

The Explosive Expulsion of a New Affection

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[0 : 00] Let us now turn to the passage of Scripture that we read, the Gospel according to Luke in chapter 7, and we may read again at verse 44.

Then turning towards the woman, that is Jesus, he said 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.

Therefore I tell you, her sins which are many are forgiven, for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little.

Particularly verse 44, do you see this woman? I am sure most, if not all, are familiar with the account which Luke gives us about this very moving story.

[1 : 31] You will only find it in Luke's Gospel, and it is characteristic of Luke, that only he tells the account of this woman.

Luke seems to focus especially on incidents that bring out the character of Christ as the friend of outsiders or of outcasts.

His Gospel is eminently the Gospel of forgiveness. For example, we ought to look the account of the three great parables of the last sheep, the last coin, and the last son, as well as the account of the Pharisee and the publican who were praying in the temple.

We also owe to him the account of the good Samaritan, and it is Luke who records for us the meeting with Zacchaeus, the chief tax collector in the Jericho area.

It is Luke who tells us that all the tax collectors and sinners came near to Jesus to hear him. And he loses no opportunity of enforcing that lesson in the Zacchaeus account.

[2 : 53] Luke emphasizes and underlines a claim that is frequently made in the Scriptures regarding the Lord Jesus Christ.

This man receives sinners and eats with them. And in this story, there is clear evidence that that is no pretense, that that is no false claim, because here is Christ identifying with this woman who once lived a very rebellious life, a life of shame, a life of scandal.

And Christ is identifying with this woman when many in the community perhaps were shunning this lady. Here, he receives her as a sinner.

A woman who comes to anoint the Lord. We don't even know where she was from, and yet despite such knowledge being withheld, we are given selective information by the Gospel writer about this woman.

We know, for example, who she is not. She is not Mary Magdalene. How do we know? Because as far as we know, Mary Magdalene, although she was controlled by evil spirits or devil-possessed, you don't find in the Scriptures any information to suggest that she was guilty of breaking the seventh commandment.

[4 : 50] The suggestion is that this woman was. We know that she is not Mary of Bethany. It reminds me of an old elder I met once, and he was convinced that this woman was also Mary of Bethany.

I don't think the Scriptures can support that suggestion. The anointing by Mary of Bethany took place towards the close of Christ's ministry in the house of Simon the leper.

This anointing takes place not at the close of his ministry, in the house of a man called Simon a Pharisee. And we're not told much about his identity either, apart from the fact that we're given his name and that he was a Pharisee.

He's not to be confused with the Simon who lived in Bethany. They are two different people. And his identity also is partially concealed for reasons best known to the Most High.

We're not able to identify him with any degree of certainty. And so you have this, perhaps you might call her, a former Lady of the Night.

[6 : 25] A lady who perhaps used herself for illicit gain, who gave of her services in the community in a most despicable way.

That is how she made her living. That is the suggestion that is given by the scriptures with regard to this woman. And she comes into the house of a man who is regarded as a pillar of the community. And there are so many contrasts or comparisons that you could make between this woman and the man into whose house she comes. He is looked up to and she is looked down.

He made a living promoting standards. She made a living breaking them. He is the host for those whom he has invited into his home.

And she comes as a gate crusher uninvited. There are so many comparisons between Simon the Pharisee and this nameless woman who is seeking the Lord.

[7 : 52] a woman who I believe is motivated by the 777 principle.

You know how these big airliners, triple sevens they're called. If you've ever been in a jet airliner and when it goes down the runway the tremendous surge of power and energy as it goes down the runway and lifts up into the atmosphere.

Hundreds of people aboard. Containers with baggage and food etc. Plus the ample reserves of fuel. And yet the surge of power lifts it up into the atmosphere.

It's an uplifting and an exhilarating experience. And then you have the tremendous effect of G-forces pinning you to your seat.

And you're unable to move momentarily. Your body is under another power. That's how it was with this woman.

[9 : 00] Her life was now under another power. She was under a new power. The expulsive power of a new affection was dominating the life of this woman so that now her path is directed in a new way.

She's looking to the Lord, looking to the Savior, attracted to the one who wants she runs from.

Attracted to the very Christ who by her lifestyle she despised.

The very Christ who symbolizes perfection, morality, purity. She's drawn to this Christ now. attracted to him under life.

Under this power, has received stability and direction and purpose. A life that was once so aimless, drifting on the seas of life, without any direction whatsoever.

This woman, she has received much love, love, and she loves much in return. Her love is a reciprocal love, by virtue of the fact that the love of Christ has been outpoured in her life.

[10 : 29] We don't know when she met the Lord or where. That is not revealed, but what comes across from the context is that this is not her first meeting with the Saviour.

And although we have no account of it recorded anywhere else, it must have been difficult for her to enter the home of Simon.

She wasn't invited as a guest. She wouldn't have been. She wasn't the kind of company that Simon fraternized with.

He was a Pharisee. He belonged to that very strict sect of the Jews. And their aim was to live in strict accordance with the law as they interpreted the law.

They were separatists or exclusionists. They were sticklers for ceremonial purity. They despised those whom they did not consider their equals.

[11 : 32] They were proud and arrogant because they believed that they were the only interpreters of God and his word. You can imagine the emotional turmoil of this woman with the past that she had as she approaches the door of this home.

It wasn't easy. We don't know what her emotional state was. But we can hazard a guess.

She walked up to that door. I suppose that quite a number of us here this evening when we began to follow the Lord experienced difficulties in the world.

We were so unworthy of entering into the fellowship of those whom we considered to be so advanced in the path of holiness.

You didn't think that they would accept you. You didn't think that you could be part of them. you didn't think that you had a right to be with them because you felt so defiled and so impure and so

unlike what they were.

[13:12] Because at that stage you were looking at them. I suppose with rose tinted spectacles you were looking at them as those who seemed to live a life of perfection.

And you knew your own heart. You didn't know their heart. But you knew your own in a measure. Perhaps you only knew it in a very little measure. Perhaps even to this very hour we only know it in a little measure.

And here she is going into this home. She makes her way there. I don't know how Christ why the Pharisee invited Christ to his home.

I would love to ask him. Perhaps you have an answer because he didn't love or respect the Lord. He didn't give him the normal welcome that was accorded to visitors who came to the home.

He didn't give that to Jesus and the Lord points this out for us in the account. He points out for us how the Pharisee didn't even give him that.

[14:28] He turned to the woman. Do you see this woman? He says to Simon, I entered your house. You gave me no water for my feet. 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 anoint my head with oil but she has anoint my feet with oil. What was his motive in inviting Christ into his home? Why did he invite him?

Was he curious as to what this man was? Did he want to sort of conduct some kind of private investigation on his own part to see if Jesus would pass the test?

Was he really a prophet? prophet? And Jesus in the eyes of the Pharisee didn't pass the test. He didn't make the grade.

Because when he saw how Jesus reacted to this woman he said to himself if he were a prophet he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touched.

[15:27] She is a sinner. Oh how little Simon knew of the knowledge that was possessed by his guest. Of the uninvited guest.

There was no one in the world who knew her better than the Christ who was in his home and who could see into her inner life. And the fact that he was there was the magnet that drew her into the home of Simon.

So that the Lord was going to teach this self-righteous Pharisee an important lesson. And so she comes into the home.

As far as she was concerned Jesus was the object of her adoration and affection. The focus of her attention.

And although Simon was there and the disciples, the church of Christ, you might say, gathered there, representative of the body of Christ, and perhaps others too, I don't suppose that the enemy of the souls of believers was far away from that home if he wasn't present there.

[17:00] But she comes into the home with a disreputable past. And let's remind ourselves and let's not forget that everybody here has a past.

past. And when you look back over it, there are many chapters you would rather not see, many chapters that you would rather remain closed.

But the Lord knows every sentence and every chapter of the past, past, just as he knows what lies before us.

This woman's past seems to have been well documented in the area. But the point is not so much what she was, but what she had become through the power of God's grace.

What she was, she shared with the whole of the Adamic family. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. That embraces everyone who comes into the world.

[18:25] But this woman had been delivered from her sinful, shameful past. And in all likelihood she was more aware of the past now than she had ever been before.

she was seeing it now in a new light, in the light of truth. And what had seemed attractive and magnetic before is now vile and repulsive in the estimation of this woman.

And what before was unattractive and as a root out of a dry ground has become the focus of our life's energies, the Lord Jesus Christ.

This sinner has been made white by the efficacy, the application of the efficacy of the shed blood of the lamb.

Her heart, her life has been changed and her heart is overflowing. with love to the one who has delivered it. And her awareness of what had taken place in her life, we believe, compelled her to go

into this house, difficult as it was, to demonstrate her sense of gratitude for what the Lord had done. [19 : 57] And I believe that is one of the marks of those in the kingdom of grace. They love to be where Christ is spoken of and where they may have fellowship with the people of God.

And when that is not true, then it is time for a scrutiny and a very acute examination temptation because there is something oddly wrong if that is not true.

Oh, what could she bring? How could she express her indebtedness? How could she show what she felt in her heart?

heart? I don't believe it is just a show of emotions when she brings this ointment into the home. It is evidence of the work of the grace of faith that has been implanted in her soul. She brings this ointment.

[21 : 13] she owed much to Jesus and she loved him greatly and she had to overcome all the obstacles in the way entering into the home of one who looked so disdainfully upon her.

Yet, there is no evidence to suggest that she was hesitant at the door or that she lost her nerve when she came to the home of Simon the Pharisee.

She wasn't welcome. It was closed to sinners. I'm not suggesting that there were physical barriers around the house of Simon with notices up.

No sinners to enter this home. The barriers were more physical, were more psychological than physical. Mental, emotional barriers that had to be overcome.

They were more of a deterrent than any actual physical barriers to entrance into the home. Any house but the home of Simon the Pharisee.

[22 : 26] She would have to run the gauntlet of derogatory scathe and criticism. All the turmoil of emotional hurdles to be faced down.

But then maybe it would have been more difficult for her if she hadn't gone. Because Christ was so precious to her.

You see, when the 777 principle that I referred to earlier takes over, the expulsive power of a new affection, the love of Christ constraining her just as it did the apostle Paul, giving him that terrific zeal for Christ.

So he says the love of Christ controls us because we have concluded that this one has died for all. Therefore all have died and he died for all that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.

Wasn't it that the apostle was consumed with some kind of obsessive religious mania? But that the love of Christ left him with no alternative but to abandon all self preoccupation.

[23 : 47] And this woman is driven by that inner compulsion as she seeks out the Lord. You see, when the love of Christ takes over the heart and the life of a man or a woman or a boy or a girl, it constrains them to take up their cross daily and to follow him.

Yes, there are difficulties. The scriptures teach us that there will be difficulties. Yes, you will not find it easy. Yes, it may be difficult to take that first step in following the Lord and identifying with the people of Christ and going to a prayer meeting for the first time.

Yes, it may be difficult to come even to the Lord's table for the first time or even many times after that. Many difficulties, many hurdles, just like this woman.

Perhaps you can relate to her this evening. In your own inner life, as you remember the struggles, and perhaps the struggles that you still have, perhaps here this evening, as you seek for the grace of God to face them down and step over the hurdles that are placed in the way, looking for tokens of help from above, seeking for the obstacles to be removed out of your path, and for the Lord to give you grace to move in that direction of obedience, so that you are enabled by his grace to show your commitment to the Christ of God.

Well, what the Lord did for this woman, he can do for you. If you are here this evening, I'm not suggesting that coming to the Lord's table, you've got to face Pharisees, or a Kirk session who are made up of Pharisees, you will find those who are part of the Kirk session are compassionate and understanding and are sinners like yourself.

[26 : 10] Unlike Simon, they have the spirit of Christ and you see how Christ dealt with this woman. He didn't turn her away.

He didn't ask her to be gone from this home. He encouraged it as he encourages all in whom his grace has been implanted.

Simon behaved outrageously. He didn't accord the common courtesies. We don't know if that was cause for grief in the life of this woman.

woman. It may have been, but she seeks to rectify what he has omitted. 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.

there she is. And she's wearing new clothes. doesn't have a designer label that you would recognize, but it's got the label of the great designer.

[27 : 36] She's wearing the clothing of the imputed righteousness of the Lamb. Not yet recognized perhaps by those in the home, but she is on the best row hope.

I don't know if our entrance caused an embarrassed silence amongst the disciples. It is possible. So often we behave in such abysmal ways when those we don't expect come into the company, don't we?

the silence might only have been broken by the sobbing that came from the depths of her soul and the splash of the tears that fell, tears that were indicative not just of the penitent spirit that belonged to her, but also I believe the thanksgiving, the overwhelming thanksgiving that was in her heart as she came to anoint her Lord.

there is sorrow in the life of this woman, sorrow for the way she had lived, there is repentance in her life as one who has turned from her past life and is facing in a new direction.

[29 : 17] Repentance, love, and thanksgiving all mingle together. and the reaction of Simon is not one of pleasure, not one of thanksgiving, but then Simon wasn't an unbiased observer.

As far as he was concerned, this woman was beyond any hope of being redeemed. If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is, that she is a sinner. She is a sinner, and in the self-righteous estimation of Simon, she would be nothing else. And what Simon failed to recognize was this, failed to appreciate that those who have touched the Lord in this way are made whole.

They have received healing. God's love because they have come through the grace that has been implanted in them.

And they have trusted in the Christ to whom they come. do you think the disciples were they aware of anything precious in their midst when this woman came in?

[30 : 55] Did they recognize that there was a work on going in the life of this child of grace?

Sometimes we are so slow to recognize a work of grace in the hearts of our fellow men. we are so short sighted.

We are so slow to understand. Did they dismiss her as just having her emotions more than nothing else?

Well the Lord didn't do that. The Lord doesn't leave us in any doubt as to what he thought about the life of this woman. He knew what Simon was thinking and he lets us see into the mind of Simon. He saw the inner revulsion in the mind of Simon. He saw the way he was reclining from this woman. He saw the way that she was branded as a hopeless case in his estimation and he rebukes Simon and defends the actions of this penitent sinner.

[32 : 19] And so he tells the parable of the two debtors. Oh it's not that the Lord is treating sin lightly.

He cannot do that. He cannot be a person of the God head and look lightly upon sin because God hates sin. He treats sin for what it is.

But the sin has been swept away in the life of this woman. And although the sin has been erased and blotted out, I dare say that the scars are still there.

you know when you have surgery, although you heal, the scars of the surgery remain.

And the Lord, when he provides healing, the scars are left to remind us what we are, where we came from. But one day, not even the scars will be there.

[33 : 33] they will be removed. It's not easy to erase sin. It's written with a pen of iron, with a point of a diamond, is engraved on the tablet of their heart, says Jeremiah, the prophet, the horns of their altars.

It is so deeply ingrained in the nature of man, that every attempt to erase it ends in miserable failure, except in the one way that the scriptures draw our attention to, by the blood of the Lamb. There is no other way of erasing sin out of lies. It reminds me of the little boy who was misbehaving and his dad said to him, because his misbehaving had gone on for some time, every day you

misbehave, he said, I'm going to put a nail in a piece of wood.

And this went on for quite some time. Every day, nails were being driven into the piece of wood.

And then this badly behaved lad turned over a new leaf.

And his dad said to him for every day that you're well behaved, I'm going to take the nail out of the wood. And so he began to draw the nails out day by day until one day there were no nails left in the piece of wood.

[35 : 15] But do you know what? The holes were still there. The marks were still there. And that is how it is. with the power of indwelling sin.

It leaves its mark. It leaves its effect upon our minds and our hearts and our lives.

Let no one be under any delusion that somehow we can pass through sin without being affected by it. It leaves its mark.

even old habits occur after you thought they were dead and new ones that you thought that you weren't even aware of placed their head.

You know for those who are into gardening you know in the summertime when you're mowing your lawn one of the blights that you can have in your garden on a lawn are daisies.

[36 : 22] Some people think they're attractive but the gardener loathes them. And you mow your lawn and there's no daisies to be seen. And then maybe just at the end of the week you look at your lawn and what do you see there's almost more than there was before.

That's how sin is in the life and the heart of man. it raises its head. Here is this woman who has been granted a full and a free and a gracious pardon.

Her heart is broken because of sin but her heart is also filled with thanksgiving and with love for the forgiveness that she has received for which she sees herself has been totally unworthy of undeserving of what the Lord has done in her life.

Wasn't her tears wasn't her repentance it wasn't her reformation it wasn't the anointed it wasn't anything that she did but earned forgiveness forgiveness because you see her forgiveness was freely conferred it was an act of divine grace oh precious grace and her love is not the cause of her forgiveness but the consequence of her forgiveness her love is the proof of the forgiveness that she received so her life takes a new direction the forgiveness precedes the love and the love is the sign of forgiveness where there is true love to Christ it is preceded by a sense of sin and an assurance of pardon and this is what is true here love prompted the gift that she bequeathed on Christ and love and the

Savior justifies her actions and his love interprets her actions and his love accepts her actions because there is a peculiar sense in which love is its own interpreter we have nothing to pay Christ has paid the price on the cursed cross this woman could say that the life that she now lived like the apostle of old I live by the faith of the son of God who loved me and gave himself for me Simon says Jesus do you see this woman her many sins are forgiven a guilty sinner but forgiven a blood bought sinner she loves much here is

[40 : 13] Simon behaving like a someone once described him as an unemotional iceberg here is this woman with a heart overflowing with love do you see this woman Simon she's my child she's an heir of heaven she's on the road to eternal fellowship and communion that has no end with me and Simon fails to see what Jesus sees he sees a sin blackened woman a woman whom he looks down on he sees a woman who is the scorn of society Jesus sees a trophy of grace a life delivered by power from on high one transformed by the power of divine grace this woman is in scripture for our encouragement for our strengthening this woman is there that we too might go to this same

Christ that we too might participate in that full and free forgiveness that he alone is able to confer friend if you are here this evening a stranger to this Christ oh won't you seek him while it is yet day before the night come let us pray oh lord we thank thee for thine own truth we thank thee for the assurance that thou didst give to one who came to thy feet in penitence that her sins were forgiven we thank thee that that assurance is not confined to one but that it is given to many as thou dost deal graciously and lovingly and compassionately with unworthy sinners such as we oh help each one of us this evening to come to thee that we might too share in the love that flows from Christ and reciprocate that love in our own hearts demonstrated by obedience in our lives in Jesus name we ask it with forgiveness of sin Amen