

Jesus meets the uninvited guest

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[0 : 0 0] so Luke chapter 7 from verse 36 down to verse 50 the end of the chapter Luke chapter 7 when one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table a woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume as she stood behind him at his feet weeping she began to wet his feet with her tears then she wiped them with her hair kissed them and poured perfume on them when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this 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's a sinner and Jesus answered him Simon I have something to tell you tell me teacher he said two people owed money to a certain money lender one owed him 500 denarii and the other 50 neither of them had the money to pay him back so he forgave the debts of both now which of them will love him more Simon replied I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven you have judged correctly Jesus said and he turned towards the woman and said to Simon do you see this woman I came into your house you did not give me any water for my feet but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair you did not give me a kiss but this woman from the time I entered has not stopped kissing my feet you did not put oil on my head but she has poured perfume on my feet therefore I tell you her many sins have been forgiven as her great love has shown but whoever has been forgiven little loves little then Jesus said to her your sins are forgiven the other guests began to say among themselves who is this who even forgives sins

Jesus said to the woman your faith has saved you go in peace good morning it is a delight to be here with all of you again and to hear live music it's been well over a year since we've myself and my family have heard that and oh what a blessing thank you all for leading us this morning it's great to be here with you if you have your Bible I encourage you to open it back up to Luke chapter 7 we'll examine the verses that Ben's read for us just a few minutes ago and before we do that let's take another moment and look to the Lord and pray together father thank you that your love for us is bigger than a burger it's bigger than a mouse or an elephant or a house or even the oceans cannot contain your love for us Lord as we come to your word this morning we pray that you would remind us once again of your great love for us that love that you have demonstrated in Christ Jesus father we pray for those that might be here this morning those that are watching online that think they've earned your love because they are so good Lord would you pierce us with the truth of your gospel that we can't be good enough to earn your love

Lord for those that might be here or watching that think that there is no way that you could love someone like me Lord would you remind us or maybe teach us for the first time that you do and would you help us to see maybe those things in us maybe both of those might be true even at the same time for Lord our lives are complicated and oftentimes messy Lord you know us better than we know ourselves and so we come to you and we ask that your word might come to us and penetrate deep into our souls that we might be changed and transformed more and more into the image of your beloved son and we offer our prayer to you in his name amen a few weeks ago a friend of mine texted me and said hey would you be up for going on a quote longish run with me and I began to think about that I tried to run a little bit just to get out of the house and to clear my head some

I don't run far and so I told him no I don't think I'm going to be able to go on a longish run with you in the next I think it's coming up next weekend or the week after and he I can't you know I've really I've not been running that much my knee has started bothering me I'm just I'm getting old I guess and he goes okay no problem and then later on in the text conversation he used the words to describe this longest run as ultra marathon now I have no idea how long an ultra marathon is I do know how long how far a marathon is it's 26 miles and I know that the word ultra means a lot more and so he was asking me to be a part of this a lot more longer than that's good English isn't it wow good job America he's asking me to go on a lot farther run than 26 miles with him and and at one sense I was actually really flattered that he would think that you know I could do that it turns out I had lunch with him last week it turns out it's 36 miles that he's doing good on you like there's no way but I was running yesterday morning and I was at

I was at the first mile and I was going downhill with the wind at my back and you know what thought occurred to me I got this I can do this you know I could I think I could and then I turned the corner and kind of went around and saw this thing in front of me called a hill and went there's no way there's just no way that that I could possibly do that I'm not in shape I can't do it we come to our passage this morning we come into contact with two people that Jesus comes in contact with and one of those that Jesus comes in contact with thinks he's in shape he thinks he's got his life all together and another person that he comes in contact with is someone who is very much out of shape that there is no way that when Jesus says come follow me when Jesus invites us here this morning or those of you that are watching there's lots of cameras is it this watching online that he says come follow me we can have one of two responses perhaps I got this of course Jesus wants me on his team because I'm pretty good right or there's no way there is no way that Jesus wants me on his team what he must have the wrong person he must be inviting the wrong person because I'm not in shape and what we're going to find this morning is that the person who misses Jesus is the one who thinks they've got it all together and the one who is moved to tears is the one who knows that their life is broken and a mess and we're going to see the scandalous beauty of the gospel of Jesus so we're going to look at Simon we're going to look at a sinner and we're going to look at a savior this morning together first Simon we're introduced to him in verse 36 now one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him the Pharisees were a group of religious leaders at the time of Jesus they were the ones who not just kept all of the rules they kept all of the rules around the rules and here's what I mean by that so I noticed when I was driving into Darville is that how you pronounce it Darville um I was driving into Darville from that way and there's a sign that says welcome to Darville slow down and then above it there is a light that flashes at some people I'm not saying that was me but it might have been me that said 20 because the speed limit when you come into town is 20 and for good reason there's people walking and all that and it makes sense well if you were a Pharisee and we had a bunch of Pharisees here in this community the speed limit of 20 is not good enough for them so what they did is they said actually the the law says it's 20 but we don't even want you to get close to that and so the real speed limit is 15 and what they would do is someone would be standing out there there's no there's no electronic thing there's a Pharisee out there and he's got his radar gun and he's pointed at every car coming into town and he's writing down your reg plate and go oh I'll see them on Sunday

[10 : 34] morning and they'll shame you even if you're going 18 you're still going below the speed limit but you're going faster than their law would have allowed and yet these men in particular were seen as those who are loved by God they were seen as the the righteous they were wealthy they were powerful they had it all together these were the men that you wanted your sons to grow up to become these were the men that you wanted your daughters to marry these were the ones who had it all together and so Simon is one of them and he is troubled he's troubled because someone's popularity has actually gotten a little bit bigger than his own you see Jesus is going all throughout Israel and he's preaching and he's teaching and instead of the crowds coming to Simon and those like Simon who are following all the rules and doing all the things and believing that this is what you have to do for God to love you for God to accept you because that's who we are we've kept all the rules we've done all the things God loves us

God accepts us and if you want proof for that look how big my house is but Jesus is getting a bigger crowd he's getting a bigger following than them and so what do you do when someone in in our world today we would say that Jesus was trending at the moment Jesus is blowing up Twitter with what he's doing and so what do you do you in that day and age you invite them to your house you want to be seen with them you want to be around them because Jesus has become popular and so if someone if you're popular but someone's become more popular than you you want to be seen with them and so that's what Simon does we do that with famous people if you've ever seen somebody who's famous or ever been I was on an airplane one time with a semi-famous person it might not be here he he had a show on the food network I think there's the food network here we've watched it a few times his name is Duff Goldman and he's the ace of cakes he makes these incredible pieces of art that are edible so much so that you like feel really bad for cutting into them and so I'm on the plane and I have no idea where I was going and I he's got this really distinctive laugh and I hear this laugh from behind me and I go that's Duff and so during the flight I'm turned around and you know what he did the whole flight he walked up and down the aisle and took selfies with everyone on the plane why because everyone saw that the ace of cakes was on the plane and you wanted to just even get a snapshot with him and that's what Simon is doing with Jesus it's not because he loves Jesus it's not because Jesus offers him salvation because he doesn't think that he does he just wants to be seen with Jesus and so he invites him to dinner a dinner was the second most intimate thing you could do in the ancient world in Jesus's time it's the most intimate thing you could do outside of marriage is to invite someone over to your house for dinner it was a sign of respect it was a sign of friendship it was a sign of love and yet what we see Simon do is disrespect

Jesus at every point because it was customary when you arrived at the dinner party for the host to greet you and to come up and greet you with a kiss and after that they would take a drop of olive oil and put it on your head and I have no idea why that they did that you can ask him later as after I get in the car he'll have the answer for I have no idea it was just the custom that's what they did and then they offered water to wash your feet because you traveled through the road that was dirty dusty covered with use your imagination as the animals run wild and go about the streets and so we see that Simon doesn't do any of those things it's almost as though in your mind's eye you can see Simon over in the corner and he's got a few of his Pharisee buddies that are standing around and they're they're watching as Jesus comes in they're kind of pointing going is that the guy yeah that's him look at him everybody's around him everybody loves him what's going on with him Simon has this thought as the dinner party unfolds and we'll look at this woman in a couple of minutes he has this thought as he's watching this woman weep at Jesus's feet we see deeper into his thought process in verse 39 of who he thinks Jesus is and he says if this man were a prophet he doubts in his own mind in his own experience tells him that a prophet could not do what this man do what this man is doing or shouldn't do what this man is doing if this man really were if he really was Jesus he wouldn't be around that person if he knew who was touching him and what kind of woman she is Simon doubts Jesus and then he begins to see who this woman is and he begins to define her by what she has done in her life by what choices she has made by the sin of her life like that is what defines us is what we have done because in Simon's mind that is what defines us what we do or what we don't do defines who we are and yet that's not true when Jesus enters into the picture

Simon was self-righteous standing on his own works and his own merit and yet before we pass by Simon too quickly let's notice a couple of things one you and I are probably more like Simon than we dare admit we're probably more like Simon than we would dare to admit because we often run to being self-righteous how do we do that what are some diagnostic questions for our own self-righteous hearts just a few not exhaustive lists by any stretch of the imagination but do we view others as sinners when we look at other people do we say look at what they have done do we define ourselves by what we have done by what we've done this week how good a week we've had did we open up God's word every day this week did we pray a certain amount of hours this week did our quiet times just really just they were amazing this week and then when we come in here or when we walk down the street or when we go to the shops we go you know

I bet my quiet time was longer than that person or that person I bet I prayed more I'm glad I don't struggle with the things that they struggle with perhaps that's true of us do we define others by their sinful actions do we avoid others or look down on others maybe we don't say it out loud but we think to ourselves I'm better than them or what reception would we give to Jesus what reception would we give to him would we stand over in the corner and say welcome welcome to my party it's right and it's good that you're here because we're kind of on the same level I was at the mall in the U.S.

[20 : 27] when we lived there a few years ago and the mall's a big indoor shopping area and I'm walking through and you couldn't help but see them it's not every day that you see a man that's about six feet tall wearing a full length dress with high heels and a big purse like the famous people wear that they carry their dogs in kind of purse and this gigantic hat like women wear to the races and he's just walking through the mall and everybody was staring at him and then a couple of weeks later there he was in my service at my church same dress same heels same bag no hat there he was and do you know what I thought oh no what's he doing here

I don't know how to I don't know how to handle this what do I say to him what do I what do I need to change in my sermon am I going to what a thousand things go through my mind and if I'm honest with you I will tell you that I thought to myself he doesn't belong here you see this just isn't a self-righteousness isn't just a problem for you out there it's a problem for this guy here maybe more so than all of you that I get the opportunity and the blessing to get up and to preach God's word and to study it and to pray and to be paid for that how amazing is that and yet I think that is what makes me righteous when it doesn't

I'm just as far away at times from Jesus as Simon was because I think I'm standing on my own righteousness the friend that brought that gentleman to our church that week he called me up later in the week I think it was Tuesday morning he called me up and said hey I just want to thank you for your sermon and for preaching the gospel you see I've been I've been witnessing to my friend we've known each other since high school and he's had a pretty rough life and I've been sharing Jesus with him for the last few months and I want you to know something he's beginning to ask questions he's beginning to get it he's beginning to understand that Jesus came and died on the cross for people who struggle and whose struggles are just like his and I said thanks hung up the phone and wept at my own self-righteousness that I wasn't willing to pray for him but my friend was willing to lay down his life to share the gospel with someone that everyone stares at when they walk down the street that's who this woman was this woman that comes into this house she is simply called in this passage a sinful woman who lived in that town we don't know anything really other about her than that most theologians throughout the years have assumed that she was a prostitute and so she was probably known in town she was the one who you told your daughters as you walked down the street don't become like her she was the one you grabbed your sons and moved them off to the side and you said you see her stay away she's dangerous she was looked at she was abused she was used life was rough and life when it was rough it kicked her when she was down it might seem weird that she was coming into this house where there was this dinner party so let's take a moment and kind of think about what a dinner party in

Jesus' time was like because it actually was fairly normal for her to be there so what would happen you see if you go back up to verse 36 he's at the Jesus is at the Pharisee's house and they it's called reclined at the table so when you went in it was kind of an open air courtyard that you would you through a dinner party which we assume that Simon is and you would go in if you were invited and there was a table that was just a little bit off the floor and you would lay down on your left side and you would put your feet behind you and then you would eat with your right hand and these would go on for several hours and as the people that are movers and shakers they were the influencers of the day they were the people that were in the know that knew the gossip that were setting about the direction of the town and all these things and so without there was no twitter back then there was no newspapers back then so if you wanted to know the news if you wanted to know the gossip if you don't know what's going on you went to the party and you would go in if you weren't invited and you were allowed to do this probably because

I mean if you're self righteous you want as many people around you as you can you want as many people seeing you're having this dinner party like your opulence and your wealth as you can and so people would just come in and they would stand all around and you say oh that was good yeah write that down and so this woman comes in can you imagine for a moment there's a table with men kind of lying around it all their feet are out and then around all of that there's another group of people and this woman that probably everybody knows that people mock and make fun of and stare at she comes in she kind of makes her way through the crowd and she comes behind Jesus feet and she's there behind

[27 : 51] Jesus feet she starts weeping she doesn't cry there's different words in the Greek for crying believe it or not this isn't just like this tear there is a waterfall coming off of her face so much so that she wets Jesus' feet remember Jesus' feet are dirty he's been walking he's in the dust he's in the stuff and this woman's tears wet Jesus' feet and then she takes her hair down something that was absolutely forbidden and scandalous in that day because a woman was not allowed to be outside of her home with her hair down only in her home in the presence of her husband was it allowed for her to do that to take her hair down she in the presence of all of these people takes her hair and she puts it on

Jesus' wet muddy smelly disgusting feet and she takes the gunk that's on them and she puts it into her own hair so she begins to smell like Jesus' nasty feet and then she takes this jar of perfume that was part of her trade and she took it and she poured it on Jesus' feet as she cleaned it and Jesus says to Simon Simon do you see this woman I'm not asking you to look at her I'm asking you do you see her Jesus he didn't just look at her he saw her think of the audacity of what she is doing in that moment think about

John the Baptist John chapter one John the Baptist when he sees Jesus behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world he knew who Jesus was he's the one who was prophesied about and John knew that he was the one who had been prophesied about and yet what did John say about Jesus the one who is coming after me his shoes I'm not even worthy to untie them if John the Baptist wasn't worthy to do that here is this woman who is at Jesus feet cleaning them with her own tears and with her own hair if John is not worthy how is she because she has been forgiven we don't know how we don't know when we don't know where but at some point this woman who is an outcast in society who is a sinner everybody knows it and she knows it heard the message of the gospel that

Jesus came into the world to die for those who were sinful and to take the punishment the wrath of God that was due unto them he took it and now through faith in Jesus we can be forgiven of all of our sin she at some point understood that and embraced that and believed that if you look at verse 50 Jesus says to this woman your faith has saved you your faith has saved you these verses have caused a lot of consternation throughout the centuries because it seems as though before we get to verse 50 that she was saved simply because she went and wept at

Jesus feet and because she loved Jesus much and if verse 50 wasn't there we could I could see where you could get that but verse 50 is describing what happened and the reason what happened came before that your faith has saved you she had faith in Jesus and so Jesus welcomes her into the family of the redeemed we will see this woman in glory isn't that amazing that Jesus came for the sinners a minute ago I said there's a couple of things I don't want us to miss about Simon one that were far more like Simon than we probably cared to admit here's the second one

[33 : 32] Jesus came to dinner at Simon's house Jesus entered into the life of someone who was self righteous Jesus comes for the self righteous and for the sinners he comes for all of us that we realize wait a second my works my self righteousness can never get me to God sometimes it feels like I can but if I'm honest with myself I am sinful maybe not in the way this woman was maybe not in the way that that gentleman who came to our church was maybe not in the way that the person sitting next to you or near you is but all of us are sinners and Jesus comes and he offers himself to all of us whether we think we have it all together or whether we know we're just a giant mess the gospel is for saints and for sinners alike the difficulty can come when we don't think we need the gospel we don't think we need

Jesus first John chapter one says this that if we claim to be without sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us if we confess our sins he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness if we claim we have not sinned we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives to hear what John is saying if we claim that we're without sin if we're self righteous if we're like look at her look what she I'm not like that we make God to be a liar we lie to ourselves but if we confess our sins he is faithful and just and will forgive us of some of our unrighteousness no all all every last drop of our unrighteousness past present and the things that you haven't even thought about or the things that you don't even realize that you're doing because of the deceptiveness of sin

Jesus has forgiven all of them if we have faith in him if we believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sin Jesus the savior he tells us short parable to Simon when he says Simon do you see this woman do you see her because you're looking at her and you're judging her but actually let me point out your own heart two people they both owe money one owes about a year and a half worth of wages just I have no idea how much a year's worth of wages might be on average here but let's just pretend 40,000 pounds you see one person 40,000 pounds worth of wages another person they actually owe about a month and a half and my math is going to be rubbish so don't help me on this because I have no idea what 40,000 divided by 18 is but somebody can tell me later so let's just for the ballpark they owe 4,000 pounds both of them have their debt canceled who do you think loved more and

Simon in verse 43 there's almost this reluctance because Simon begins to realize wait Jesus is calling me out and he says I suppose he can't even be sure of this I suppose I guess the one who had the bigger debt and Jesus goes too bad the bell is not ringing that was over there a minute go ding ding ding ding you win you're right the one who had the bigger debt do you see what she did you ignored me you stood in the corner you didn't greet me you didn't anoint my head with oil you didn't even your house is getting disgusting because you didn't even wash my feet look what she did she cannot stop weeping and she cleaned my feet with her own self you know why because she has been forgiven much

Simon you think you've got it all together you know why you don't love because you don't think you need to be forgiven do do we love Jesus what grows our love for him I'm going to say something that might sound strange we grow in our love for Jesus when we realize our own sinfulness we grow this sounds weird I think it's true we grow in our faith when we see our sin not that we sin more it doesn't mean we go out and try to do all these things the pastor said I should lie a lot more so I can be absolutely you know Romans far be it forget about it no that's not what I'm saying you don't have to actually go out and sin do something to see the depths of your own sinfulness because the things that we do come from who we are and so as we grow in our understanding of our own sinfulness the cross of

[40 : 24] Jesus gets bigger and bigger that as I've matured in the faith as I've been thankfully a follower of Jesus for most of my life now I can tell you that I can see how much more sinful I am more now than I realized when I was 20 and you know what I can see how much bigger Jesus is for me now than when I was 20 and hopefully in 20 more years should the Lord bless me with those days I will see how much greater Jesus is even then that we might love much that we might love Jesus much and what does that mean it means dying to ourselves it means following after him it means dying to our self righteousness it means dying to our sin it means being confronted with that and saying and taking it to

God and say God I lied I cheated I stole I coveted I keep you can keep the list going you know you know the list done all these things but here I am I'm going to bring them and I'm going to lay them at your feet and I ask that you would forgive and you leave them there you don't have to take them up again because Jesus has forgiven you if you are trusting in him and so I invite you if you if you're trusting in your own self righteousness come to Jesus if you think that Jesus owes you because you've been so good join the club I'm right there with you we haven't been we come to Jesus if you're going I don't even know why

I'm here today I don't really fit I'm watching online and this is I'm watching online because if people were in the building knew that I was watching I would be so embarrassed because of the things that I've done the things that I've said the life that I've led the offer of Jesus is for you to all of us and find hope and forgiveness the last thing this will be very brief verse 50 your faith has saved you go in peace go in peace the word that Jesus uses there is not the word shalom shalom is this well I won't get into it for time's sake but it's a deep inner peace the word that Jesus uses here for peace is the word for the fact that the war is over the war is over and what war the war between this woman and

God the war the separation between her and God the father Jesus says your sins are forgiven the war is over there is peace if you want to have peace in your life this woman's life probably didn't get a whole lot easier when she left she was still stared at she was still known she still had all the what we would call all that baggage she had a rough life but what joy she must have had in knowing that she was at peace with God that her sins were forgiven let me pray for us father we long for that peace with you help us we pray be with us lord I pray for the saints and the sinners that are here that are watching online

I pray that you would draw all of us to your glorious feet to your throne where we find forgiveness lord may we not miss the fact of who you are and what you have done lord thank you for the scandalous nature of the gospel of grace that saves people like me and like my friends that are here today lord we give you our praise and we give you our thanks grow us in our love for you as we see the depth of our own sin and see that the gospel of Jesus covers even that lord would you create in all of us a sense of love for you of awe for you a renewed sense of following after you with our whole heart soul mind and strength that we might walk as you walk and that you might receive the praise and the glory that you alone deserve we ask these things in

[45 : 50] Jesus name amen