

## People Jesus Met, part 13 – The Prostitute – (Loving Jesus Much)

When Jesus was asked what is the greatest thing a human can do in God's sight - - He had no trouble with the answer.

*"Now one of the rabbis invited Jesus to have dinner with him." Luke 7:36a*

*"So Jesus went to the rabbi's house and was reclining at the table when a woman who had lived a sinful life in that town learned that Jesus was there." Luke 7:36b*

*"She had lived a sinful life" = she was a prostitute*

*"She brought an alabaster jar of perfume and stood behind Jesus weeping. Then she began to wet his feet with her tears and she wiped them with her hair and poured the perfume on them." Luke 7:37, 38*

*"When the rabbi who had invited Jesus saw this, he said, 'If this man were truly a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what sort of woman she is – that she is a sinner!'" Luke 7:39*

He was able to say: *"She is a sinner."*  
But he was not able to say: *"I am a sinner."*

*"Then Jesus said, 'Simon, I have something to say to you.' And Simon replied, 'Say it, Teacher.'" Luke 7:40*

*"Two men both owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him 500 denarii (about \$165,000 in today's money) while the other man owed him 50 denarii (\$16,000)." Luke 7:41*

*"Neither of them had the money to pay the moneylender back, so he graciously forgave the debt of both men." Luke 7:42a*

*"So,' Jesus asked the rabbi, 'which one of these men do you think will love the moneylender more?'" Luke 7:42b*

*"Simon replied, 'I suppose it would be the one who had the bigger debt forgiven.'" Luke 7:43a*

*"Jesus said to him, 'You have judged correctly.'" Luke 7:43b*

Who's Who in this parable:

- "Moneylender" = God
- "2 debtors" = the prostitute and Rabbi Simon

Point: The more a person realizes (1) how big a "sin debt" they owe God and (2) how utterly bankrupt they are to pay it - - the more that person loves God when He graciously forgives them. The tragic thing here is that Rabbi Simon owed God just as big a "sin debt" as this prostitute – but in his spiritual arrogance he couldn't see it!

*"Then Jesus turned to the woman and said to Simon, 'Do you see this woman' I entered your house and you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet them with her tears and washed them with her hair.'" Luke 7:44*

*"You gave me no kiss at all, but she, from the time I came in, has not ceased kissing my feet." Luke 7:45*

*"You did not even anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with perfume." Luke 7:46*

*"Therefore, I tell you – her many sins have been forgiven and this is why she loves much. But he who has been forgiven little, loves little." Luke 7:47*

To "activate" God's forgiveness:

#1 – We have realize we are "sinners"

#2 – We have to realize that we owe God a "sin debt" we can never repay

#3 – We have to look to God for undeserved mercy as our only hope of forgiveness

*"Now a man in Bethany, the village of Mary and Martha, named Lazarus was sick." John 11:1*

*"This Mary, whose brother Lazarus lay sick, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped His feet with her hair." John 11:2*

The Bible tells us that this prostitute in Luke 7 was none other than Mary, Lazarus' sister.

This is important because of the amazing transformation that the Lord Jesus performed on this woman's life!

*"... many women who ministered to Jesus ..."* Matthew 27:55

According to church tradition - - after the resurrection of Jesus - - Mary became a missionary, living in Cyprus and traveling all over the eastern Mediterranean preaching the Gospel.

This is what the Lord Jesus does with every human life He takes over: He transforms us from the inside out.

*"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, they become a new creature: old things pass away; all things become new!" 2 Corinthians 5:17*

So often our world sees people through the eyes of Rabbi Simon.  
But God always sees people through the eyes of 2 Corinthians 5:17.

God doesn't care how we look when He gets us - - because He's not going to leave us the way He found us!

### **The Touch of the Master's Hand by Myra Brooks Welch**

*T'was battered and scarred and the auctioneer*

*Thought it scarcely worth his while,*

*To waste his time on the old violin,*

*But he held it up with a smile.*

*"What am I bid, good folks?" he cried,*

*"Who'll start the bidding for me?"*

*A dollar, a dollar – now two, only two –*

*Two dollars, and who'll make it three?"*

*"Three dollars once, three dollars twice –*

*Going for three" – but no!*

*From the back of the room, a gray haired man*

*Came forward and picked up the bow;*

*Then wiping the dust from the old violin  
And tightening all of the strings  
He played a melody pure and sweet;  
As sweet as an angel sings.*

*The music ceased, and the auctioneer,  
With a voice that was quiet and low,  
Said: 'What now am I bid for this old violin?'  
And he held it up with the bow.*

*"A thousand dollars – and who'll make it two?  
Two thousand and who'll make it three?  
Three thousand once, three thousand twice –  
And going and gone!" said he.*

*The people cheered, but some of them cried:  
"We do not quite understand –  
What changed its worth?" And the man replied,  
"T'was the touch of the master's hand!"*

*And many a person with life out of tune,  
Who's been battered and torn by sin,  
Is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd,  
Much like this old violin.*

*But the Master comes, and the foolish crowd  
Can never quite understand;  
The worth of a soul and the change that is wrought  
By the touch of the Master's hand.*

*"I may not be all I ought to be -- but by the grace of God -- I'm not what I used to be!"*

*So What?*

*"Here in Luke 7, what was it about this prostitute that so impressed the Lord Jesus?"*

*What impressed Jesus so much about this woman is how much she loved Him!*

*When a guest entered your home in ancient Israel, it was customary to offer him water to wash his feet.  
But to do this for someone was considered the most humiliating of tasks.*

*Jesus is not impressed by how much we do for Him, nearly as much as by how much we love Him!*

*"Then an expert in the Old Testament Law asked Jesus, 'Teacher, what is the greatest commandment of the Law?'" Matthew 22:36*

*"Jesus replied, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'" Matthew 22:37*

*"This is the first and greatest commandment." Matthew 22:38*

*"Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God, the LORD is one." Deuteronomy 6:4*

*"And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might."  
Deuteronomy 6:5*

*"You shall have no other gods beside Me . . . for I am a jealous God." Deuteronomy 5:7, 9*

*This tells us that God is a "personal Being," not some inanimate, cosmic force.*

*"How much do I really love Jesus Christ?"*

*#1 - When you love someone, you yearn to be with them*

*#2 - When you love someone, you want to please them*

*"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments." John 14:15*

*#3 - When you love someone, you are loyal to them*

*"For I am prepared not only to be imprisoned, but also to die for the name of the Lord Jesus." Acts 21:13*

*#4 - When you love someone, you are anxious to tell other people about them*

*"I will extol the LORD at all times - His praise will always be on my lips." Psalm 34:1*

*#5 - When you love someone, that person becomes the central focus of your life*

*As His children in Jesus Christ, God doesn't love us because we love Him as we should - - He loves us for no good reason at all and He always will!*

*"How can we grow in our love for Jesus Christ?"*

*#1 - - Ask God to show you how sinful you really are*

*"Search me, O God, and know my heart. Try me and know my anxious thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me . . ." Psalm 139:23, 24a*

*"The purpose of God in showing us the evil of our own hearts is to make us prize more highly the unconditional love of Jesus." John Newton*

*#2 - - Get to know God better*

*"Familiarity breeds contempt."*

*The closer we get to God - - the more we can't help but love Him.*