

• *It was her sense of having being forgiven much that produced this sinner's adoration*

What was it about Jesus that made 'the woman who was a sinner' love Jesus so much? She had not 'fallen in love' with Jesus in a purely biological way. It was her sense of having being forgiven much that produced in her this adoration. She was not simply worshipping God the Father. She was not simply going to church and saying a lot of prayers. She was pouring out adoration and worship towards the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. The question is: what does this say to us about Him?

1. Jesus

• *Wise and knowledgeable*

1. **Let us look first at Jesus.** He is sociable, as always. When invited to a meal, He accepts the invitation ^{□1}. He is quite relaxed and is reclining at a table enjoying the food and talking to Simon the Pharisee when a woman comes in who has a bad name in the town ^{□2}. Jesus is **wise and knowledgeable**. When the woman comes in, she weeps and then dries Jesus' feet with her long hair ^{□3}. Simon is shocked ^{□4} but Jesus knows exactly what is happening in his heart. He is full of spiritual knowledge. By the Spirit, Jesus senses exactly what Simon is saying to himself. Luke 7:40 says '*Jesus answered him*', but Simon had not said anything! Jesus knew his heart.

□1 7:36

□2 7:37

□3 7:38

□4 7:29

• *Utterly faithful*

In every situation Jesus is utterly **faithful**. He always does the right thing and says the right thing. He said exactly what needed to be said to Simon ^{□1}, and exactly what needed to be said to the woman ^{□2}.

□1 7:41-47

□2 7:48-50

2. Simon the Pharisee

• *Generous – yet self righteous*

2. **Let us take a closer look at Simon the Pharisee.** He was interested in the things concerning Jesus. He had taken the trouble to invite Jesus to his home. There were a lot of people around and the door was open for anyone to come in; it was this that enabled the woman to enter the house. Simon was **generous** enough to let his house be used in this way. Some sinners are nice, but when they are being nice we need to remember that they are still sinners. Simon was quite generous, and yet he was **self-righteous**. Nice people are often self-righteous. They may be 'nice' but they know it and feel good about themselves as a result. So Simon feels quite superior to this woman. He speaks scornfully to himself about this sort of woman! ^{□1}. He does not like the idea of her even touching Jesus. Sinners like her should keep well away from people like Him, he thinks to himself. But this is typical self-righteousness. He is **spiritually ignorant**. Does he not realise that he is as much a sinner as this woman? He may not have done precisely the things that she has done, but he has the same sinful human nature, And self-righteousness is as loathsome to God as the wickedness for which this woman is known. Simon is **ungrateful**, and ingratitude is hateful to God. Actually he is **unbelieving**. Although he is interested in Jesus and has had sufficient curiosity to invite Jesus to his home, he has not yet come to believe what Jesus is preaching. He has not seen himself as a sinner in need of a Saviour.

□1 7:28

• *Spiritually ignorant*

• *Ungrateful and unbelieving*

3. The woman who loved Jesus so much

- Not self conscious

- She showed respect to Jesus as an honoured guest

- Overwhelmed in gratitude

- Those who feel that they are sinners are those who will feel greatly forgiven and show deep gratitude

- Jesus' words give her added and intensified assurance

3. Let us look at the woman who loved Jesus so much. She had evidently lived a wicked life but she had heard Jesus' teaching about God's forgiveness. She knew that in some way He himself was the Saviour and she was so grateful. It was not enough for her that within herself she was thankful; she wanted to do something that showed Jesus how she valued Him and His salvation.

She is **not self-conscious** of what she is doing. She does not care much about what others think. How much time we waste on worrying what others think of us. This woman cared nothing about that! She got a long-necked bottle with perfume or scented oil in it. Then she walked into the house, wanting to stand behind Jesus and anoint His head. Anointing the head was a way of showing respect to an honoured guest. But the woman breaks down in weeping. Her tears fall on Jesus' feet. Ignoring what people think of her, she lets down her hair to dry Jesus' feet. She is not caring at all about what others think.

She is **overwhelmed in gratitude** for what Jesus has done for her. Jesus explains: a money-lender forgives a debtor who owes five denarii, and he forgives another debtor who owes five hundred denarii. Which one will be the most grateful? The one forgiven the most! Simon did not feel very forgiven, but then Simon did not feel that he was a sinner! The woman felt deeply how much Jesus had forgiven her. Of course it was not a matter of the **quantity** of sins she had committed. You don't have to be greatly wicked to feel greatly forgiven! Peter may not have been a specially wicked person when he said '*Depart from me, for I am a sinful man*' ¹. Yet that was the way he felt. Jesus reassures the woman and tells her she is forgiven. Of course she knew that already! That is the point of the story! She was forgiven already because of her faith (not because of her love). Because she knew that she was forgiven much, she was expressing her love to Jesus. The word of reassurance that Jesus gives her is an **added** assurance. She already knows she is forgiven, but Jesus witnesses with her spirit that she is a child of God. There is such a thing as an **intensified** gift of assurance of salvation, an enlarging of the assurance that one has already. It might be given to us when we forget what others think.

¹ 5:8

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