

sins of the spirit are always more heinous than the sins of the flesh. The sins of the spirit, pride, self-satisfaction, are more deadly to human life than the sins of the flesh ever were, or can be.” (G. Campbell Morgan)

- 6) Simon easily saw the woman as a sinner, yet he could not see himself as a sinner. One of the greatest curses of our day is what I call “Spiritual Vaccinations”. This is when people accept just enough spiritual truth to become religious but not enough to save their souls. They may even make a profession of salvation to please others. This vaccinates them spiritually so that the truth of the Gospel never penetrates their hearts. From then on, they refuse to admit that they are a lost sinner and therefore never truly trust Christ. Churches are full of spiritually vaccinated unsaved people.
- 7) We do not know if this convicted Simon and led to his conversion or not, but we do know that others present at the dinner ignored the lesson and condemned Jesus for forgiving the woman (v.49-50).

**Conclusion:** Both the sinful woman and Simon were spiritually sick. The woman knew she was sick. She repented, trusted Christ and received full forgiveness. Simon could not see his spiritual sickness. He may have never received God’s forgiveness.

Each of us here today are like one of those two spiritually sick people. Like the sinful woman, many of us have admitted our guilt, trusted Christ and received God’s forgiveness.

However, you may be like that sinful woman, knowing that you are a guilty sinner, but you have not yet placed your faith in Christ to save your soul. You need to. Do not put it off.

Some here today may be like Simon. You were “spiritually vaccinated” in your youth without truly receiving salvation. You think you are doing just fine. You believe in God and are religious, but God has never saved your soul and changed your life. You have very little spiritual appetite. If that describes you, please do not ignore it. Admit your sin and receive Christ today.

**Song:** Come to the Saviour - 254

# A Forgiven Sinner

18 April 2021 AM – Luke 7:36-50 – Parables21 – Scott Childs

**Introduction:** There are two kinds of seriously sick people. One feels sick all over and is so miserable that he or she cannot hide it. The other may have cancer or some other disease and not even know it. In our Scripture today, we are going to see two spiritually sick people. One was obviously a sick sinner and knew it. The other was a very sick sinner but thought he was spiritually healthy.

**Transition:** This event in Jesus’ life teaches us valuable lessons about sin and forgiveness.

## 1. The Setting

### a. Simon, a Pharisee, hosted a dinner.

- 1) We learn that his name was Simon in verse 40.
- 2) What do we know about Pharisees?
  - a) They were a common Jewish sect that began sometime after the Babylonian captivity.
  - b) They very strictly kept the OT law as well as other added oral laws and were very self-righteous.
  - c) Jesus frequently rebuked them for their pride, covetousness and hypocrisy.
  - d) Many of them hated Jesus and his teachings.
- 3) We do not know why Simon invited Jesus to dinner. He questioned whether Jesus could even be a prophet (v.39). His self-righteous attitude does not indicate that he was a true believer. He had not even shown Jesus the basic politeness of the day (v.44-46). He did not wash Jesus’ feet, give him a customary kiss or anoint his head olive oil.
- 4) Perhaps Simon was using the meal as a trap to get Jesus to do or say something incriminating.

### b. Jesus was his dinner guest

- 1) Jesus gladly accepted Simon’s invitation to dine.
- 2) Being God, Jesus knew the events that would transpire at that dinner.
- 3) It is important for us to understand the meal atmosphere of those days. A low table was in the centre of the room

and around it were placed cushions on which the guests reclined on their left sides facing the table with their feet outward.

## 2. The Sinner

### a. She was a sinful woman of the city (v.37-38).

- 1) She was likely an immoral woman. She had a reputation that everyone in the city knew.
- 2) When she heard that Jesus was dining with Simon, she went into the dining room to find Jesus. Though she was not an invited guest, Simon did not have her put out. Perhaps, he wanted to see how Jesus would respond to this sinful woman touching Him.
- 3) Warren Wiersbe gives this insight, “It was customary in that day for outsiders to hover around during banquets so they could watch the ‘important people’ and hear the conversation. Since everything was open, they could even enter the banquet hall and speak with a guest. This explains how this woman had access to Jesus. He was not behind locked doors.”
- 4) She washed Jesus’ feet with her tears and wiped them dry with her long hair. She then kissed his feet and anointed them with expensive fragrant ointment.

### b. The woman’s actions irritated Simon (v.39).

- 1) He criticised Jesus for allowing such a sinful woman to touch even his feet. The only thing that Simon knew about the woman was her sinful reputation.
- 2) Jesus knew that she was a sinner. He also knew that she had previously repented of her sins and placed her faith in Him. She came to anoint Him because she was grateful that God had forgiven her. **How do we know this?** Look at verses 47-48. When Jesus said that her sins “are forgiven”, this verb is in the perfect tense, which describes an action that took place in the past, not to be repeated, with present results – literally “have been forgiven.”
- 3) Having been forgiven of all her sins, this woman deeply loved Jesus. “Her tears, her humble attitude, and her

expensive gift all spoke of a changed heart.” (Wiersbe)

## 3. The Story or Parable Jesus told

### a. A creditor forgave two debtors (v.41-42)

- 1) One debtor owed 500 pence (i.e., 500 days’ wages) and the other owed 50 pence (i.e., 50 days’ wages).
- 2) Neither could come up with the money he owed. They were both bankrupt.
- 3) The creditor forgave both of the debts. Forgiving a debtor was no more common in that day than it is today. Creditors just do not forgive debts.

### b. Jesus ask Simon a convicting question (v.42-50)

- 1) Jesus used that unusual example of forgiveness as the basis for His convicting question. Read verse 42b again.
- 2) Simon gave Jesus the right answer (v.43).
- 3) Jesus then applied His parable (v.44-47).
  - a) Simon had shown very little, if any, love to Jesus by his impolite reception (cf., 1.a.3).
  - b) This sinful woman had not only washed Jesus’ feet, but also washed them with her tears.
  - c) She dried his feet, not with a towel, but with her own hair.
  - d) She did not kiss His cheek; she continually kissed Jesus’ feet.
  - e) She did not anoint his head with olive oil; instead, she anointed His feet with expensive fragrant ointment.
  - f) She loved Jesus much because He had forgiven all her many sins.
- 4) Jesus wanted this to haunt Simon’s thoughts. He had not even shown Jesus the love of the lesser forgiven debtor. As a typical Pharisee, Simon considered himself righteous. The sinful woman had been forgiven of all her terrible sins, but the self-righteous Simon had not been forgiven.
- 5) It is often more difficult for a self-righteous person to receive God’s forgiveness than it is for an obvious sinner. One commentator put it this way, “Simon’s sin was greater than the woman’s, for do not forget this, that the