

# THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

*A Message of Hope and Fulfillment For Those Longing For God*

## *Sinners Great and Small*

**Luke 7: 36-50**

Most likely we are still in the village of Nain. Jesus has been very busy. There is nothing more likely to draw a crowd than raising someone from the dead. He has been healing and delivering many people who have come to Him hoping for a cure. One sense that some time has passed, whether one day or several, when Jesus is invited to share a meal in the home of a Pharisee named Simon. While he is there a woman to whom He has previously ministered learns of His whereabouts and come to show her gratitude:

### **I. Some General Observations About Luke's Account**

- A. While many of the Pharisees are decidedly opposed to Jesus, the jury is still out as far as Simon is concerned and yet he is casually aloof toward Jesus.
- B. There are numerous cultural norms and customs broken in this very unusual event.
- C. The Pharisee is named, the woman is not.
- D. Jesus proves He is a prophet in an unusual way and we are given a practical demonstration of the use of miraculous spiritual gifts.

### **II. The Particulars of the Event**

- A. Jesus is invited to the home of a Pharisee. It is a dinner intended to examine Jesus' ideas and teachings. He is the honored guest.
- B. There is an underlying implication of wealth and status, not only with Simon but possibly with the woman as well.
- C. The woman learns of His whereabouts and brings an extravagant gift and presents it in an act of grateful worship.
- D. Simon is appalled at this brazen act and Jesus' seeming naiveté . . . Or His potential moral complicity!
- E. Jesus tells a story, proves He is a prophet, brings conviction to Simon the Pharisee, and restores the woman to the local community of faith.

### **III. The Lesson for Us All**

- A. Who is the greatest sinner at this dinner?
- B. The deepest love rises from the ashes of depravity and is clothed in the brokenness of humility.
- C. The goal of the Holy Spirit in sanctification is to bring us first to accurate self awareness
  - 1. If we think in spatial terms, to the extent we are filled with our self, to that extent we are lacking the fullness of the Holy Spirit.
  - 2. Empty vessels are able to contain the greatest quantity of the Holy Spirit.
  - 3. Broken vessels are able to let more of Him out.
  - 4. Empty, broken believers understand the necessity of total dependence upon the Holy Spirit

Now one of the Pharisees was requesting Him to dine with him, and He entered the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. And there was a woman in the city who was a sinner; and when she learned that He was reclining at the table in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster vial of perfume, and standing behind Him at His feet, weeping, she began to wet His feet with her tears, and kept wiping them with the hair of her head, and kissing His feet and anointing them with the perfume. Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet He would know who and what sort of person this woman is who is touching Him, that she is a sinner."

And Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he replied, "Say it, Teacher." A moneylender had two debtors: one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they were unable to repay, he graciously forgave them both. So

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Describe a typical table/dinner scene in a home of the first century Jew.
2. Where did the women normally sit?
3. Give several of the most striking points of this particular scene.
4. How does the Holy Spirit work in our lives to bring us to the awareness of our need for dependence upon His righteousness?
5. At what point in the journey of following Christ are you most likely to reflect His character?
6. Have you come to the place of being empty and broken? What are some ways that you might know this?

### NOTES

which of them will love him more?" Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have judged correctly." 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. You gave Me no kiss; but she, since the time I came in, has not ceased to kiss My feet. You did not anoint My head with oil, but she anointed My feet with perfume. For this reason I say to you, her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much; but he who is forgiven little, loves little." Then He said to her, "Your sins have been forgiven." Those who were reclining at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this man who even forgives sins?" And He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."