

Jesus Christ's Encounter with a Sinful Woman

Luke 19:10 [NIV] *“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”*

Jesus Christ came to earth to save those who are “lost”.

What is meant by this word “lost”.

The Greek word signifies utter destruction, the loss of eternal life, the loss of any reward at the end of this physical life and alienation from our Creator God.

Romans 3:23 [NIV] *“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,”*

All of us have sinned and lost the opportunity to be glorified by God by receiving eternal life.

Romans 6:23 [NIV] *“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

Without forgiveness we can only receive eternal death for our efforts.

John 14:6 [NIV] *“Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me.”*

Following Jesus Christ is the way to eternal life; any other direction gets us “lost”.

In a recorded event of Jesus Christ's life, we are shown true repentance [a change of direction in our life] and what our response to Christ's forgiveness should be.

Luke 7:36 [NIV] *“Now one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, so he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table.”*

Jesus was an invited guest at this house of Simon the Pharisee.

This invitation was unusual as most of the time the Pharisees were at odds with Jesus.

Most likely Simon was testing Jesus to find some fault or accusation against him.

Many people today approach Jesus Christ in this way, as they have done through the centuries.

Note: In the east the custom was to lie down on bedded sofas and recline on one arm while eating with the free hand at a very low table, with your head towards the table and your legs and feet stretched out behind you as if lying down.

Luke 7:37-38 [NIV] *“When a woman who had lived a sinful life in that town learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster jar of perfume, and as she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.”*

To enter the Pharisee's home, this woman who was most likely a prostitute, must have known Jesus' offer of forgiveness and possibly the Pharisee Simon also, in different circumstances.

What is significant about the three things that this woman did for Jesus?

She was fulfilling what Simon as the host should have done for his guest Jesus Christ.

Wash the guest's feet [she with her tears] after walking the dusty road in open sandals.

Some perfume or sweet smelling incense to give a congenial atmosphere [she did this].

Welcome his guest with a customary kiss of friendship and wellbeing [she did this constantly to Jesus' feet].

The fact she loosed her hair in public to dry Jesus' feet showed how she had forgotten everyone except Jesus.

This whole account demonstrates a contrast between two attitudes of mind and heart.

In reality this account is about repentance and faith.

These are the human conditions that must be met if salvation from the penalty of our sin is to take effect.

Simon was unconscious of any need.

His impression of himself was that he was a good law-abiding man in the sight of other people and God.

Simon therefore felt **no** gratitude or love towards Jesus Christ, his potential Saviour, and therefore received **no** forgiveness.

The woman was conscious of nothing but her need for forgiveness and was therefore overwhelmed with love for Jesus Christ who could supply that forgiveness, and therefore she received it.

The one thing that shuts a person off from God is self-sufficiency.

Revelation 3:14-18 [NIV] *“To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation. I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I am about to spit you out of my mouth. **You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’ But you do not realise that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.** I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so that you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so that you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so that you can see.”*

Here were a group of people, claiming to be Christians, but had the same attitude as Simon the Pharisee and were blind to their need of forgiveness from Jesus Christ.

Revelation 3:19-20 [NIV] *“Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent. **Here I am! I stand at the door and knock.** If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.”*

It is true to say that the greatest of sins is to be unconscious of any sins.

But the sense of need will open the door to forgiveness of God, because God is love, and love's greatest glory is to be needed.

Luke 7:39 [NIV] *“When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is, that she is a sinner.”*

Simon was relying on his own idea of righteousness **not** the true righteousness from God that came as a result of faith in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins.

Romans 4:3, 23-25 [NIV] *“What does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” ... “The words “it was credited to him” were written not for him alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness, for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.”*

This is the **only** way to true righteousness and freedom from the death penalty that we, because of our sins, justly deserve from our Creator God.

It is all too easy for people to fall into Simon’s kind of thinking.

Luke 7:40 [NIV] *“Jesus answered him, “Simon, I have something to tell you.” “Tell me, teacher,” he said.”*

Jesus then used this repentant sinful woman as an example and warning for Simon and any of us who have the same attitude as he had of self-sufficiency.

Luke 7:41-50 [NIV] *“Two men owed money to a certain money-lender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he cancelled the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?” Simon replied, “I suppose the one who had the bigger debt cancelled.” “You have judged correctly,” Jesus said. Then he turned towards the woman and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven, for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little.” **Then Jesus said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.”** The other guests began to say among themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?” Jesus said to the woman, **“Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”***

If we want forgiveness and peace of mind we should follow this sinful woman’s example and constantly express our thankfulness and love to Jesus Christ our Saviour.