOUR RESPONSE? - The Lord Jesus Christ is Savior. Come to Him and be saved. He will change you, and the fruit of your life will show how much you understand His forgiveness, as you trust and obey. "All desire to see among Christians more good works, more self-denial, more practical obedience," observes Ryle. "But what will produce such things? Nothing but love.

"There will never be more done for Christ till there is more hearty love to Christ Himself. It will always be loving workmen who will do the most in the Lord's vineyard." What about you? ☐