

Proper 6C – THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
June 13, a. D. 2010  
Luke 7: 36 – 8:3

Simon the Pharisee must have seen something in Jesus to go out of his way to invite him to his house for dinner. It was custom in those days for the leader of the synagogue to invite the guest preacher to his house for supper. The invitation came on the evening before the sermon was to be delivered to give a preview of what was going to happen.

Perhaps Simon invited Jesus after hearing him preach. It shouldn't surprise us to hear that someone is intrigued by the words that come from the Saviour's holy lips. These are words that come from the father and so confront us with the uncomfortable truth that our intelligence and experience are not the ultimate authority.

However, there is a surprise wrapped in the encounter of Simon the Pharisee and the enfleshed Word of God, Jesus. As Simon got to know Him better and heard more of God's words, the less Simon liked him. Does that surprise you? Wouldn't you think the opposite that Simon would be more impressed with Jesus and want to get to know him on a deeper level and invite him over for supper every day?

If you find a good restaurant or a good recipe, don't you want to have more of it? Not so with Simon. The more he learned of Jesus, the more he realized that this was not his cup of tea. Simon was looking for a different sort of religious superstar. He wanted someone who would support the nation of Abraham's descendants and find comfort in upholding the traditions of the elders and flatter Simon with words like: What a marvelous example you are, what a faithful teacher you are, what a holy man you are Simon!

Another surprise about Jesus was that he accepted the worship and praise of a woman who was a notorious sinner. Everyone knew what kind of woman she was. She broke God's law. How could she find favour in the Lord's eyes? What right did she have to come into my house uninvited, and offend everyone by washing his feet, drying them with her hair and then perfuming those feet?

A woman should let her hair down only in the presence of her husband. This sort of thing was private pillow talk between husband and wife only. And furthermore, it was

rude to barge into a house uninvited and unwanted. If this Jesus held company with women like that, then surely he is the wrong man to follow. Simon concluded that Jesus was NOT a prophet of God. If Jesus were a prophet, then he would know what kind of woman this was and have nothing to do with her. For the bible teaches the common things have no fellowship with the uncommon. Sin and holiness have nothing to do with each other.

Is this the kind of Saviour you want? One who would eat with sinners and receive the worship and praise of notorious outlaws. The kind of Saviour you want depends on what you think about yourself and what kind of help you think you need from God.

The woman could not say enough or do enough to let Jesus know how happy she was. Her tears flowed freely. But make no mistake. Her tears were not of bitterness or remorse. These were tears of JOY. Jesus accepted her acts of worship and praise. He didn't tell her to get lost and bugger off. He forgave her.

All her sins that everyone in town knew about and the secret ones that only God knew were gone. They were taken away. Happy is the heart that is totally forgiven. That is why God was made into a man, in order to bring us to God. The woman already heard of God's love and she was already forgiven. She was not the sinner that Simon thought. God changed her. She was made holy, clean and spotless. She was made into the Bride of Christ as are all who are forgiven by Christ himself.

Simon's biggest surprise was that Jesus forgave her. Only God can forgive. Is it too much for God to forgive sins? If Jesus forgives then he must think he is God. This was too much for Simon. He could no longer control the situation. Jesus was way out of hand. He was no longer safe. Simon wanted nothing more to do with him. He couldn't get Jesus out of his home and his heart fast enough.

The woman could not get enough of Jesus. She was in love with God. The God who took her sins away was the same God who accepted her, cleansed her and put her on a different path when He says, Now go and sin no more, your faith has saved you.

Our Lord's perfumed feet were later pierced with a spike to the cursed wood of a cross. His feet no longer smelled of myrrh and expensive perfume but were dirty from carrying a heavy cross. He carried all your sins even the secret ones. His feet were covered in blood as blood flowed from his holy wounds. That sacred blood now flows

into his cup and he offers it to you at His Table. Come and drink all you who are carrying heavy loads and I will give you Peace. I will accept you just as you are and make you holy, clean and spotless. I will accept your praise, your hymns, your worship and even your tears of joy, for I will not turn anyone away who comes to me for forgiveness. Go in peace, your faith has saved you. You are free!