

**JESUS
LOVES
YOU!**

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March 17, 2013

Sermon in a sentence: Jesus is seeking after you right now to enfold you in His limitless love.

Scriptures: Luke 7:36-39; Luke 7:34; John 8:11; Mark 1:14-15; 2 Peter 3:9; Psalm 86:1-15

Luke 7:36-39 NASB Now one of the Pharisees was requesting Him to dine with him, and He entered the Pharisee's house and reclined *at the table*. 37 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, 38 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. 39 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."

The woman who appeared at Simon's dinner party was uninvited and unwelcome. Everybody in Bethany knew who she was - it was a tiny settlement likely numbering less than 500 people. When she came into the house and approached Jesus, it was absolutely scandalous: a woman known for her immoral trade, weeping, touching, kissing and anointing the Master's feet with a precious fragrance, shamelessly letting her hair down in front of men (which no respectable woman of her day would do), using it to wipe the tears and perfume off His feet.

She is deliberately nameless and faceless, an ‘every-woman’ to represent every woman, indeed to represent us all.

The response everyone expected from Jesus did not come. The voice raised in rebuke, the drawing back, the scornful face, were all absent. One could be excused for thinking He actually appreciated what she was doing, and His words of censure, when they finally came, were not directed at the intruder, but at the host.

Some have speculated that this woman was the one whose life Jesus had spared when the self-righteous scribes and Pharisees brought her to the courtyard of the Temple for His ruling on her adulterous lifestyle. She had been caught “in the very act”, and the religious elites wanted her to be stoned (John 8:2-11). Since Bethany was only a couple of kilometers from Jerusalem, it is quite possible that she was the woman, routinely coming from the village to work in the city.

Whether or not she was the one is irrelevant, but Jesus’ words to her are extremely relevant. Having dispelled her accusers, He turned to her and said: **“Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more”** (John 8:11b KJV).

How is it that Jesus could make statements like this? How is it that He spent so much time with those everyone else hated, shunned and despised? (This became so much a part of His modus operandi that His detractors labeled Him a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of sinners (Luke 7:34)).

The answer is simple. He loved them! He *wanted* to be with them. He wanted to make radical changes in their lives. In fact, He came to save them, give them hope and an eternal future with Him in Heaven.

John 3:16 KJV For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Luke 19:10 KJV For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

He did not come to join them in their transgressions as His critics accused Him of doing – He came to deliver them out of their prison of sin and give them a new birth and a new life.

Jesus is a friend of sinners. His love abounds to each and every one of us, without exception. Whatever you have done can be forgiven, if you will only ask Him. That is the message of Calvary. Jesus died to save sinners, because He loves us. This truth needs to be affirmed and re-stated over and over and over again!

As Jesus spoke to His disciples for the last time before His death, He made it clear to them that His love was going to be demonstrated in the most powerful way possible – by giving His life for them.

John 15:13 KJV Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Jesus loves every one of us, without exception.

At the same time Jesus made this statement, He also told them how they could be elevated to the status of “Friend of God” (John 15:15).

We become His friends by simply obeying His Word.

John 15:14 “You are My friends if you do what I command you.”

What is the command we need to obey? Primarily this:

Acts 17:30b NASB "... **God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent.**

Μετανοέω (metanoéō) is the Greek word translated "repent". It is comprised of two words: "meta" – to change – (as in metamorphosis), and "noeó" – thinking, (derived from noús – "mind"). **Repentance, therefore, is a change of thinking, a change of mind.**

What should we be changing our thinking about? Anything that is contrary to God's stated Word and purpose. Anything that tells us we cannot be saved. Anything that tells us God hates us and wants to send us to hell. Anything that tells us our sin is too bad to be forgiven, (especially if we are baptized believers who have gone astray).

Chiefly, repentance is a change in our thinking toward the gospel of Jesus Christ, to the point where we believe it, receive it and act upon it. This is what Jesus preached.

Mark 1:14-15 NASB Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, 15 and saying, "**The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.**"

The love of God, His goodness, mercy and grace toward us is intended to bring us to a place of repentance. It is not intended to make us sad, feel lost and condemned, stranding us in our depression.

Romans 2:4-8 NASB ... do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that **the kindness of God leads you to repentance?** 5 But

because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, 6 who WILL RENDER TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS: 7 to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; 8 but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.

2 Cor. 7:9-10 NASB I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that **you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance**.... 10 For the sorrow that is according to *the will of God* produces a repentance without regret, **leading to salvation**, but the sorrow of the world produces death.

Luke 5:32 NASB And Jesus answered and said to them, ***“It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick. 32 “I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.”***

2 Peter 3:9 NASB **The Lord** is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but **is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.**

The woman in Luke 7 came to the wonderful understanding we all need to have: ***Jesus loves me!*** He has the ability to look past all the junk in my life and love ME, completely. Nothing I have done scares Him off. He still loves me, and His greatest desire is that I respond to His love through repentance, and be born again into His family.