

A SINFUL WOMAN IS FORGIVEN



Imagine sitting in your own home with a very important guest and then seeing a woman, known for her sin, walk in and stand behind the guest. Furthermore, the woman is crying, interrupting that valuable conversation. In biblical times, it was common for people to arrive at any party without a personal invitation, but Simon the Pharisee was not at all pleased with this development (Luke 7.36-50).

Moreover, imagine the effect that Christ's words to the woman at the end of the story had on Simon: "*Your sins are forgiven*" (Luke 7.48 NKJV). What happened? Follow the story with me.

Note the description of her: "*A woman in the city, which was a sinner*" (v. 37 KJV). It doesn't describe her sin itself, but when Simon thinks with disdain in his heart that a prophet "*would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him*" (v. 39 NKJV), we are led to believe that she was a prostitute. Simon, being a Pharisee, was one of the most respected and knowledgeable men of the law of Moses.

The woman's desire was not to draw attention to herself, but to be close to the Lord Jesus Christ. Most likely, she saw in Him the only source of hope

in her life, the only Person who could give her what she needed most: the forgiveness of her sins.

She had obviously made the decision to go where Christ was, because she came prepared with an alabaster jar of perfume. She was surely aware that others would despise her, but she didn't care; she just wanted to see the Lord Jesus.

Christ, knowing what was in her heart and what was in Simon's heart, said to the Pharisee, "*Simon, I have something to say to you*" (v. 40 NKJV), and continued with the parable of the two debtors. It's not difficult to understand what Christ told him, and Simon grasped it well. One man owed 50 denarii and the other 500. (A denarius was a laborer's daily wage.) Both were forgiven, but Christ asks the question: "*Which of them will love him more?*" (v. 42 NKJV). The man who owed 50 denarii may not have seen his situation as urgent, but the other man was well aware that he would never be able to pay his debt.

Christ shows the difference between Simon and the sinful woman, and it is clearly seen in the way that each treated Him. Simon invited Him, but gave Him neither water for His feet, nor a kiss, nor oil for His head. The woman came

and washed His feet with tears, kissed His feet continually, and anointed them with perfume.

Note very carefully that she was not forgiven because of her actions, but through her faith. Christ declares to her: *"Your sins are forgiven"* (v. 48 NKJV). Hearing this, those at the table say, *"Who is this who even forgives sins?"*, He tells her, *"Your faith has saved you. Go in peace"* (vv 49-50 NKJV).

Forgiveness brings peace, and both are divine gifts. Have you received them?

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