

Luke 7:36-50

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[0 : 00] One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house, and he took his place at the table. And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of oil.

And standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

Now when the Pharisee, who had invited him, saw this, he said to himself, If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is standing or who is touching him, for she is a sinner.

And Jesus answered, said to him, Simon, I have something to say to you. And he answered, Say it, teacher.

A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed 500 denarii, and the other 50. When they could not pay, he canceled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?

[1 : 09] Simon answered, The one, I suppose, for whom he canceled the larger debt? And he said to him, You have judged rightly. Then turning toward the woman, he said to Simon, Do you see this woman?

I entered your house. You gave me no water for my feet, and she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave me no kiss. But from the time that 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. Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much.

But he who is forgiven little loves little. And he said to her, Your sins are forgiven. Then those who were at the table with him began to say among themselves, Who is this who even forgives sins?

And he said to the woman, Your faith has saved you. Go in peace. Soon afterward, he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God.

[2 : 17] And the twelve were with him, and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities. Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, and Joanna, the wife of Chusa, Herod's household manager, and Susanna, and many others who provided for him out of their means.

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Please be seated. Good morning, family.

It's good to be here this morning with you and to stand before you with God's word. While I was making my way forward, Josh came and whispered in my ear something that you probably want to know.

We have another baby. The strands have delivered. What was it, boy or girl? Another boy. Well, we praise God anyway. Amen.

Let's pray. Father, for this morning, we give thanks. For another young one coming into our family, we give thanks.

[3 : 29] For your marvelous, matchless grace, your depths of mercy that we've sung about this morning, we give thanks. Be glorified in us as we, as I speak, as we hear and respond to your word.

It's my prayer in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. Amen. What a scene.

What a scene of grace it is. Of mercy. And forgiveness. It doesn't take much for us to connect our text today with what has gone before us.

In the previous section. There has been mention of the response to Jesus' ministry as well as to the ministry of John's.

As a matter of fact, take a look back in chapter 7, and particularly verses 33 through 35. John the Baptist came, eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, he has a demon.

[5 : 06] Son of man has come, eating and drinking, and you say, look at him, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners. Yet wisdom is justified by all her children.

Looking back on the response of the religious as well as the irreligious to both the ministries of John and Jesus.

So what Luke does, he gives us a very up-close and personal scene where you've got both the religious, the Pharisee, is in the scene, as well as the irreligious, a woman simply known as a sinner, in the scene.

We see representatives and their responses to the ministry of Jesus, a Pharisee and a sinner. Look at verse 36. One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house and took his place at the table.

[6 : 25] Wow, you've got to think, Jesus, you sure you want to go into the Pharisee's house? I mean, it's sort of like going to enemy territory there.

The Pharisee, the religious conservative of that particular day. This particular group was not Jesus-friendly, if you will.

It may strike us as strange that Jesus even accepted this particular invitation to go to Simon's house. More often than not, because Jesus' teaching and ministry exposed the Pharisees and their self-righteousness, they were out to get Jesus.

They were out to trip him up, out to make him look bad. There always seems a reason to examine Jesus and to make him look bad.

I mean, religious people often do that. I mean, they see him and they'll look at his teaching and they'll wonder and gaze and look upon it and critique it.

[7 : 33] But religious people have a way of bent toward being critical of Jesus. Was this a setup? Was there going to be an unannounced Q&A session with Jesus?

We don't know. Nevertheless, Jesus showed up and took his place at the table. Later in the text would come to see that the way in which Jesus was received didn't even fit the standards of hospitality of that day.

And particularly those standards as it related to teachers, as it related to rabbis. They were especially honored when they came to dinner.

According to verse 37, though, we see that Jesus was not the only person in the house or the only guest, if you will.

Jesus was an invited guest, the person that we see coming in verse 37. She was not on the list. But nonetheless, she made herself there.

[8 : 41] We don't know her name. We do have a label for her. And it's probably not a label that any of our ladies or men would want to own or to wear.

You see how she's labeled in verse 37? A woman of the city who was a sinner. Woman of the city who was a sinner.

She learned that Jesus was there. Verse 37. We know that her 47. We know that her sins were many.

We don't know there have been many and perhaps some of us have surmised. Oh, boy. She is a sinner. She is probably a harlot.

Her sin is probably sexual sin. The text doesn't specify. And we really need to be cautious in doing so because sexual sins are not the only sins that women or men commit.

[9 : 58] Huh? And sometimes we give those who are in certain categories of sin. I mean, we sort of put them in a certain class.

These are your four X sinners over here. Huh? And these are your small sinners over here. Huh? We don't know exactly.

She was a woman with a reputation. Yes. It's clear that she is a known sinner. We don't exactly know. The word sinner there.

Hamatolos. Talos. Las. Was a word that speaks of sin in general. It doesn't connote necessarily or specify sexual sin.

Rather than a religious Pharisee giving Jesus the kind of welcome that was due him.

[10 : 58] We have an irreligious woman. A woman of ill repute. Don't exactly know what it is. But she assumes or she feels that particular role. The Lord used a very unlikely person to render the customary hospitality of that day.

Huh? That was right for a guest of honor. Well, when this Jesus, when this lady found out that Jesus was at Simon's house, she must have put a plan together that would get her there. And she came. Flashed with perfumed oil in hand. Huh? She was ready for the occasion. I love air travel. And I've come a long way since, as a 19-year-old kid, I took my first airplane ride. It was a jet, even though it was way back then. I think it was, no, it may have been propeller. Yeah. But it made it in the air, nonetheless. Huh? I've never paid for a first class ticket.

[12:07] Now, I've had upgrades. And I've had friends who have given us companion passages where I could fly either in business class or first class.

First class is really, really nice. Huh? Warm towels for your hand. Ceramic wear for your, as your dishes.

Metal silver wear. Huh? You almost feel guilty as other people go by you. I mean, they're lugging their luggage, trying to get in the overhead bin, and there you are sipping on your orange juice already.

More often than not, I'm one of those that's making my way back to the coach class. Huh? Coach class is really close together.

Most domestic airlines, three across. And if you get on those international ones, something like that, they're five or six. They are wide, huh? I remember even one missionary fare.

[13:12] You know those missionary fares, cheap tickets. I go all the way back to a seat. I couldn't even recline. I was so far back. Coach class, huh?

You say, Pastor, what's your point? There is a point to this. The reception that Jesus got initially was coach at best.

What this woman gave to Jesus was first class kind of treatment that he was worthy of.

The Lord used this sinful woman, if you will, to give this first class kind of response that recognized the worth of Jesus.

That recognizes worth. An expression of what Jesus really had already, if you will, we'll look at it a bit later, but already had done for her.

[14:22] But either way you put it, the contrast in the receptions reflects other contrasts that we see in the passage. The people are in contrast.

A religious man versus an irreligious woman. A Pharisee named Simon with an unnamed woman. Simon has a speaking role, if you will. The woman says absolutely nothing. Look at verse 39.

Now, when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, if this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner.

Simon. Simon. Doubt-filled, critical, and his response contrasts with this woman's faith and her gratitude.

[15:30] He erroneously concluded that just because Jesus didn't respond in the way that he did, how could he, even allowing this sinful woman to touch him, how can he really be a spokesman or spokesperson for God?

Oh, but Jesus, he revealed that he, in fact, was God's spokesperson because Jesus, who had seen the faith and the gratitude in this woman's heart, he had also heard, if you will, or discerned the thoughts of Simon's heart.

Jesus answered him, and that answer follows in the text. such was the scene in verses 36 through 39.

Pharisee and a sinner and Jesus in the same setting. The Pharisee, arm's length, examining, scrutinizing, and finding fault with Jesus.

And the needy and know it making their way toward it. Jesus himself. Pharisee's there. The sinner is there and the Savior.

[16:55] Verses 40 through 50. Pharisee's folly. The woman's faith. The Savior's forgiveness comes into view in these verses.

He's shown us what's transpired. Luke has at Simon's house that day. And finally, Jesus spoke with a story. A story in which he explained to Simon and explains to us why he had been so warmly welcomed by this woman who was a sinner.

Look at the text with me. Jesus answering and said to him, Simon, I have somewhat to say to you. And he answered, say it, teacher. A certain money lender had two debtors.

One owed 500 denarii and the other 50. When they could not pay, he canceled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?

Simon answered, the one I suppose for whom he canceled the larger debt. And he said to him, you have judged rightly.

[18:00] Huh? It's a story. Two debtors. One with a debt that was 10 times as large as the other.

Basically, the larger debt amounted to 500 days of labor for a common laborer of that day. Close to two years worth of wages.

Versus for the other 50 days. A denarius was what was a day's pay for a laborer in that day. One debt excessively large.

One debt relatively small. But the reality was that neither could pay. And that the creditor graciously forgave both of them.

Notice he canceled the debt. You see that in verse 42? That word, it has the same root as the word that is translated grace.

[19:00] In the New Testament. So he graciously forgave is the idea. No strings attached. Biblically speaking, there are several metaphors that describe what sin is.

Sin, on the one hand, is a stain that needs to be removed. You remember David in Psalm 51? Where he says, plot out my transgressions.

On the other hand, sin is a weight that needs to be relieved. Think of it. A person who is bowed down and bent over.

And that weight is relieved. That sin is the weight that needs to be relieved. But then, it is a debt that needs to be canceled.

Or a debt that needs to be paid. That is what we see here. As far as a sin. Or as being that which needs to be canceled.

[20:04] In verse 43, Simon correctly noted that the greater debt. The greater would be the gratitude. The one for whom the largest debt had been canceled.

Would appreciate the creditor. Most. That's the idea that's there. Think about it. Massive debt. Relieved.

Massive weight. Relieved. Stained. Cleanse. Again, the same idea. The nature of sin. What it does to us. And the blessedness of when it is graciously relieved.

Jesus drives the point home. In verses 44 through 50. What in fact was the proper hospitality for the occasion. Notice, after he gives this interpretation.

He then turns to Simon in verse 44. And he speaks to Simon. But he makes reference to the woman. You see this woman?

[21:06] Simon. Basically, Simon, I came into your house. And you didn't even give me the common courtesy. Of water for my feet. But she, his wife.

Used the tears of her eyes. For as water. For my feet. You gave me no kiss. You didn't give me anything to anoint my head. What's the idea here? Again, common courtesies.

No kiss of peace. This is when the host would place his hand on the guest's shoulder. And give him the kiss of peace. A mark of respect. Which would not be omitted.

When a distinguished or respected rabbi was there. Barclay helps us further. No water for dusty feet. And you know, if you've been a Bible student long enough.

You know that the travel. The roads were dusty. And the footwear was barely thongs that they wore. And again, when one would come into a house.

[22:06] That was one of the first things that was done. I mean, picture Jesus in the upper room. John chapter 13. Washing the feet. Pouring water over the warm and dusty feet.

It was the art of the day. No oil. He said, you didn't even give me olive oil. Huh? Which would have been, again, a mark of special friendship. And that a guest was in once present.

But she gave me this perfume. Scented oil. Huh? Why this lavish reception? Was because God's grace had been wonderfully extended to her.

Huh? This was not likely her first encounter with Jesus, friends. Perhaps she personally had heard the message of Jesus' forgiveness. Or perhaps she heard it from someone else.

But anyway, she seemingly had heard it and had embraced the too good to be true kind of forgiveness that Jesus offered then. And he offers the same to us today.

[23:09] Huh? That reaches those who are sinking in the depths of sin and despair. Oh, we've sung songs about it this morning. As far as the reach of God's grace to those who are in the throes

of sin.

Huh? The message of God's amazing grace had reached this sin-stained soul. And I'm wondering, perhaps there is one here on this morning.

I know that many, and perhaps even most, have been to the fountain, if you will. But perhaps there is one here this morning. And you feel yourself the weight of sin.

Huh? Or you know the stain of sin. You know the depth and the depth of sin. Oh, Jesus' word to you is the same as it was to this particular woman in our text.

And also, the Pharisee probably had heard the same message. But he had not received that particular message. Huh? Here was the key. The difference.

[24 : 19] Her actions demonstrated that she had, in fact, experienced Jesus. Huh? The gracious cancellation of her sin did. Forgiveness from the God of heaven.

And Jesus was the instrument of her deliverance and her freedom. Huh? Listen to Jesus' words to her. He turns to her.

And he says, her sins, which are many. For she loved much. They are forgiven. Notice the repetition of the words forgiven. The release, the letting go of the dead.

But he who is forgiven little loves little. And he says to her, oh, what marvelous words of pronouncement. Your sins are forgiven.

Huh? The word forgiven jumps out of the text at us. What a wonderful, wonderful word that is. Huh? By faith she had received it.

[25 : 15] And her actions were an expression of her gratitude for it. Huh? Faith for forgiveness had preceded her act of hospitality.

It had preceded her praise, if you will. Jesus had, in fact, forgiven her. Look at what Luke has shown us.

He has shown us the Pharisees' response to Jesus. And the sinners' response to Jesus. And this is not an isolated case. Because Jesus again and again, Luke again and again, he'll put the two side by side.

We saw it in chapter 5. We'll see it again in Luke chapter 18. You remember? Pharisees goes up to the temple to pray. And he prays thus within himself.

Lord, I thank you that I'm not like other men are. You know, I pay my tithes. I do all of this. I'm not like even this person over here. And he points to the center. Oh, but this person does not even so much lifted eyes.

[26 : 20] But he says this. Be merciful to me, the sinner. Recognizing his need. Oh, we see it again in Luke chapter 15.

Because Jesus demonstrated himself to be indeed a friend of sinners. Regardless of the debt.

Because notice Jesus in the story. The money lender canceled the debt of them both. Regardless of whether they were a 10 or 50 denarius sinner.

Huh? Or a 500 denarius kind of sinner. Huh? A religious and naughty but sort of nice kind of person.

And just a plain naughty person. Huh? Oh, have you ever taken a look at your sin?

[27 : 19] Huh? And the depth of mercy. The long arm of grace that has reached out to you. As we sing songs like we did this morning.

Speaking about depth of mercy. Can there be? Mercy with my name on it. Me? You don't know what I used to do.

You don't know where I was. You don't know the depth from which he pulled me and rescued me. You don't know my sins of thought and spirit.

Depth of mercy. Mercy with your name on it, sir. Mercy with your name on it, ma'am.

Uh. Simon. Was critiquing and criticizing Jesus. He probably had heard the message of the kingdom.

[28 : 25] Wanted this close up look at Jesus. Oh, but all this woman knew that. Huh? Huh? Huh? I once was lost. But now I'm found.

Was blind. But now I see. Amazing grace. How sweet the sound. Huh? The Pharisee.

Faithless. And foolish. This sinful woman. Was what we see at the end of verse 35. She was a child of wisdom.

Huh? She had received. The message. Of the kingdom of God. Through Jesus Christ. And therefore. Justified.

Declared God righteous. And her life. Demonstrated. The very fact of the goodness of God. Of what God can do. Huh? If you're a child of God.

[29 : 19] Her lives. Should be a. An advertisement. To where God has brought us from. Regardless. Of where. Or how deep. Deep you were.

Huh? You may not know. But you were in the pit. Huh? Some of us deeper than others. But each of us. Was in the pit. Huh? Pharisee's folly.

A sinful. Woman. Faith. You see that. In verse 50. Said to the woman. Your faith. Has saved you. Here was a word of assurance.

For this woman. Because she was not saved. By the act that she. Did for Jesus. Of this. Act of hospitality. And gratitude.

That didn't save her. That was an expression. Of her thanks. Because she in fact. Had been forgiven. Huh? Pharisee's folly. Found fault.

[30 : 18] With the very person. That could do him. The most good. He cleaved. To his own righteousness. And he found fault. With the very one. Who could do him. Most good. As well as this woman. You know.

He's making comparisons. You know. I mean. You know. We can always. Make ourselves look good. By comparing ourselves. With someone. Who is worse. Huh? This gratitude.

But we see the. Savedness. Forgiveness. It's broad. It's effects. Effects are liberating. The source. Is God. In Christ. It releases.

From debts. Depths. Debts. Are canceled. It's good. For the religious. And the irreligious. For small. S. Centers. And capital.

S. Centers. If there is a distinction. What a glorious. Story. Of the triumph. Of faith. And grace. And forgiveness. But.

[31 : 13] This woman. That we see here. Was not the only woman. Who would experience. Jesus. Luke. Above the other. Gospel writer. Shows us. The impact. Of the ministry.

Of Jesus. On women. So. The folly. Of the Pharisee. The faith. Of the sinner. The forgiveness. Of the Savior. But also. We see the faithfulness. Of his sponsors.

We see that. In chapter 8. Verses 1 through 3. It's actually. What you would call. A hinge. Some hinge verses. Because on the one hand. It looks back.

Of what we've already seen. Particularly in 36 through 50. On the other hand. It looks forward. Because the. The chapter 8. It begins with women. And it sort of.

Ends with women. Oh so. Huh. We go from. A woman. Exemplar. Of faith. To women. Exemplars.

[32 : 07] Of faithfulness. Those. They too. Had received. They had heard. The message of the kingdom. Look at chapter 8. Verse 1. So afterward.

He went on. Through cities. And villages. Proclaiming. And bringing. The good news. Of the kingdom of God. That's Jesus did. The 12 were with him.

Huh. Jesus entourage. And. You might. Ask yourself. The question. How did Jesus. Support himself. I mean.

It wasn't. Every day. That he was. Multiplying. Fishes and loaves. And going out. Fishing. And getting a big load. Of fish. No. He had regular. Kind of means. Of support. And we see.

His support team. These patrons. That supported him. In verse 2. These were people. Who likewise. Had received. From the hand. Of Jesus. And they expressed.

[33 : 01] Their appreciation. By taking. Of their means. And supporting them. I think. I think. It's very interesting. That while we don't.

Have. The. A woman's name. As far as this woman. Known as a sinner. We do get names. Of people. Here.

Mary Magdalene. And I think. That also. She gets. A bad rap. In that. Sometimes. We. She is spoken of.

I don't think. Anywhere. In scripture. Where. It says. That she was. Actually. A harlot. But. On the other hand. What we do know. About her. Is that.

There. She was. Delivered. By Jesus. From. Seven demons. She was. A woman. Who was. In bad shape. And Jesus. Healed her.

[33 : 55] Jesus. Delivered her. And. And basically. Her life. Was a thanksgiving. Offering. To him. Huh. Notice. We see. Other. Women.

An exemplar. Of faith. The woman. Sinner. 36. And 50. Exemplars. Of faithfulness. We see. These women. Joanna.

She's there. She's the wife. Of Chusa. Herod's. Household manager. So. She was sort of. On the. Upper. Echelons. Of society. In that day.

There's. Susanna. I know. Here's a good. Some great names. For twin girls. Isn't it? Joanna. And Susanna. That works. And. Many others.

Who provided. For them. So. Other. Unnamed. Ones. That became. Supporters. Of Jesus. And how did they do it? Out of their means. Out of their means.

[34 : 53] Out of what. God had provided. For them. They then. Provided. For Jesus. And for his disciples. As Jesus. Proclaimed.

Proclaimed. The kingdom of God. And others. Who. Were assisting him. In that endeavor. What's your response.

To forgiveness. As we move to a close. How do you respond. To the forgiveness. Of Jesus. Does. This woman.

In the text. Is an. Exemplar. Exemplar. Of faith. But also. An exemplar. Of gratitude. Huh. She recognized. From whence.

Jesus. Message. Of deliverance. Had rescued. Her from. It had rescued. Her from a life. Of sin. Exactly. The nature. Of her life.

[35 : 46] Of sin. We do not know. But we do know. The power. Of God's grace. To rescue. From the depth. Of sin. Huh. Do you know anything. About that. If that is your.

Case. Regardless. Of. The nature. Or the enormity. Jesus. Forgives. Sin. And gratitude. Should be. Our response.

From him. Huh. Have you received. Forgiveness. Of God. Through Jesus. If so. Does your. Worship. And your. Work. And your. Labor.

And your. Service. And your. Sacrifice. Reflect. The fact. That you have. Been. Indeed. Forgiven. By God. Huh. She lavished.

Her. Love. And gratitude. On. Him. What a response. Huh. On the other hand. You may be.

[36 : 41] Religious. Like. Simon. In the text. Not. Received. Forgiveness. Yet. Still. Scrutinizing. Jesus. Still. Examining.

Him. Perhaps. Even. Criticizing. Him. Let me. Encourage. You. Put that. On. Pause. Okay. And. Rather. Than. Look. At. Him. Perhaps.

Look. Within. Look. Within. And. And. Get. The. Nature. Of. The. Fact. That. As a. Sinner. You're. Separated. From. God. And.

That. Jesus. Has. Through. His. Suffering. Death. And. Resurrection. Has. Provided. Absolutely. Everything. That. You. Need. And. Rather. Than. Over. Scrutinizing.

Him. Why. Not. Receive. Him. Jesus. Forgives. Men. And. Women. In. The. City. Who. Are. Sinners. Of.

[37 : 33] All. Kinds. And. Men. And. Women. Even. In. Our. Day. In. Our. City. Need. That. Kind. Of. Message. Of. Forgiveness. Those. Who. Sends. Sends. Accounts. Are. Relatively.

Small. And. Those. Who. Are. Astronomical. Religious. People. Who. Choose. To. Analyze. And. Scrutinize. And. Criticize. It's. Hope.

For. Them. To. What. Am I. Saying. Today. Simply. This. Forgiveness. Is. For. Those. Who. Recognize. Their. Inde. Who.

Recognize. Their. Indebtedness. And. The. Capacity. That. God. Has. Given. In. And. Through. Jesus. For. Forgiveness. And. Grace. To. The. Person. And. Work. Of.

His. Son. If. Haven't. Yet. Received. That. Forgiveness. I. Encourage. You. To. Receive. It. Today. And. For. Those. Who. Have. I. Would. Encourage.

[38 : 29] You. To. Express. Your. Gratitude. And. Your. Thankfulness. For. That. Forgiveness. In. Visible. In. In. Invisible. Intangible.

And. In. Intangible. Way. So. For. Blessed. Are. Those. Whose. Sins. Are. Forgiven. Through. The. Person. And. The. Work. Of. Jesus. Let.

Us. Pray. Father. We. Bless. You. This. Morning. And. Give. You. Praise. And. Thanksgiving. We. Bless. You. For.

Your. Forgiveness. In. And. Through. The. Person. In. The. Work. Of. Christ. And. Lord. As. We. Look. At. The. Lavishing. Of.

Love. On. You. In. That. Day. And. We're. Reminded. As. We've. Remembered. In. Our. Study.
How. Beautiful. Are. The. Feet. Of.

[39 : 23] Those. Who. Bring. Good. News. Who. Publish. Things. Lord. And. You. Are. Just. That.
And. You. Are. Published.

Through. Your. Person. Through. Your. Death. And. Resurrection. The. Glad. Word. Of. The.
Gospel. The. Glad. Word. Of. Forgiveness. And. Pray. That. All. Under. The. Sound. Of. My. Voice.
Regardless. Of. Where. They. Are. On. A. Spectrum. Would. Come. To. You. By. Faith. And.
Receive. Your. Forgiveness. That's. Our. Prayer. In. Jesus.
Name. Amen.