

(22) A Sinful Woman Anoints Jesus (Lk. 7:36-50)

1. The Affair (Lk. 7:36). A dinner party presents an opportunity for evangelism. This is the first of three meal invitations that brings Jesus into conflict with Pharisees (Lk. 7:36-50; 11:37-54; 14:1-24).

Christ had been invited by a Pharisee to have dinner at his home, but the host's attitude was condescending. As the guests ate the meal a woman whose sinful life was well known entered the dining area. This would not have been unusual in a culture in which hospitality was considered a virtue, especially if the guest were considered inferior to the host. For such an occasion as this a Pharisee would set the table in an open place, perhaps in the courtyard. The host would leave open the front gate so that passers-by might not only observe the hospitality of the host, but even enter the courtyard to view the food that the host had provided for the guests. The more sumptuous the provision of the Pharisee, the more honor that would be heaped on that one as a host.

Thus the custom of that day made it possible for this sinful woman to come into the place where Christ was reclining at the meal. However, this woman did not come to observe but to pay homage to the Lord. She brought with her an alabaster jar of perfume. This very costly ointment possibly was purchased with her ill-gotten gains. The woman showed the attitude of her heart toward Christ by standing at His feet, which He would have extended away from the table in His reclining position. The woman began to bathe His feet with her tears. This was her way of telling Christ that she had repented. She was acknowledging her sinfulness and confessing her need of forgiveness from sin. Since the Messiah was the One who was to put away sin (Isa. 53:6; Zech. 13:1), the woman's tears not only were a sign of her sinfulness but of her faith in Christ as the Messiah. She had come seeking His forgiveness. After wetting His feet with the abundance of her tears, she used her hair as a towel and dried His feet. Then she showed her affection for Christ by kissing His feet. This suggests that she was confident that she already had received His forgiveness. She showed her adoration for His person by pouring perfume from the alabaster jar on His feet.

Pentecost, J. D. (1998). *The parables of Jesus : Lessons in life from the Master Teacher*.

2. The Actors.
 - a. Simon the Pharisee. One of nine NT Simons. Not elsewhere mentioned. No firm information apart from this text. According to Edersheim "possibly the most common Jewish name of this time."
 - b. A woman in the city who was a sinner. See the information in [GM10] The Call of Matthew for the term "sinner."
3. The Anointed (Lk. 7:37-38).
 - a. The sinner learned where the savior could be found.
 - b. The sinner came to the savior with a costly gift—correctly prioritizing earthly and heavenly values.
 - c. The sinner observed an opportunity for service to the savior.
 - d. Wuest's translation:

Now a certain one of the Pharisees was asking Him to dine with him. And having come into the home of the Pharisee, He reclined at the dinner table. And behold, there was a woman of the city who was in character a sinner stained with vice, and having come to know that He was taking dinner in the home of the Pharisee, having brought an alabaster cruse of a fragrant ointment, she stood behind Him beside His feet, weeping audibly. With her tears falling like rain she began to be wetting His feet, and she dried them with the hairs of her head. And she kissed His feet tenderly again and again, and began applying the fragrant ointment.

4. The Annoyed (Lk. 7:39).
 - a. Simon the Pharisee engages in a faulty logic application of a second-class conditional statement.
 - b. If this man were a prophet—assumes the condition to be untrue.
 - c. He “would know” completes the assumption that the conditional statement is second-class (untrue).
 - 1) Who.
 - 2) What sort of woman. ποταπός ποταπος ^{#4217}_{7x} interrogative reference to class or kind, *of what sort or kind?* (Matt. 8:27; Mk. 13:1_{x2}; Lk. 1:29; 7:39; 2nd Pet. 3:11; 1st Jn. 3:1).
 - d. The faulty logic is that having a sinner touching you is unthinkable. ἅπτω haptō ^{#680}_{39x} *to touch, cling to.*
 - 1) Mosaic Law proscribed touching a, b, & c as despoiling ceremonial cleanness (Lev. 5:2,3; 15:2ff.).
 - 2) Pharisaic legalism added d through z and then some as despoiling Pharisaical cleanness.
 - 3) There is a legitimate principle of separation in the Old Testament (Num. 16:21,26; 19:11,16; Isa. 52:11; Dan. 1:8) and the New Testament (2nd Cor. 6:17), but this principle can be abused by false legalistic teaching (Col. 2:21; Rom. 14:14).
 - e. Simon concluded that Jesus couldn't be a prophet because He apparently didn't know the woman's heart. Jesus' message though makes it very clear that He thoroughly knows Simon's heart!
5. The Analogy (Lk. 7:40-47).
 - a. In a striking parallel to Nathan the Prophet in convicting King David (2nd Sam. 12:1-12), Jesus presents Simon with a parable.
 - b. Simon the Pharisee pronounces his own evaluation.
6. The Absolution (Lk. 7:48-50).
 - a. The love that the woman demonstrated was evidence of the faith she had already placed in Christ.
 - b. The Lord's forgiveness of sins is one of the clearest implicit statements of Deity in the Gospels.
7. The Application.
 - a. [Scofield](#)'s note on justification by works and justification by faith.
 - b. [Edersheim](#)'s exposition.
 - c. [McGee](#)'s exposition.