

**Sermon Title- Big HOPE and Big CHALLENGE**

**Sermon Synopsis-** God's love for us (grace & forgiveness) fuels our love for him

**Themes-** Love, Forgiveness, Confession

<sup>36</sup> One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at table. <sup>37</sup> And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, <sup>38</sup> and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment. <sup>39</sup> Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner."

<sup>40</sup> And Jesus answering said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he answered, "Say it, Teacher." <sup>41</sup> "A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. <sup>42</sup> When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?" <sup>43</sup> Simon answered, "The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt." And he said to him, "You have judged rightly."

<sup>44</sup> Then 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, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. <sup>45</sup> You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. <sup>46</sup> You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. <sup>47</sup> Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little."<sup>48</sup> And he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." <sup>49</sup> Then those who were at table with him began to say among<sup>[a]</sup> themselves, "Who is this, who even forgives sins?" <sup>50</sup> And he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

- **Vs 36- *One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table***
  - **The Host-** Influential Religious sect of Jesus's day, Separated ones", Keepers of the law, Practiced righteousness "externally", Added tradition/rules to the law
  - "Religious" establishment/conservatives.....***why did he invite?***
  - Relationship to Jesus- skeptical/critical, led to adversarial
    - Luke 6:6-7- *so that they might find a reason to accuse him.* Luke 6:10-11- *filled with fury and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.* Luke 7:30- *rejected the purpose of God for themselves*
  - **The Setting-** Might have been on the Sabbath, afternoon meal after the teaching
  - Customary to entertain traveling/guest Teachers
  - A banquet, time of fellowship, food, drink, conversation, discussion, debate
  - Open Courtyard setting, Towns people would come to observe and be entertained, The poor to get scraps from the table
    - Low to the ground, no chairs but lounges w/ pillows
    - Guests heads faced the table w/ feet as far away as possible
- **Vs 37-38 *And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that He was reclining at table in the Pharisees house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment.***
  - Behold- Shocked, surprised, taken back, show stopper- she shouldn't be there
  - Labeled a sinner, known for this, recognized for this, judged by this
  - a prostitute, somehow she knew about Jesus's meal plans & pursued him
  - Brought an Alabaster flask of ointment- soft stone/carved
    - Common in these days- on a necklace, Expensive, only used one time
  - Standing in the background, Jesus's head in & feet out, tears overflowing, gushing so much as to wet his dirty feet, No towel to dry, uses hair
  - Feet considered to dirtiest part of the body, dust, sand, dirt, mud, open sandals
  - Hair is a woman's glory (pride & joy)- 1 Corinthians 11:15
    - Using it to dry dirty feet
  - Kissing his feet, Sign of worship, reverence
  - Might not have been the focus of the gathering but now it is getting the attention
  - Her response is so radical, so lavish, and so extravagant, all in worship (heart, mind, soul, and strength).....***when was the last time you went ALL IN like that? Bold, risky?***

- Vs 39- *Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, “if this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner.”*
  - Thinking to himself- Pharisee- judging (woman and Jesus), Skeptical of who Jesus was. Self-righteous, judgmental, Looking out vs looking in (Log in eye in Chapter 6)
- Vs 40- *And Jesus answering said to him, “Simon, I have something to say to you.” And he answered, Say it, Teacher.”*
  - Jesus knows his thoughts, Jesus is active in his thought life.....calling him out? Us?
- Vs 41-43- *“A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty.”<sup>42</sup> When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?”<sup>43</sup> Simon answered, “The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt.” And he said to him, “You have judged rightly.”*
  - 500 Denarii & 50 Denarii.....Denarii = silver coin = a day’s wage
  - Both unable to pay, Wiped out both debts
  - Set up question? In response to Simon’s thoughts
- Vs 44- 46- *Then 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, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair.”<sup>45</sup> You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet.<sup>46</sup> you did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment.*
  - Turned to the woman but spoke to Simon
    - No water- tears and hair, No Kiss- continuous kissing his feet
    - No head anointing- anointed feet with expensive perfume
  - Such a stark contrast....her radical/extravagant love vs his disrespect
  - Calling him out in his own house, Not even the basic acts of hospitality in their day
  - *He invited Jesus in, but then ignored him....do we do that?*
- Vs 47- *Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for (hence) she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little.”*
  - HOPE for us all.....Her sins are forgiven THEREFORE she loved much
    - Forgiveness proceeds the love
  - BUT.....he who is forgiven little, loves little...*who is Jesus talking about?*
- Vs 48-50- *And he said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.”<sup>49</sup> Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, “Who is this, who even forgives sins?”<sup>50</sup> And he said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”*
  - Wants to make it clear to all who He is- the forgiver of sins
  - It’s about her faith in Jesus....we all have HOPE...she was the worst of sinners

**Application-** What are we to take from this dinner party interaction between Jesus and the Woman & the Pharisee?

- **The contrast** drawn between the Woman and Simon the Pharisee is dramatic and is a powerful picture of HOPE but I also see a CHALLENGE in there
  - She is **known for her sinfulness**, recognized for that, labeled by her actions
    - Can you relate to that?
      - Perhaps you feel burdened by labels of things from your past or things you are struggling with now? (there is **hope** in this story for you)
  - He is **known for his law keeping**, religiosity, outward appearances are key
    - Can you relate to that?
      - Perhaps you can get so focused on the outward appearances of things, perceptions that you are self-righteous but don't see the log in your own eye? (there is a **challenge** in this story for you)
- The **contrast in the condition of their hearts** motivates totally different responses to Jesus at this dinner
  - She is so overwhelmed by the grace Jesus has shown her that her love for him is extravagant, over the top- she knows she was a sinner needing forgiveness
  - His lack of awareness of his own sinfulness and need for forgiveness results in him dishonoring his invited guest, Simon didn't sense a great need for Jesus
- **What is the current condition of your own heart?**
  - Are you keenly aware of your own sinfulness and need for forgiveness or are you unaware & numbed to this like Simon?
  - Do you see yourself more like the sold out Woman or the self-righteous Pharisee?
  - Can you relate to the outrageous love expressed by the Woman as a response to the grace she has received (forgiven much so she loved much) or the cold self-sufficient actions of Simon?
  - This is what this story in Luke is challenging us to wrestle with this morning.....

Because of Jesus there is both HOPE to grasp and a CHALLENGE to wrestle with

Tim Keller says it well in his book- The Meaning of Marriage

**“The gospel is this: We are more sinful and flawed in ourselves than we ever dared believe, yet at the very same time we are more loved and accepted in Jesus Christ than we ever dared hope.”**

**— Timothy J. Keller, the Meaning of Marriage**

## Confession closes the gap created by sin

**1 John 1:8-9-** <sup>8</sup> If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. <sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

I made a trip to the dermatologist this week

- I know my skin is susceptible to cancer- runs in the family-
- I have been before and the Dr. warned me to come back regularly
- I knew that I needed to keep an eye on things and knew that another appointment was way over due
- I finally broke down and set an appt
- Went into the room after waiting a while, told to strip down so my skin could be examined completely....everything needed to be exposed
- Doctor comes flying in w/ a few assistants- googles (lights, magnification),
- First comment- you have a lot of skin
- The Dr. pops down the googles and starts examining
  - Been a while since I've seen you- I know, too long
    - Its best to come regularly..catch things early- I know
  - How long has this been here- don't know
  - This needs to be treated, are you wearing a hat
  - You should have come sooner, but im glad you are here, you using sunblock
  - This one looks bad but isn't serious
  - Let these stay untreated and they will go deeper and wider and really be a problem
- For us to get all this under control you'll have to come see me on a regular basis
  
- My trip to the dermatologist is a picture of what our battle with sin is like....
- Untreated it grows deeper & wider, it gets more serious, more complicated
- We have a **BIG HOPE and a BIG CHALLENGE**
- The sinful woman was given freedom in Jesus's forgiveness and loved much and it seems like the Pharisee missed an opportunity with Jesus....this morning is an opportunity for all of us to do business we Jesus.....
- Carpets
- Prayer Team
- Communion