

(Luke) 23 - Anointing Jesus Feet

by Ed Miller

The story of the woman who was a sinner highlights the difference between Christians who are forgiven but lack love and those who are forgiven and demonstrate love, emphasizing the importance of understanding and appreciating the depth of one's own forgiveness.

Duration: 48:55

Scripture: Matthew 22:37-40, Matthew 26:6-13, Mark 14:3-9, Luke 7:36-50, Luke 10:25-37, Luke 19:1-10, John 12:1-8

Topics: "Repentance And Faith", "Gods Holy Justice"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the Galilean ministry of Jesus, where he goes about performing miracles and helping those in need. The speaker introduces the story of the woman called the sinner, found in Luke 7:36-50. He discusses how Jesus confronts Simon, explaining the reasons behind his critical and cold attitude. The speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding the full Gospel, which includes the truth that God is holy and just, and sin must be punished. He also highlights the contrast between Simon's self-righteousness and the woman's genuine repentance and love for Jesus.

Transcript

Open please to Luke chapter 7, is where we are. Luke chapter 7. We're pretty deep into our study, so if you haven't been with us or you want the reviews, I'll recommend again, Lillian has the tapes and she'd be glad to give them to you. We're just a little deep for too much review.

We're in this section though, beginning in chapter 4.14 all the way to 19.28, which we call the Galilean ministry of our Lord Jesus. And in this section we've called our Lord the friend of all mankind. Because in these chapters he goes about doing, it's a great miracle section.

And he goes about helping and stooping and ministering and comforting. And especially the most needy of mankind. Those who were helpless, those who were oppressed.

When we left off in our discussion, I had just begun to introduce the story of the woman who was called the sinner. Chapter 7 verse 36 to chapter 50. Let me just read a couple of verses there and then get the scene before your heart.

Review two observations we already made and then we'll move to our new material. Begin at verse 36 please. Now one of the Pharisees was requesting him to dine with him.

And he entered the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. And behold there was a woman in the city who was a sinner. And when she learned that he was reclining at the table in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster vial of perfume.

And standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and kept wiping them with the hair of her head. And kissing his feet and anointing them with the perfume. Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, if this man were a prophet, he would know who and what sort of person this woman is who's touching him.

That she is a sinner. In our introduction last time, I made two points of observation. Let me just quickly review those and then we'll continue in the story.

The first observation has to do with the identity of this woman. Who was this woman called the sinner? As far as the Bible record goes, her name's not given. As far as the Bible record goes, she never said a word.

So here's someone who never said anything and her name's not given. Now there are four different accounts in the Bible of Jesus. Either his head or his feet.

Matthew chapter 26, Mark chapter 14, John chapter 12 and here in Luke chapter 7. Some have tried to pull all those stories together and say it's all one anointing. Look that from different vantage points. In other words, Matthew saw it one way and Luke saw it another and Mark another.

The problem of course is that in this record, we are at the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Early in his Galilean ministry. The other anointing, for example in John 12, took place clearly the last week of his life.

Just before the cross. So they took place at different times. But some would say, well Luke put it in here, but it didn't take place at this time.

His record is not chronological. We have another problem, that one takes place in Galilee. So that makes them at least two different accounts.

We have two accounts where the man's home, whose home it was, is named Simon. But one account, the one we're studying, calls him Simon the Pharisee. The one in Mark calls him Simon the leper.

Is it the same Simon? That was a familiar name in those days. And so on. The big problem is that so many of these accounts have similar things in common.

They have anointing, they have tears, they have the wiping of his feet with their hair. For example, in John 11, you remember Mary and Martha and Lazarus, that dear family of Bethany. When Lazarus was sick, it seemed like John wanted to explain who Mary was.

And so it says the Mary, John 11 too, it was the Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. Almost as if he's referring to this story that we're studying now. And so this problem of many anointings, Simon, Mary, who was this woman? Many have tried to say that this sinner woman, this fallen woman, was the same as Mary of Bethany.

It was the same Mary that did it. But there's no real proof of that. We know from Luke 7 that this woman was a fallen woman, either an adulteress or a harlot or something like that.

Certainly she sinned in some licentious way. The Greek carries the weight of that. Some complicate it further because the next story we're going to read in Luke chapter 8 says there was a woman named Mary Magdalene out of whom he cast seven demons.

And so because that story follows this one, many have made this woman Mary Magdalene. But there's no evidence that this is Mary of Bethany or Mary Magdalene. Now I'm not going to try to convince you of my own opinion because godlier men than I am have differed on these particular things.

I personally think there are three different stories. That this woman is a unique story, and we don't know who she was. I don't think Mary of Bethany and Mary Magdalene are the same person.

Some people think they're the same one. So I think Mary Magdalene is one person, Mary of Bethany is another person, and whoever this is, is another person. So at least play with me this morning, and for this morning, this is a unique story.

She's a stranger, we don't know her name, we don't know her town, we don't know her family, we do know her reputation. We know that she was a notorious sinner, violator of the sixth or seventh commandment, depending on which list you use. We know also that she became a lover of the Lord Jesus by his wonderful grace.

That's what we know about her. So we'll look at the story as if it was unique. The second observation I made last time, and as we close, had to do with this woman's love.

In the parable Jesus told in this story, he told the parable of two debtors, and we won't read that right now, but you'll recall that parable. Chapter 7, verse 42, which will love him more, Jesus asked Simon. And his answer is 43, the one whom he forgave more.

And Jesus said, you've judged correctly. The one who's forgiven the most, loves the most. And then if you look at verse 47, for this reason I say to you, her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much.

He who is forgiven little, loves little. I call attention to that to point out that forgiveness comes first, not love. Love does not come first.

Pardon comes first. Producing love. That's why at the end of this story, in verse 50, Jesus said, your faith saved you.

He doesn't say your love saved you. She wasn't saved because she poured out tears, and because she poured out ointment on the Lord Jesus. She was not forgiven because she had a great love for Jesus.

She had a great love for Jesus because she was forgiven. He who's forgiven much, loves much. She had a great love for the Lord because of all He had done for her.

The love that she had for her Savior, was the effect of her pardon. In other words, she had entered into her salvation, and that produced this love. And so love is the effect, it's not the cause.

It's the consequences of what God does. It's not the condition on which God will do it. It's the result.

It's not the reason. It's the fruit. It's not the root.

So, my point is, she did not come to this house to be forgiven. She came to this house because she was already forgiven. At another time, she met the Lord, or heard the Lord, or responded to the Lord.

She didn't come here to be converted. She was already converted when she arrived. And she came to say thank you.

She came to show her love and appreciation. I used to think that Luke 7, verse 38, where it says, She stood behind him weeping, and began to wet his feet with her tears. I used to think those were tears of repentance.

That this fallen woman came and felt so bad about her sin, that she just cried and just a fountain opened up. But those are not tears of repentance. Those are tears of love.

She had already repented. She had already been forgiven. And those who are forgiven much, love much.

And she's come now to say thank you. And this was the gratitude of a debtor, who had been forgiven and her debt had been canceled. So she came on purpose to say thank you and to anoint his feet because of the forgiveness she received.

So her passion, her tears, her love, her kissing, all of that was just a great big thank you. Now before we look a little deeper at the love that is generated by forgiveness, let me make one other observation. And it's about this man called Simon the Pharisee.

Look please at verse 36. Luke 7, 36. Now one of the Pharisees was requesting him to dine with him.

And he entered the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. Simon was a Pharisee. Now if you go through the Gospel of Luke, you're going to see that Luke is not very kind to Pharisees.

Generally speaking, he has a lot to say against them. And because Luke's words are sharp against the hypocrites and the Pharisees and the whitewashed supplicants, many think that Simon here, since he's Simon the Pharisee, was just patronizing the Lord Jesus. In other words, like so many others, he was trying to catch him and trick him and set him up and put him in a snare.

And so when Simon invited him to dinner, some think, it wasn't because he loved him and was serving him and was his disciple. They take verse 39. It says, Now the Pharisee who had invited him saw this.

He said to himself, If this man were a prophet, he would know who and what sort of woman this is who's touching him. She's a sinner. And they say, See, there's the Pharisee.

He's just trying to prove Jesus. And so he said, Now if he were a real prophet, he would know what kind of a woman he is. He's not a real prophet.

And they say he's just trying to find some fault against Jesus. That he was like the other Pharisees, a formalist, a hypocrite, just going through the ritual external all on the outside. Once again, I can't prove it and I don't ask you.

I'm not trying to convince you. But I don't think that's the case at all. I think this Pharisee was a disciple of the Lord Jesus.

Yes, he was a Pharisee. So was Nicodemus. So was Joseph of Arimathea.

So was the Apostle Paul. There were Pharisees who became disciples of Christ. When Jesus said in verse 40 to the Pharisee, Simon, I have something to say to you.

He said, Teacher or Master, say unto me what you have to say. That isn't the strongest proof. I think the proof is in the parable.

Jesus said in verse 41, listen to the parable. A certain money lender had two debtors and owed him five hundred denarii. One owed him five hundred denarii, the other fifty.

And when they were unable to repay, he graciously forgave them both. Now which of them will love him the more? And as Jesus unveiled this parable, Simon answered right. He said the one that's forgiven the most is going to love the most.

And then Jesus compared it and said, See, there's two debtors. You're one and she's one. She's been forgiven a lot.

So she loves me a lot. When I came to your house, you didn't show me common hospitality. So Jesus clearly takes the two debtors and makes one of them the woman and one of them Simon.

And he knew it. That was him. And the reason I call attention to that is in verse 42, He graciously forgave them both.

He graciously forgave them both. And I think the point is that they were both forgiven. Simon wasn't Simon the Pharisee, hater of Jesus.

He was also forgiven. The parable says that he was. She was forgiven and he was forgiven.

And in verse 42, they were both insolvent. They were both bankrupt. Neither one was able to pay.

And just because one owed fifty and one owed five hundred, if you can't pay, what's the difference if you owe fifty or five hundred? And they were both bankrupt before Christ, their creditor. And they were both forgiven. So I'm going to take this story to be that, using our own language, they were both Christians.

And what's the difference? Sometimes you find a Christian like Simon. You know he's a Christian. He's forgiven.

And then you find a Christian like this woman. What makes the difference between Christian A who's forgiven and lives like Simon and Christian B who's forgiven and is so full of love and pours out her heart to the Lord Jesus? They're both Christians. They're both forgiven.

And what I'd like to set before your hearts this morning is a possible answer to what makes the difference between two Christians who are forgiven but one who is just poured out on the Lord Jesus. That's the kind of hope that you desire in your heart to be. I know it's the kind I want to be.

I think the best way to get the facts before our hearts and the precious principles are just to divide this up. This story talks about three people. It talks about Simon the Pharisee.

It talks about this sinner woman who came to say thank you. And it talks about the Lord Jesus. So if we look at those three people I think we'll get all the facts before us and hopefully the answer to the question.

Alright, let's look at Simon the Pharisee. Now, again, our approach is he's a Christian. He's forgiven.

He's a debtor. Simon, though he's forgiven, has a few problems. And he's not seeing things as clearly as he ought to see them.

And I think the reason is this. He that's forgiven much, this will run through the whole story, he that's forgiven much, loves much. And somehow, because Simon didn't enter into his own salvation, he didn't realize how much he'd been forgiven.

When you don't realize, or when I don't realize, all we've been forgiven, it's going to affect our eyesight. Now, he was blurry visioned in his look at the woman. He was blurry visioned in his look at the Lord Jesus.

He was blurry in his vision in his look at himself. He couldn't see clearly his own debt. And so on.

This man had some real problems. For example, in his observation of this woman, how critical he was. How judgmental.

I don't think it would be true of any in this room. My tongue, you see, is in my cheek. The possibility that we would look at some who are in the world's eyes great sinners and have a judgmental attitude and a censured spirit and condemn.

That's what he did. Now, for fairness sake, let me stick up for dear Simon here for a moment. He had invited Jesus to dinner.

Let's not read in motives that aren't there. We don't know why. He had invited the Lord Jesus to dinner.

And if you'll glance at verse 49, you'll see Jesus wasn't the only one invited to dinner. There were other invited guests. This woman was not invited to his house.

So you've got to give that to Simon. What if someone uninvited came to your house, not only uninvited, but showed up at mealtime? And that's when she showed up. Now, he was reclining at the table, verse 37.

They had already sat down to eat with the guests. And just about the worst time for an uninvited person to come is at mealtime when you're just sitting down with the guests. Now, in those days, they didn't really sit down.

You know, they reclined. From what I've read, they used to have their tables like in a horseshoe. And they would recline with their feet away from the table, facing each other, and they would alternate elbows depending on who they wanted to talk to.

And they were ambidextrous when it came to eating. They could eat with either hand, and so on. And they would all be facing one another.

I thought sometime I'd like to try that, just laying down to eat. I don't know if that would work. Anyway, she was not only uninvited, but you know from these eyes, and from the record, and from the fact that she was a notorious sinner, she had a reputation that when the invitations went out, probably she'd not be on the list.

She was not only uninvited, she was unwanted. This woman did not have a good reputation. And when she came in, what it looked like to these eyes, you got to understand where Simon was coming from.

He knows this woman. She has a reputation. And then she comes in in verse 38, and she's crying and wiping his hair, his feet with her hair.

Now once again, the culture ties in here. In those days, they had certain rules for women. And this idea of letting down your hair had to do with intimacy.

A woman just didn't do that unless it was on an intimate occasion. And then verse 38, kissing his feet, and the Greek is very strong here. It's this continuous tense.

She kissed him over and over and over again. Wiest in his translation, Kenneth Wiest said, she kissed his feet tenderly again and again. And another translation said, smothered his feet with kisses.

Just imagine it. Simon now, he's watching her do this. Then she takes this alabaster vial and pours this perfume on his feet and fills, of course, the place with odor.

You've got to feel for Simon before we get too critical on him. He didn't have a clue what was going on in her heart. All he knew was what he could see with these eyes.

He knew her reputation. He was embarrassed. He was a little bit angry.

He was annoyed that she would come in uninvited, shocked at what she was doing, amazed that Jesus responds to him. Verse 39, Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, If this man were a prophet, he would know who and what sort of a woman this is who's touching him. She is a sinner.

No, Simon. She was a sinner. That's the part he couldn't see.

She is not a sinner. The reality is, she is a blood-washed saint as pure as the driven snow. She came in with a heart that was forgiven and pure.

But he didn't know that. He didn't know what happened in her life. He didn't have a clue that she came to vent her gratitude and her love for someone who had forgiven her such a death.

And the point is this, that if I'm critical, or rather, if I haven't entered into my own salvation and know what I've been forgiven of, it will be very easy to look at someone else and point the finger and just say, He is a sinner. She is a sinner. And become very, very critical.

So he was blind as to this woman. And like a true Pharisee, I suppose, he was judging things by outward appearance. It was outrageous to him that an immoral woman, uninvited at dinner time, would come in and then perform what he would consider at least to be some immodest gestures toward the Lord Jesus.

So he was blind. He judged her motives. And he was very critical.

He was also blind to the Lord Jesus. Verse 39 again. Verse 39, note this.

Verse 39 tells us what Simon was thinking. It does not tell us what he said. He didn't say this.

He just thought it. He thought to himself, if this man were a prophet, he'd know what kind of woman this was. So he looked at this woman and then he looked at Jesus and she's kissing his feet and he doesn't even pull up his legs.

He doesn't even try to get away. He just leaves. He said, if he were a prophet.

A prophet has discernment and Jesus does not have discernment. Now remember, he's just thinking this. He didn't say a word.

I love this because verse 40, Jesus answered and said. Answered what? He didn't ask anything. He didn't say a word.

I'll tell you what he answered. He answered his thoughts. If he were a prophet, he'd see inside that woman.

Simon, he's a prophet. He sees inside your head. He knows what you're thinking.

And he begins then to read his mind because he is a prophet. But Simon was blind to the fact that this woman had a real work of grace done in her heart. He was blind to who Jesus was.

Now don't forget, I take it that he's a disciple and that he's invited Jesus to serve him this meal. But even though he's invited him that way and he is in a sense serving him, Jesus points out that Simon, you're lacking love. You're really cold toward me.

Jesus contrasted the treatment that he received from Simon with the treatment he had just received from this forgiven sinner. Now look at verse 44 please. Turning toward the woman.

I'm so glad he looked her in the eye when he talked to Simon. 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.

She's wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but she, since the time I came in, has not ceased to kiss my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she anointed my feet with perfume.

That must have blessed her out of her sock to hear him talk to Simon and look at her. Jesus used the social cordials of the day to show Simon how cold his heart was. Yes, you're forgiven.

Yes, you're a believer. Yes, you've served me. Yes, you've showed me out.

You've invited me to your home. You've prepared me a meal. But Simon, this is as basic as you can get, the elemental courtesy.

In that day, you come to someone's house, they offer you water for your feet. They wore sandals and they got all the dust. And it was just a courtesy.

Everybody did it. That was the foot washing. And not only that, but the conventional politeness, the kiss of welcome.

You've seen them with the way they welcome one another. And we read in the Bible, greet one another with a holy kiss. He didn't even give that to Jesus.

And then, in those days, the sun would crack your skin. And so they would have oil. They would anoint with oil.

It was a courtesy. That was more friendship. Not everybody anointed with oil, but if you were friendly towards someone, when they came in, you would give them the oil for their head.

And that was the feet, the head, and the kiss. He didn't even meet those. And Jesus contrasted that.

He said, you gave me no water for my feet. That's just elemental courtesy. Look at the water she's given me.

That has come from the fountain of her heart. You didn't even give me the welcome kiss. She's been kissing my feet since the time I walked in here.

You didn't even give me oil for my head. She has taken this vial, alabaster box of perfume, and she's poured it on me. And so he contrasted her love.

He said, Simon, I don't want a meal. I want your heart. She has love.

And she has it because she's entered in to her redemption. She is a sinner. No, she was a sinner.

She's not anymore. Now she's a dear Christian. If you're a prophet, oh, you don't see me.

I am a prophet. I'm your servant. Yeah, but you don't love me.

You haven't even met the basics of relationship with me. He was also blind toward himself. Implied in verse 39, if he were a prophet, implied in that is, he would see things as clearly as I see them.

There's some pride here in Simon. There's no question about that. Simon was a Pharisee.

He was self-righteous. Wouldn't you expect Simon's heart to be profoundly moved by this woman's tears? That should have been a dead giveaway that she wasn't trying to be impure or live up to her reputation. This woman is weeping.

Now, I know different people have different emotional... I know with my own self, I'm very emotional. If the leaves fall off the trees, that's an occasion for weeping. I just... I'm just very emotional.

But especially, if I'm in a place and someone is crying, that always touches me when someone's crying. And especially, if it's a work of grace. If they're crying because Jesus did something for them.

Why does that touch my heart? This guy is cold. And maybe because his party was busted up, or maybe because he's looking bad, especially now after the parable. Even though Jesus called him a debtor, Jesus made this difference.

I know it's denarii, but I'll use dollars. The point is, she was a \$500 sinner, and he was a \$50 sinner. And in his mind, he was saying, he was comparing his debt with her debt, and I'm not like that.

And I'm not a \$500 sinner. I might be a \$50 sinner, but I'm not a \$500 sinner. But the point was, verse 42, both of them were unable to pay.

And he was as much bankrupt as she was. And he was as insolvent as she. And that's the point.

It doesn't matter if you owe \$500 or if you owe \$50, if you can't pay. And he did not understand that they were on level ground as far as the creditor was concerned. He was looking at it, she's so bad, I've never

done that.

And there was this pride in his heart. So he didn't understand her, he didn't understand Jesus, he didn't understand himself, he didn't understand his debt. And because he hadn't entered into his own salvation, he was critical toward other people who had sinned, he was critical of the Lord Jesus and was not intimate, he was cold toward him, and he was proud toward himself and ignorant toward his debt.

Now look for a moment at the \$500 sinner, this dear woman who found forgiveness. I already told you that she came in to say thank you, not to be forgiven. She knew how great a debt had been canceled for her.

And that's what the tears and the hair and the perfume and the kissing was all about. Isn't it wonderful to realize only two times in the Bible, as far as the record goes, now I know Mary kissed her son, there's no doubt about that, and others the courtesy kiss and so on. But as far as the record goes, only two times did human lips ever touch the body of Christ.

One is this woman, and what's the other one? Judas. Isn't that an amazing thing? The only other time is Judas who kissed him in betrayal. I have no doubt that this woman was just so filled to the brim that her kissing was an evidence of verse 50, your faith saved you.

Not your love, it was your faith. Now one thing I love about this woman is her blessed audacity. And what I mean by that is she just didn't care much about what was politically correct and about human opinion and so on.

Her love was so bold and so spontaneous. She did cross the threshold of wealth. She did cross the threshold of religion.

She didn't care what people said or thought about her. All she had in her mind was the object of her forgiveness, and she wanted to come and say thank you. She was forgiven much, and her faith made her very, very bold.

I told you this idea of letting down the hair has the idea of intimacy connected with it. And I know this was spontaneous, but this woman was so thankful for what she had received. And in contrast to Simon the first, this is not duty.

This is not obligation. There's no command. She is just being spontaneous, and she loves the Lord, and she's illustrating it with this act of love.

I also believe that there was a picture here of a real surrender. In verse 37, this alabaster box, I don't know if you've ever studied the cultural background of some of these Bible customs, but they had a dowry in those days. It went both ways.

When a man and woman were going to get married, the man had to pay a dowry to the father or the brothers of the bride, but the woman also was saving a dowry and brought it into the marriage with her. For example, you remember Rebecca brought slaves. So did Leah.

And this was part of the dowry. She brought that into the marriage. Caleb gave his daughters the upper and the lower springs that bring into the marriage and so on.

It's believed that for single women, they would collect all their wealth in that alabaster box. That was their dowry. And they would just turn it into the perfume.

And if that's the case, and it seems to be, when this woman poured out that alabaster box, she poured out her future. That was her dowry. That was the possibility of her getting married.

And she just poured that out in love. And even if you don't accept that as part of the cultural background, even if that perfume was a relic of her history and was used as it would be to make herself attractive for other men, even then she just poured it all out on Jesus. And so you just see this woman in love and intimacy and heart and just pouring out everything in surrender.

And nothing's going to stop her. And the boldness that she had and so on. Everything was spontaneous, alive, sincere.

Now as we prepare to wrap it up, let me look for a moment at the Lord Jesus. We saw Simon and he's sort of blind. We see this woman and she's just pouring out her heart.

Our Lord Jesus is also pictured here. If you look at Him in relation to her, I think it's very precious that He accepted her love. And as I said, He didn't recoil when she started kissing His feet.

He didn't pull back His legs. It's almost unimaginable to think that someone wouldn't just automatically do that. And just sort of recoil just at the plate or at the dinner table.

You would just think that automatically He would do that. But He deliberately didn't do that. Her weeping, her kissing, her lavishing of oil, He understood her heart.

Do you realize this? If you love the Lord, it is impossible to embarrass Him. I think that is so tremendous. It's not possible to embarrass the Lord with your love.

He never refuses your love or my love. In the other anointing, this is bad enough on the feet, but when Mary anointed Him, she took the whole alabaster box and poured it over His head. And the Bible says the perfume filled the whole plate.

If you loved me and came to my house and poured perfume all over my head, I'd smile and turn red and thank you. And as soon as you left, I'd hit the showers. But Jesus didn't hit the showers.

He wore it proudly. And when they said, why this waste? He stuck up for her. And He said, it's love and this will be every place the gospels preached.

There's a good chance because that one was just before the crucifixion. There's a good chance He took that aroma to the cross with Him. Oh, it's a precious thing.

And Jesus is never embarrassed. I used to think when I read this story that oh, this goes a little bit against the heart of some. There are those who love the Lord Jesus with all their hearts, all their souls, all their minds, all their strength, but they're not emotional.

And this idea of crying and pouring out this kind of love, that's not their expression of thanksgiving. Jesus isn't saying, I want your kisses, I want your tears, I want you emotional, and if you really were forgiven, you'd be emotional. He's not saying that.

He's saying, I want your heart. How you express a thankful heart may not be in tears. How I express a thankful heart may not be in an emotional display and exuberance of joy.

It may not be that way. And He's not saying, I want your kisses, I want your tears. He's saying, I want your heart.

Be creative in your thanksgiving. Just give Him your heart because that's what He's looking for. Don't try to imitate this woman.

I used to do that. And I think, well, if I'm going to really love the Lord, I'm going to have to do what this woman did. No.

He's going to accept whatever I offer in reality. And He'll not be embarrassed. Don't worry about what other people think.

You love Jesus, say thank you. And just come to Him and say it that way. And then the second thing is our Lord Jesus defended her.

I think that's a very precious thing as well. That we don't have to defend ourselves. If you do something just for Jesus, if you do something just for the Lord, you don't have to try to defend it.

He'll look you in the eye while He deals with them. He'll look me in the eye while He deals with them. You don't have to explain or try to defend yourself.

Jesus will do that for you. And then notice verse 50. At first this bothered me.

Jesus said, Go in peace. And I would think the thing this woman needed is not go, but stay. Just stick close to Me.

And stick around until I ground you thoroughly in the truth. Don't go back out into that. And you're misunderstood out there.

Actually, in the Greek, it says go. And what He was saying is your real testimony now is out there. And you can go back out there, but this time into peace.

And her conscience, of course, was settled because she had been forgiven. So we look at Jesus and He is accepting our love and defending us and sending us out in peace. That's if we're the woman.

But what if we're Simon? What if we're not the woman? What if we haven't entered in to the wonder of our salvation? He's so tender with Simon. This is so precious. He said, Simon, I have something to say to you.

And so He begins to talk to Simon as well. And He explains the issues to Simon. The reason you're critical toward others.

The reason you're cold toward Me. The reason you're deceived toward yourself. You haven't seen how much you've been forgiven.

I love the Gospel and I hope through the years you've sensed that I love the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But I think there is a soft Gospel. And I think it hurts Christians.

And the soft Gospel is this. God loves you. God has a plan for your life.

He wants to come into your life and be your friend. And He'll forgive you no matter how many times you sin. Is that true? Oh my, that's true.

Believe that with all your heart. Pull out the thigh. But that's not the full Gospel.

Here's the rest of it. God is holy. And God is just.

And sin must be punished. And the Lord Jesus had to go to the cross to die for your sins. Whether you're a \$50 sinner or a \$500 sinner, you're a debtor.

And we deserved everlasting punishment and hell. That's the rest. And if we could see what was done on the cross, if we could see how much we owed, how impossible it was for us to pay, then know He loves us, has a plan for our life, wants to be our friend, live in our hearts, and forgive us no matter how many times we sin.

The more we enter in to how much we've been forgiven, the more we will not be critic. The more we enter in to how much we've been forgiven, the more our hearts will not be cold toward the Lord Jesus Christ. The more we enter in to how much we owed, the more we will not become very proud.

We'll be awfully humble when we realize what we have been forgiven. And so the way to have great love is to have great forgiveness. And the way to have great forgiveness, and Jesus does not let Simon off the hook.

He says, Simon, I have something to say to you. And then here's what He says secondly. He not only says, you need to enter in to your forgiveness.

Here's the second thing He says. Simon, thank you for the meal, but I have missed your fellowship. Even the most basic things I've missed.

He tells Simon that he wants relationship, not service. That he wants the water, the tears, the ointment. He wants the most basic thing, union with Him.

And so this story is such a marvelous story. It shows us what it means to be forgiven. It shows us our Lord Jesus, how tender He is.

If you're the woman, He'll accept your service. He'll defend you. If you're the woman, He'll have that relationship with you.

If you're Simon, I have this to say to you. Know how much you've been forgiven. And know that I miss your fellowship, and your union, and your intimacy.

And so our Lord Jesus again, as always, He just crowns the whole story with His great mercy. Well, we'll close there. Comments or questions? That is a fact, that they did collect tears.

I don't know if she used the tear, but they did have such a thing. I had not connected that with this story. I know that is a fact.

So he also has. So I don't know. That's interesting.

But thank you for that. What do they call it? Lapidary? Other comments or questions? But what looks extravagant to others, to the heart that's touched by His grace? Our Father, we thank you that every one of us, though on the level of earth, yet we all stand before you as debtors. And we all can't pay.

And you've graciously forgiven us. Oh, teach us what it means to be. And then create out of that knowledge a great love for you and for others.

Thank you that you're doing it now and you're going to continue to do it.

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