

J.J.

LOVING JESUS
Luke 7:36-50

Luke 7: 36 One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at table. 37 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, 38 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. 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."
40 And Jesus answering said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he answered, "Say it, Teacher."
41 "A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. 42 When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?" 43 Simon answered, "The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt." And he said to him, "You have judged rightly."

PRAY

INTRODUCTION:

Our song that we sang...

Set a fire unto my soul.
I want more of You, God
No place I would rather be than here in your love.

It's a song of desire for God and a passion for God.

By God's grace, I want to be where the Psalmist wrote :

Psalm 42:1-2

*As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God.
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?*

We have talked about "Obeying God." Then last week, we finished the 2-part series on "Pleasing God", explaining from God's Word that God is already pleased with us and we want to please Him not in for Him to be pleased with us but it's a reaction in knowing that God is already pleased with us. We please God because we love Him and the way to please Him is one word, "Sacrifice."

Today, let's talk about the one that wraps it all up and the thing that makes us want to obey God and to please God and that is to love God – to desire Him.

Let's look at the woman again who showed this kind of love, passion and desire for God in what we just read together.

What does truly loving Jesus look like and then we'll see the reason why this woman loves Jesus this much – and examine ourselves to where we are at loving Him.

LOVING GOD ENTAILS

- **FULL ATTENTION**

³⁷ And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil

A woman In order to understand the impact of this, you have to look at first the role of women during that time.

- They are excluded in synagogue worship.
- Forbidden to enter the Temple beyond the Court of Women
- They are not touched Scriptures, or it will make it unclean
- A man was not talk much with a woman.

Note : This is the reason why the woman at the well was confused when Jesus was talking with her...

John 4: 9 The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?"

MORNING PRAYERS Jewish men had a morning prayer thanking God they weren't slaves, gentiles or women. Greek thinkers had a similar prayer, thanking God they weren't beasts, barbarians or women.

<https://www.focusonthefamily.ca/content/welcome-respect-affirmation-how-jesus-interacted-with-women>

A sinner

It can be concluded that when a woman is called a sinner, it is because of immorality – whether the woman is a prostitute or an adulterer.

Proverbs mentions this :

Proverbs 23:27-28 "For a prostitute is a deep pit and a wayward wife is a narrow well. Like a bandit she lies in wait, and multiplies the unfaithful among men."

This is the reason why "RELIGIOUS" men avoid them like a plague so that they will not sin.

³⁹ Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner."

RELEVANCE : What this woman did approaching Jesus was unacceptable, culturally and religiously.

It's not normal and frowned upon for a woman to approach men like that, much less, a Rabbi, (who is Jesus) IN FRONT OF PHARISEES!!!!

BUT SHE DIDN'T CARE. HER FOCUS WAS ON OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

³⁷ And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil

This is what happens when you desire our Lord Jesus Christ. Your complete attention is on Jesus Christ alone. You're not distracted. You only want to be in the presence of Jesus Christ.

You remember Mary of Bethany, the sister of Martha. She did the very same to Jesus Christ in John 12.

In Luke chapter 10. Remember, Martha was asking Jesus to tell Mary to help her... Martha was distracted by Mary's full attention is on Jesus. Let's read it :

Luke 10: 39 And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. 40 But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me." 41 But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, 42 but one thing is necessary, Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her.

Quote : A person who LOVES OUR LORD WOULD WANT TO BE WHERE HE IS.

How do we do that?

Illustration : Some of you know that my wife is away on vacation with her friends. I brought her to the airport the previous week's Friday night. I realize the morning I woke up and the following days, the house felt empty. I realize how much I need her. The house felt empty. We were messaging each other and I told her that just in case she goes home to the Lord before me, I will immediately sell the house by God's grace because this is meaningless without her.

It's the same with this world, a person who loves the Lord will feel that this world is meaningless without Him. The world is nothing without Him...without His presence.

Look at how the Psalmist expresses it.

Psalm 27:4 One thing I ask from the LORD, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple.

- **OVERWHELMING AFFECTION**

and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears

This weeping is not out of sorrow or heartache. We know that this is out love for our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴⁷ Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much

Note : If we truly believe that we are in the presence of God, **one way or another we will truly be affected by His presence.**

Look at this woman. She never said anything but the Lord understood what she's feeling because of her tears.

I love what Chuck Swindoll regarding tears.

"When words fail, tears flow.

Tears have a language all their own, a tongue that needs no interpreter. In some mysterious way, our complex inner-communication system knows when to admit its verbal limitations...and the tears come."

<https://www.insightforliving.ca/read/devotional/tears>

How many times has that happened to you when you are overwhelmed by your emotion, tears just flow.

Or many times, when we're worshipping God during Sundays, we cry, not because of sadness but because of the glory of God.

Illustration : The Hebrew word for "glory" is Kavod which means...heaviness...weight... In short, when you are in the presence of God, His presence overwhelms you... and that's the reason why the release valve is tears!

This is the reason why our Lord Jesus Christ said :

John 4: 24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

Yes, we need to worship in truth on who the real God is according to His Word...but when you truly know Him, worship comes from deep within you...from your spirit. It's because that how we express our desire.

Remember, loving God is not just a matter of the mind. It includes our entire being.

Matthew 22:37 Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."

One of my favourite songs that really touches my heart is "Everything" by Lifehouse
Whenever I hear the refrain, tears just well up.

*"How can I stand here with You,
And not be moved by You?"*

*Would you tell me,
How could it be,
Any better than this?"*

Zak's Wedding Illustration : June 20, 2020 I remember when my son got married in our backyard. When she saw Louisa in her wedding gown walking down the aisle we created, he can't help but cry. **Why? It's because he was overwhelmed by the presence of the one he loves.**

And when we are in the presence of the One who loves us most, we can't help but be overwhelmed in our emotions and God sees it as precious... it's a sign of our spirituality.

Quote : He who has no religious affection is in a state of spiritual death and is wholly destitute of powerful quickening influences of the Spirit of God. – Jonathan Edwards

What's your spiritual state right now? Ask God.

- **VOLUNTARY ACTION**

and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head

Remember : If we love someone, the overflow is too much that we want to do something for that person. We want to serve them. We want to give them our time. We want to buy them gifts. We all know this.

In order to understand the significance of this, you need to understand what it means.

First, the washing of the feet. *and she began to wash His feet*

Footwashing was part of the social life before. It wasn't a religious rite like what happens today.

That's why we don't do footwashing in our church...it's just a ritual when it was a sign of hospitality before. Why?

Historical : Due to the climate in the countries surrounding the Mediterranean Sea, it was common for people to wear sandals or go bare-foot while doing their daily activities. Hence, the feet were constantly exposed and got dirty easily. Foot-washing, like eating and sleeping, became an essential daily activity that one could not do without.

<https://tjc.org/elib-single-item-display/?langid=1&itemid=718&type=pub>

Washing somebody's feet is the job of the lowliest of slaves. But when a person who is not a slave washes your feet, it's a sign of deep friendship and love.

This was also exemplified by our Lord. When that's how He showed His love.

John 13: 1 Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.... 4 rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. 5 Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him

Wiped the feet with her hair *and wiped them with the hair of her head*

Note : That to the women at that time, their hair is the symbol of her beauty and her femininity...

1 Corinthians 11:15 But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given to her for a covering.

Now the significance :

⁴⁴ Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head.

So the woman must have seen that our Lord's feet was still dirty and she didn't care if that was the work of a slave but since she loves Jesus, she used the available water that she had - her tears. And since there was no towel, she used her own hair to wipe the tears (water) off his feet.

In short : She forgot all about herself, saw the need and just immediately did something about it. Doing the work of a slave by washing our Lord's feet and forgetting the glory of her own to wipe our Lord's feet with her hair.

THAT'S WHAT TRUE LOVE IS ALL ABOUT. IT'S THE FORGETTING OF ONE'S SELF TO SERVE THE NEEDS OF OTHERS.

Love is an action word. And how do we see love in action?
ACTS OF SERVICE TO GOD AND TO OTHERS.

That's what the woman did.

Isn't that also how our Lord want us to express our love to Him? Look at what He said to Peter.

John 21: 15 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?"

"Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

16 Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"

He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."

17 The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"

*Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you."
Jesus said, "Feed my sheep.*

Application : One who desires the Lord, sees the need and serves out of love.

- **BEST ADORATION**

*37 And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil,
38....she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil.*

The Kissing of Feet

Important Again : Custom during that time when a guest arrives in your house, you give them a kiss which shows that you are welcoming them and you are so glad to see them.

2 Corinthians 13:12 Greet one another with a holy kiss.

This means make sure they feel they are welcome.

Today's Application : We do that with a hug... it shows we desire or we love to see them.

Illustration : Last time, I remember I flew to Montreal to surprise my daughter on her birthday. She was feeling down and she didn't know I was coming. When she saw me, she was surprised...she cried and she hugged me tight. In short, she welcomed...she showed that she loved that I was there.

Imagine, if when she saw me, she looks at me and asks only, "What are you doing here?" and then walks away.

Look at what Jesus said to Simon the Pharisee :

⁴⁵ You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in.

Look at this woman.

The woman did not "cease" to kiss the Lord's feet shows she knows she is not worthy of the Lord's presence but she is so glad and happy to just be with Him. She wanted to make sure that **OUR LORD KNOWS SHE IS HAPPY TO BE IN HIS PRESENCE.**

That's what the Psalmists would write. They are happy to be in the Presence of God.

Psalm 122: 1 I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.

The fragrant oil

Now, If it's spikenard, it's worth around 300 denarii

John 12 : ⁵ "Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?"

Typical salary of a person for a day – 1 denarius

Note : Isn't that what love is all about? It's about giving your best to another. It is because out of desire, out of deep love.

Illustration : Have you tried saying to your wife, "You know, I love you but you can only have 50% of my money." (That's why the Bible says, the two flesh will become one... what's mine is yours and what yours is mine)

Application : When we show our love and desire for the Lord, we give Him our best.

Widow's Mite

Luke 21: And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury, 2 and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites. 3 So He said, "Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all; 4 for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had."

In short : She gave God her best.

Why? You give the best to someone you love. God has given us the best.

How am I sure?

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

We answered what desire for the Lord looks like WHICH IS FULL ATTENTION, OVERWHELMING EMOTION, VOLUNTARY CONDESCENSION AND BEST ADORATION...and the next question...

WHERE DOES THIS DESIRE AND LOVE FOR OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST COME FROM?

⁴⁰ And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." So he said, "Teacher, say it."

⁴¹ "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴² And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?"

⁴³ Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more."

Then our Lord ran down how the woman showed her desire and love for the Lord which is in contrast with what Simon did not do.

And He said to him, "You have rightly judged." ⁴⁴ Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. ⁴⁵ You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. ⁴⁶ You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil.

And this is the reason why this woman loves and desires the Lord.

⁴⁷ Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little."

Note : You know why she loves and desires the Lord. It's because she saw that the Lord loves and forgives her in spite of who she is.

QUOTE : We have to remember that loving God is an overflow of realizing WHO WE ARE how much He loves us.

That's why the Bible says :

1 John 4: 19 We love because he first loved us.

Let me share again : You want to love God more, think about how much He loves you.

STORY : The Incredible Story of A Gangster Turned Can Collector

S.G.D.