



## DINNER IN A PHARISEE'S HOUSE

Luke 7:36–50

<sup>36</sup>Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. <sup>37</sup>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, <sup>38</sup>and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. <sup>39</sup>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." <sup>40</sup>And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." So he said, "Teacher, say it." <sup>41</sup>"There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. <sup>42</sup>And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?" <sup>43</sup>Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have rightly judged." <sup>44</sup>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. <sup>45</sup>You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. <sup>46</sup>You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. <sup>47</sup>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." <sup>48</sup>Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." <sup>49</sup>And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" <sup>50</sup>Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

—Luke 7:36–50

**Read Luke 7:36–50**

Could it be possible that, although Jesus resides in our hearts, we often neglect Him? Perhaps it is because:

- We are overly occupied with the pressing issues of life
- We do not feel our need for Him
- We have lost the awareness of His presence
- We have things we want to do that He won't approve of
- We are somewhat embarrassed by His presence in our hearts

There are a number of possible reasons why Jesus is often ignored and neglected in our house. Most commonly, we just don't prioritize His presence and company.

The Bible not only speaks about the sins of commission (those that we commit), but also the sins of omission (*not* doing what we should do): *Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin* (James 4:17).

When the New Testament speaks of sin, it uses the Greek word *hamartia*. This word means to miss the mark. The origin of this word hails back to archery tournaments with bows and arrows. Those who shot the arrow and did not hit the bull's eye were said to have missed the mark (*hamartia*). It didn't matter if the shot landed close to the center, was wide of the center, or didn't even hit the board, any shot that didn't land right in the center of the target was a *hamartia*. When we sin, either by commission or omission, it is because we have missed the mark of what God created us to do. All of us have missed the mark as Paul pointed out in Romans 3:23, *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*. It is for this reason that Christ came to earth. Jesus alone hit the bull's eye with His righteous life, then He accredited His own righteousness to anyone who would receive Him into their hearts by faith.

When we ignore Jesus, we are committing the sin of omission. We are being inattentive to the very One who lived a perfectly righteous life, died the death we deserved, and rose that He might ascribe His righteousness to us in order to save, bless, and secure us.

In our house this week, we encounter a Pharisee named Simon. Though he invited Jesus in to dine with him, he consequently ignored Jesus. When a notoriously sinful woman entered Simon's house and made a sincere display of worshiping Jesus, Simon was appalled. However, Jesus pointed out that both Simon and the woman were sinners. The woman was a sinner by commission, and Simon by omission. However, the faith of the woman saved her, while Simon's neglect and self-righteousness threatened to leave him in a perpetual state of hamartia!

As you consider the interaction in the Pharisee's house this week, let the Spirit of the Lord minister to your heart about the glory of Jesus' forgiveness toward you.

1. According to Luke 7:36:
  - a. Who invited Jesus to his house?
  - b. What did he invite Jesus to do in the house?
  - c. How did Jesus respond to this invitation?
2. Use Luke 7:37–38 to describe what happened while Jesus was in the house.

#### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

*A woman letting her hair down was scandalous and could have constituted grounds for divorce.<sup>19</sup>*

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

A denarii was a day's wage; 500 denarii was almost two year's wages.

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Alabaster was a soft marble of various colors used to make holders for expensive oils.

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

*Simon was a rude host. In that culture, hospitality was highly treasured. Guests were greeted at the door by a servant with a towel and basin of water to wash their feet. Friends were greeted with a kiss, and it was common to anoint guests with oil. Simon was a poor host; he did not show to Jesus any of these common courtesies.*

—Pastor Chuck Smith

3. From Luke 7:39–43, note and comment on:
  - a. Simon's assessment of the situation
  - b. Jesus' engagement of Simon
  - c. Jesus' parable
  - d. The question Jesus posed to Simon
  - e. Simon's answer
  - f. Jesus' response to Simon
4. Use Luke 7:44–46 to remark on what Jesus said concerning:
  - a. Simon's omission
  - b. The woman's actions
5. From Luke 7:47 write out Jesus' declarations concerning:
  - a. The woman
  - b. Her sins

- c. Those who are forgiven little
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- 6. What did Jesus affirm to the woman? Luke 7:48
    - a. How does this affirmation speak to you?
  
  - 7. What was the reaction of *those who sat at the table with Him* to this declaration?
  
  - 8. According to Luke 7:50, what did Jesus:
    - a. Commend the woman for
  
    - b. Tell the woman to do
  
  - 9. Share your thoughts concerning the following people in this account:
    - a. Simon
  
    - b. The woman
  
    - c. The creditor

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

The woman in this account should be distinguished from the women in similar events: Mary of Bethany (see John 12:1–8); and Mary Magdalene (see Luke 8:2; Mark 16:9).

d. The debtors

e. Jesus

10. What is your greatest takeaway from Jesus' dinner in a Pharisee's house?