

Simply Simon

Key Verses: Luke 5:30-32 ~ *But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners? And Jesus answering said unto them, they that are whole need not physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

Power Point: *Always remember the great price that Jesus paid for our sins. It's because of His mercy that we are what we are. Let us not be judgmental but remember that all are sinners.*

1. Luke 7:36-38 ~ True worship comes from a heart of gratitude for the gift of forgiveness. The word worship (*proskuneo*) comes from two words, *pros* and *kuneo*. *Pros* means “towards” and *kuneo* means “to bow, pay homage to or do reverence to”

- How do you express gratitude to God for being so generous in forgiving you of so much?

2. Luke 7:39 ~ When we think we are better than others we begin to judge & look down on people.

- Share a time when you were judged for your beliefs and how it affected you?

3. Luke 5:30-32 ~ Jesus did not avoid sinners but offered love & forgiveness to them.

- Share about your life before you met Christ & how you met Christ.

Application: Let your worship flow out of gratefulness for the price that Christ paid for you. Scripture teaches us how to love all people both believers and non-believers. Look for ways to express it this Christmas season.

Simple Simon

Sunday December 6, 2009

Luke 7:36-50

Being forgiven is a gift from God and when we understand the extent of what we have been forgiven from we worship with abandonment and freedom. Gratitude is an expression of worship that looks back on all the Lord has done and continues to do in our lives every day.

The heart of the story we just read has to do with two people, Simon the Pharisee and the sinful woman and the contrast between their actions of receiving Jesus. The parable that Jesus gives to Simon illustrates the point that Jesus is making between the two.

As this drama unfolds it must be assumed that the woman in the story had heard Jesus preach of the message of grace for sinners. The entire account makes no sense if this assumption is not taken into consideration.

It seems that she was looking for an opportunity to express gratitude to the Lord for the forgiveness and acceptance she had received.

The message of Gods love and invitation to sinners was one that Jesus proclaimed everywhere he went.

At Matthew the tax collectors house the scribes and the Pharisees complained against His disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" Jesus answered and said to them, "**Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.**" (Luke 5:30-32)

The Pharisees didn't agree with this teaching because in their view they believed that God cared only for those who were righteous and kept the law. I believe that the invitation of Simon was not one of hospitality and respect but of suspicion of whether this man was really a prophet from God. Perhaps he and the other religious leaders thought that they could somehow adjust the young Rabbi's teachings and so the meal was planned and the he was invited.

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Here is how the story begins with the introduction of Simon... Luke 7:36-39 Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat.

The scene is filled with a sense of tension by what didn't take place.

Every culture has its rituals and customs to receive their guests of honor. In our culture when you are expecting a guest it begins with:

- Meeting them at the door (*we don't yell from the back room, "come on in the doors open"*)
- Words of welcome and reception perhaps a hug or a kiss on the cheek (*Welcome, It's so good to have you in our home*)
- Taking their coat and hanging it in the closet
- Invitation to sit down
- Offering of a cup of coffee
- All distractions are turned off so that undivided attention can be given to the guest. *(TV OFF)*

If we were to skip these we would insult our guest and make them feel unwelcome. Imagine what kind of tension and apprehension would be bred without true hospitality.

This is what was going on as the story unfolds. Jesus points out three things that Simon didn't do that proved his lack of hospitality and respect for the invited

- I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet
- You gave Me no kiss
- You did not anoint My head with oil

Jesus says that Simon's lack of attention to these details showed a lot about his heart towards his guest. His lack of hospitality was a sign of his lack of gratitude for the gift of forgiveness. He didn't know how to truly worship or show reverence.

*Interesting that the word worship (*proskuneo*) according to the Vine Expository comes from two words *pros*, "towards," and *kuneo*, "to kiss" and means "to make obeisance, do reverence to"*

How about us? Did we kiss the face of God in our time of worship? Did we express words of gratitude this morning for His being so generous in forging us of so much?

A woman who was a sinner

And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, and stood at His feet behind *Him* weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped *them* with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed *them* with the fragrant oil.

Not only does this woman irritate Simon and the Pharisees she also shocks them.

She uncovered her hair and touched Jesus. According to Middle Eastern culture as you see even in many places today it was forbidden that a woman uncover her head and worse that she should touch a man.

The question he asks himself reveals his hidden agenda for the invitation. To see if Jesus was a real prophet or not!

Why didn't Jesus stop her?

- Because her worship was a complete abandonment of self and a total focus on gratitude for forgiveness and grace
- Simon needed to learn that there were two types of sinners in the room (***Law keepers and law breakers***)

Simply Simon again

Luke 7:39 Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw *this*, he spoke to himself, saying, "This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman *this is* who is touching Him, for she is a sinner."

Simon was embarrassed, both for himself and for his guests. People had been saying that Jesus was a great Prophet (Luke 7:16), but He certainly was not flowing in prophetic discernment if He allowed a sinful woman to anoint His feet!

People who think themselves better than others find much to be critical about and little to be grateful for.

Simon not only criticizes and judges the woman but he also questions the authenticity of Jesus being a prophet. However, Jesus proved his prophetic call by reading Simon's thoughts and exposing his needs.

Simon learns a lesson about gratitude and forgiveness

Luke 7:40-43 And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." So he said, "Teacher, say it." "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?" Simon answered and said, "I suppose the *one* whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have rightly judged."

Luke 7:44-50 Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped *them* with the hair of her head. You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. Therefore I say to you, her sins, *which are* many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loves little." Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

- First thing Jesus does is to get Simon to look at the woman whom he has been ignoring and judging as a sinner.
- He then tells him that more forgiveness a believer receives the more costly love he or she offers back to God.
- He teaches him that there are two types and both need forgiveness law breakers and law keepers who think they are accepted on their own merits.

Simon was guilty of sins of the heart, especially pride, while the woman was guilty of sins of the flesh. Her sins were known, while Simon's sins were hidden to everyone except God. *And both of them were spiritually bankrupt and could not pay God for their debt.* Simon just didn't realize it.

- Simon learned that the true nature of a prophet is not to avoid sinners but to offer love and forgiveness to sinners

Simon's life, I imagine, was never be the same. He thought he would learn about Jesus but he ended up learning more about himself than he cared to know.

What about us? How mindful and grateful are we for everything that God has done and forgiven us from? Are we quick to judge what others do on the outside and minimize sins of the heart such as pride?

Conclusion: Jesus' encounter with a sinful woman teaches us the great price paid for the enormous debt of sin that we once carried. There are too many ungrateful Simons in the church. Let loving gratitude toward Christ characterize our walk with him.