

Jesus Has Something to Say to You

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[0 : 00] Well, let's turn for a short time now to Luke chapter 7.! We're going to look especially at verses 36 to 50, I have something to say to you.

And he answered, said, teacher. In many ways, we could summarize this passage by focusing on two of the questions that are asked in the process of the passage.

In verse 44, he said to Simon, do you see this woman? In other words, Jesus is drawing Simon's attention to this woman, to who she is, but especially what she has just done in anointing the feet of Jesus and wiping them with her hair.

And when you go to verse 49, it's a comment there by Luke when he comes to write this for us. He said to her, your sins are forgiven.

And then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, who is this who even forgives sins? And in many ways, you can summarize the passage from both of these questions.

[1 : 35] Do you see this woman? Do you see who she is, what she's done? And do you see this person, this Jesus, and who he is and what he himself is able to do?

So in other words, the first question there in verse 44, it's really a challenge to Simon, Simon the Pharisee, a challenge as to how he should see people, how he should view people, how he should come to an opinion about people, what are the characteristics of his assessment, what is right and what is wrong in making assessments of people.

The second question is a challenge, and of course that's a challenge to us as well, but the second question is a challenge to us too, verse 49, who is this who even forgives sins?

How do we view Jesus? Not just how we view other people and how we assess their lives, what we make of them, what we think of them, what our conclusions are, but especially what do we make of him?

What is Jesus for? What have we done with him? Who is he to us today? An issue which runs right through the Bible, but Luke's gospel, in the framework of Luke's gospel, that question frequently comes up.

[2 : 57] Who is this man? Who is he? What is he about? So let's see, first of all, this woman. Simon, do you see this woman?

Who was this woman? Well, she came to this house of Simon when Jesus was here, and we're told that she had something of a reputation. A woman of the city who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table, brought an alabaster flask of ointment.

The word sinner, and Simon uses the word as well, when he thought about what Jesus had allowed this woman to do. If he were a prophet, he wouldn't have allowed this.

He's saying, for she is a sinner. Now, that word could mean a lot of things. We're all sinners to some extent. To a great extent, we're all sinners deep down, and we're sinners by practice as well. But when this word is used in this kind of context, it means she was a woman who had a reputation, a woman who had a lifestyle that just wasn't becoming as it should be of a woman in society, or of anyone in society.

[4 : 08] It means she had a reputation for being prominently or obviously a sinner. She lived in a sinful lifestyle, possibly a sinful relationship. Who knows?

Maybe she was a prostitute. Maybe she was somebody who lived an immoral lifestyle. But in any case, she was known as a sinner. She was known as somebody who had that sort of reputation, that sort of background and practice.

And she would not be welcome in this kind of society, in this kind of situation, in this man's house especially. But she came in, and as she came in, she came to Jesus, and she anointed his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair off her head.

She came weeping. She came with his ointment. She came and kissed his feet. She came and anointed them. What is all that telling us? Well, it's telling us that she recognized in Jesus things which this Pharisee certainly did not.

It tells us that she loved this Jesus, which this Pharisee did not. It tells us that despite the fact that she had this reputation, she came to love this person, Jesus, and she loved him particularly because he had forgiven her sins.

[5 : 32] It was all from her love for him that she did this. Look at verse 47, where Jesus says to the Pharisee, You didn't anoint my head with oil.

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.

Now Jesus is not saying, because she has done this, I've decided to forgive her sins. He's not saying, by virtue of what she has done, by virtue of her action here, her doings, she has come to be forgiven her sin.

That's not what he's saying. He's saying, what she has done shows, it's evidence of the fact that her sin has been forgiven. She loves me because I have forgiven her sins, because her sins which are many are forgiven.

Her love for Christ grew out of her knowledge of forgiveness, grew out of her situation where her sins had actually been covered, had been dealt with by the Lord.

[6 : 38] And that's why she loved him. But her love took the form of acting like a slave would act. When you came into a house like this, for a meal or on a special occasion, there were slaves employed to actually wash your feet.

John chapter 13 has a very famous passage that uses that as a background to it, if you like, where Jesus began to wash the feet of the disciples.

You gathered some dust when you walked through the streets on the way to wherever you were going, and slaves were employed, among other things, to wash the feet of guests who were invited to come to dinner or to come to a supper.

And that's what this woman is really doing. She's acting the part of a slave. She's taking this position in the presence of Simon and his guests and Jesus in Simon's house.

She's taking the lowest position. She's happy to do it because she loves this Jesus. Now there's a challenge in that for ourselves, isn't there?

[7 : 53] Our discipleship is not about prominence in public. It's not about getting for ourselves a position that people can talk about. Our discipleship is being prepared to take the lowest, the smallest, the most menial position and tasks for the Lord.

Being able to say to the Lord, whatever you give me, Lord, whatever you ask me to do, whatever service I can be to you, I'll be happy to do it because it's what I owe you.

Because it's all too little compared to what you have done for me. What is washing someone's feet compared to having your sins washed? That's the point that Jesus is making.

When your sins are washed away, the least you can do for Jesus is something you will do most happily. The most you can do for Jesus, you will do it most happily.

Why? Because you love Him and He's worth doing this for Him. After all, as we mentioned, John chapter 13 has a wonderful passage where Jesus Himself acts the part of a slave or a bond servant.

[9 : 02] You remember He took off His outer garments. He wrapped a towel around Himself. All of these details are important.

And He began to wash the feet of the disciples. And there's a theological symbolism in that in John's Gospel. John loves to have that symbolism brought out, especially where it relates to God's love and to Jesus and all that Jesus came to do.

And here is Jesus demonstrating by way, if you like, of a parable in action rather than in words, where He had divested Himself of the glory that is His as God.

He's still God. It still belongs to Him, but He's masked that by His place in the world as a servant of the Father. He's come to be, not to be served, as He put it Himself, but to serve and to give His life a ransom for many.

And as He does, as He washes these disciples' feet, He's demonstrating, He's come into the world to act the part of a slave, the part of a servant, bonded to the Father and bonded to His people and being prepared to carry this through to the very end.

[10 : 26] And when He had finished washing the disciples' feet, He took up His place again. The towel had done its work.

He sat again where He was to begin with. And there's John's symbolism for you. The Lord came into this world in the form of a servant and He humbled Himself to the death of the cross, as Philippians 2 put it.

And what happened then? Well, He went back to the glory He had with the Father before the world was. But what a wonderful, wonderful service in between those two great points of His coming and His going back to the Father.

He came to wash the feet of His disciples spiritually, as well as literally. He came to be the Savior of sinners.

He came into the world to show the Father's love and to be, for us too, the example above all other examples of what it means to serve God humbly, willingly, consistently.

[11 : 36] So there's a challenge in this woman for ourselves. Are we today prepared to follow Jesus? To follow Him into the most menial tasks?

Will we go wherever He sends us? Will we do whatever He requires of us? Will we say, Lord, when I think of what You have done, what You ask of me to do for You is all too little.

But then you see Simon's conclusions. Jesus said to him, Do you see this woman? But he had concluded beforehand, and I think this is one of the reasons Jesus drew His attention again to this woman when the Pharisee, when He saw this woman doing what she'd done, He said, 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.

What is Simon doing with this woman? What are his conclusions based upon? They're based upon his own ideas of what's right and wrong. He's putting her in a category, not regarding her as a person.

He just says, This woman is a sinner. This man, Jesus, shouldn't have allowed this woman to touch Him. She's a sinner. She's in the category of being a sinner. He should have just excluded her.

[12 : 58] He should have put her aside. How do we assess people? Do we put them in categories? Do we say about them, Well, yes, but they're of the world and just ignore them?

Or do we say, Oh, yeah, but they're not our denomination. They're not our congregation. Or do we say of them, They're not communicant members of the congregation. Therefore, it's not so important what they do or don't do with their life.

We're constantly, aren't we, in the business of categorizing people, putting them into different categories, and quite often absolving ourselves of responsibilities concerning them.

That's what this man was doing. She is a sinner. Let's leave it there. So Jesus shouldn't have touched her, allowed her to touch Him at all.

And he's concluded about Jesus, this man can't be a prophet. He's a fake. If he were a real prophet, he would have known what sort of woman this is.

[14 : 06] It's really telling how Jesus responded. Here is Simon saying, If this man only knew what this woman is, if he really knew, he wouldn't have allowed her to do this.

And in the response, what becomes obvious is that not only did Jesus know who this woman was, but he knew what Simon was thinking. You see, it's interesting.

It's important, actually. Simon said to himself. He didn't say anything out loud. He said to himself, If this man were a prophet, he would have known who this woman, what sort of woman it is who's touching him.

It's quite clear. In verse 39, the Pharisee, when he saw it, he said to himself. He didn't say anything out loud. He didn't say to Jesus, Why are you allowing this woman to do this?

Don't you know that she's a sinner? It's all inside his own head. It's all in his soul. It's the thoughts of his mind. And all the time that he's saying about Jesus, if only he knew, he really doesn't know that Jesus knows not only who this woman is, but the very thoughts that he's thinking.

[15 : 22] Simon never spoke a word, and Jesus knew everything that was in his mind. And so it is with you and me today, just as truly as it was on that occasion.

Your response to the gospel, your response to the call of the gospel, calling you to come to Christ, your response to Christ's call to go to serve him, to be his servant, to be openly his, to be willingly his, to do for him whatever he's calling upon you to do, whatever thoughts are in your mind regarding those things right now, the Lord is reading them.

He knows them. He's reached his own conclusions. Whatever conclusions we've come to about him. But he doesn't condemn Simon outrightly.

He doesn't come to rebuke him openly. Instead, you find from verse 41 there, he actually tells him about this moneylender. And he puts Simon to the test again when he goes through the various parts of that account about the moneylender.

And he then comes to the point which of them will love him the most. And Simon rightly concludes, well, it's the one to whom most is forgiven.

[16 : 46] And that's what leads him again, leads Jesus to speak about this woman. Because Christ's concern is to lead this Pharisee towards the light. Not to leave him in the darkness.

The darkness of his own understanding. The darkness of his own conclusions. The wrongness of his own thinking. He's all the time leading him towards considering the truth as he ought to consider it.

And he's saying, well, you have judged rightly. And then he turned again to the woman so that he would focus again on what that woman had done.

You see, he's drawing Simon's mind all the time to what he ought to have concluded. What he ought to have thought. And to what kind of opinion he should have had about Jesus himself.

And that's how the gospel is today for you. The gospel of which Christ is the centerpiece. Where Jesus stands at the very heart of this gospel message of salvation in him.

[17 : 51] That's the concern of the Lord. That's what the gospel is concerned for you and I to do. To lead us into the light. Not to leave us in our darkness. Not to leave us to our own conclusions.

And that's why you find through this passage that Christ's response here to Simon is to get his attention.

Verse 40 Simon I have something to say to you. Jesus knew who he was knew who this woman was knew the thoughts of Simon's heart now he turns to Simon and says Simon I have something to say to you.

And he's saying that to you and to me today. He's reading your thoughts. He knows your heart. He knows what conclusions you've come to about himself about other human beings or about the church whatever it is he's reading your thoughts he knows your mind.

And today this gospel or Jesus through the gospel is saying Simon I have something to say to you. He's not saying it to whoever's beside you in the pew. He's not saying this to somebody else in this congregation today.

[19 : 12] Yes he may be doing that but as far as you're concerned as far as I'm concerned Jesus is saying I have something to say to you. Because this gospel is not a generalized presentation of truth to us.

This gospel of Jesus and Jesus through the gospel is not just addressing us as if we didn't have individual needs that he is able to meet. He's not lumping us all together and saying here's something I want you all to consider and discuss together.

No he's saying I have something to say to you today. Doesn't matter how you've come here today. What your thoughts have been. What your life has been up to now.

However long you've been on the road of following the Lord. Lord. Or even if you've not yet come to begin to follow him. Jesus today is addressing your soul and saying you put your own name into it instead of Simon.

I have something to say to you. Aren't you thankful today that Jesus is not saying I could speak to you but I'd rather that I go to somebody else in this congregation first of all and then I'll come back to you.

[20 : 29] No he's saying I have something today to say to you. Wonderful way the gospel directly addresses us as individuals in our individual need in our individual relationship with God and to eternity and to the truth of the gospel itself.

Thanks be to God that he didn't walk past me in my life. God and say I'm going to leave you here. I'm going to speak to someone else.

And you're thankful today as a Christian that he didn't bypass you on the way through life but that he came and spoke directly into your soul and said today I have something to say to you.

God's and as we're thankful for God's address to us individually so we're thankful for all that that contains focusing specifically on our need to serve him on our need to humble ourselves before him or our need to be like this woman to take the lowest place to wash his feet spiritually without tears

actually to if we need to.

She honored Jesus by her actions. And that's what Jesus is pointing to speaking this way to Simon. She has honored me Simon.

[22 : 01] I want you to look at her. I want you to think about her. I want you to consider what I have to say to you about her and about yourself.

and so Simon has much to think about. And that's how it is for me today.

I stand in this pulpit and Jesus is addressing me and saying you speak to these people about the gospel you speak to them about their need of Christ what about yourself? I have something to say to you today.

He's not bypassing me or any of us who preach the gospel. for all of us for each of us it's our great privilege to know God speaking to us.

God not leaving us to our own devices. God not telling us I'm done with you. No he's speaking to you and to me in this building at this moment.

[23 : 03] And he needs your response. he needs to know what you're going to make of what he has to say to you. He's not just throwing it at you and just leaving it as if it didn't matter.

Why is he speaking to us directly? Why is he calling our attention to the Bible and to the teaching of the Bible? So that we will come to know him and know him intimately and know him continually from now on and know him as the only one in existence who is able to meet all of our needs in all its scope, in all its detail, in all its depth.

Nobody can do for you what Jesus can. And that's why the gospel is concerned. Or Christ through the gospel is drawing you to think deeply of this relationship with himself.

Do you see this woman? But then you find near the end of the chapter as we saw in verse 47 who is this who even forgives sins?

As we said, she loved the Lord because her sins were forgiven. This is what he's saying. I tell you, her sins which are many are forgiven, for she loved much, but to whom little is forgiven, they love little.

[24 : 30] And he said to her, your sins are forgiven. And then the question, who is this who even forgives sins? Now this is the burden of Luke's gospel all the way through as you read it from beginning to end.

This is in many ways the main burden of his gospel as he's taking us through the incidents in Christ's life while he was in the world, through to his death and resurrection and then ascension to glory.

Who is this? What is he about? that's the concern of Luke for his readers that they will come to know who exactly this is and what they need to make of him.

And he says here, who is this who even forgives sins? That's what they said among themselves, those who are at table with him. That's the question. Who is this who even forgives sins?

Well, only God can forgive sins. No minister can forgive sins. No priest can forgive sins. No church can confer forgiveness of sins, wipe our sins away.

[25 : 38] Only God can do it. But you see, the point is, here is God doing it. Who is this who forgives, even forgives sins?

He has the authority to forgive sins. That's why he's able to speak to this woman. your faith has saved you. Your sins are forgiven.

There's no salvation without forgiveness. We can persuade ourselves that somehow we'll make our way into the kingdom of God without really paying much attention to our sin and our need to have our sin forgiven.

It's not like that. There are many voices that will try and persuade you of that. There are many voices that will tell you, well, you don't need to deal with your sins yet. You don't need to be that serious about things yet.

you can do that. You can do that at some later stage in your life. You've got enough to be doing with at the moment. But you have to realize, and I have to realize, that without Jesus we're still in our sins.

[26 : 51] Without faith in Christ, our sin is not forgiven. And when our sin is not forgiven, we're not right with God. Who is this who even forgives sins?

The world in which we live hates the idea of sinfulness. The biblical idea of sin, the biblical teaching on sin, what sin is, what sin deserves.

What we are as sinners from the day of our birth onwards, or even prior to that, as Psalm 51 put us, we are conceived in iniquity and sin. And we bring forth sin as soon as we're into the world.

The world out there hates that. You don't tell people you're a sinner. You don't tell people you need your life changed, you need a fresh and a new start.

Do you need a relationship with God? The world doesn't want to hear that. As sinners, we don't want to hear that. But our privilege under the gospel is that in his own goodness and mercy and grace, God brings us to hear that.

[28 : 10] God brings us to consider that. And we come to know our need of forgiveness because that's what God is telling us. and Jesus says to this woman, your faith has saved you.

Go in peace. Now, it doesn't mean that her faith was meritorious. It doesn't mean that she earned salvation by her faith.

But it does mean that her faith had connected her to this salvation, this forgiveness, this salvation that Jesus is speaking of. Your faith has saved you.

It's faith. What is faith? Faith, essentially, is our coming to trust in the Lord. To put all our trust in him for time and for eternity, that trust is really faith.

Our faith is trust, essentially. There are other things to it as well. You believe certain things to be true, certain things not to be true, and so on. But faith at its very center is trusting in God.

[29 : 22] Putting your trust, your confidence in him, handing over your life to him, and saying, Lord, here is my life, the life I've had up to now.

It's not been the kind of life that you're pleased with. But I hand my life over to you. I know it's right for me to do it.

I know it's what you're calling on me to do. And this woman here, your faith has saved you. Is there anyone here today who's not yet saved?

Anyone who's not come yet to trust in the living Christ? Anyone who knows the gospel as you do so well? But still you're in your sins.

And your sins will condemn you if you die like that. And you have Jesus today speaking to you. I have something to say to you. And what he's saying to you is, here is salvation.

[30 : 30] Here is what you need. Trust in me. And you will have this salvation to enjoy for time and for eternity. No one will be able to take it from you.

Nobody can actually change the circumstances, the relationship then that you have with God. Your faith has saved you.

And then he says, go in peace. And actually literally what Luke is recording for us here is that Jesus said, go into peace.

Really to translate it literally, it's the word into, go into peace. peace. He's not just saying to her, go now in peace from this place. He's saying, go into peace.

Enter into peace, the peace that you have in your salvation. Enter into that peace. Enjoy that peace. Do you lack peace in your life?

[31 : 34] Are you looking for peace? peace? I'm assuming that everyone here, including myself, is aware of their need for peace in their life. The world out there is full of the lack of peace.

But you and I are here under the gospel where peace is being presented to us in Christ. Go into peace. Enjoy peace with God.

Enjoy peace as you anticipate death and eternity. These things are not morbid to focus on them, to think about them.

The world will tell you, I don't want to think about these things. I have far too much to live for. Why should I be thinking of death and eternity and sin and judgment and all that stuff? Here is Jesus saying, if you want peace you've got to think about them.

If you want peace there's only one place you can find it and that's in Him. Go into peace. A peace that will not in any way free you from all your troubles.

[32 : 44] It will not inoculate you in such a way that you won't feel any pains or concerns or anxieties or troubles anymore. It's not like that.

But the big thing is, when you go into peace, when you place your trust in Christ and He says to you, now go into peace, what He's saying, you might have troubles, you will have troubles, but you'll have me.

And because you'll have me, you'll have peace. You'll be able to face your troubles as never before, through the peace that I will give you. Simon, do you see this woman?

Who is this who even forgives sins? Simon, I have something to say to you today.

Let's pray. Lord, our God, we thank you for the peace of the gospel. We thank you for the way that it has come about, that you have come into this world and given of yourself the Prince of Peace to die for our peace.

[33 : 56] We bless you, Lord, today that that peace is real, that it far exceeds anything that any human being can conceive of by way of peace. Bring us, we pray, into that peace, and if we will already come to know you as peace, O Lord, help us to travel onwards in the peace of Christ, and enable us to value that peace in such a way that would treasure it in our own hearts, but would also value sharing it with others.

Receive our thanks now, we pray, pardoning all our sin, for Jesus' sake. Amen. Well, we're going to conclude our worship today singing in Psalm 103, from the Scottish Psalter, Psalm 103, and verses 8 to 12.

The Lord, our God, is merciful, and he is gracious, long-suffering, and slow to wrath, and mercy plenteous. He will not chide continually, nor keep his anger still.

With us he dealt not as we sinned, nor did requite our ill. For as the heaven and its height, the earth surmounteth far, so great to those that do him fear his tender mercies are.

As far as east, as distant from the west, so far hath he from us removed in his love all our iniquity. all these verses then to God's praise in Psalm 103 from verse 8, the Lord our God is merciful.

[35 : 30] and he is gracious, from suffering and slow to wrath in mercy plenty of He will not continually, nor keep his anger still.

with us he can't nor does we sin nor give we quite ado.

For us the heaven in its height, the earth surmounted fire.

so great to those that do in fear his tender mercy side.

! As far as he distant from the west of the sea, from us to us to us the of the and the Father the the Lord the Lord the Lord Lord Father and the Holy you evermore.

[37 : 43] Amen. the of the of the the! holy