

## **At the Table with Jesus - Adoration at the Table Luke 7:36-50 Sunday Morning Live-stream**

Good morning!

I'm glad you could join me for a few minutes  
as we worship from home  
on this freezing cold and snowy morning.

I'm simply going to share a few brief reflections  
this morning,  
and then close with a prayer and a blessing.

However.

Part of our Sunday morning worship rhythm at Threads Church  
is that we begin our time of worship with  
a Scripture reading,  
our First Word.

This morning the First Word comes from Psalm 32;  
we've picked some selections from that Psalm that are particularly fitting.  
If you want to read along,  
this is Psalm 32 verses 1-2, 6-7, and 11.

Psalm 32, selections

<sup>1</sup> Blessed is the one  
whose transgressions are forgiven,  
whose sins are covered.

<sup>2</sup> Blessed is the one  
whose sin the Lord does not count against them  
and in whose spirit is no deceit.

...I acknowledged my sin to you  
and did not cover up my iniquity.  
I said, "I will confess

my transgressions to the Lord.”  
And you forgave  
the guilt of my sin.

<sup>6</sup>Therefore let all the faithful pray to you  
while you may be found;  
surely the rising of the mighty waters  
will not reach them.

<sup>7</sup>You are my hiding place;  
you will protect me from trouble  
and surround me with songs of deliverance.

<sup>11</sup>Rejoice in the Lord and be glad, you righteous;  
sing, all you who are upright in heart!

Let's take a moment and pray  
before we dwell on our central Scripture passage for today.

## **Pray**

Now, if we were in person this morning  
you would have come into the Gathering space  
to find the chairs arranged differently than usual  
so that the communion table is at the center.  
you would have found generous portions of bread  
and cups of juice, larger than normal,  
heaped on the table.  
because today would have been our second week  
in our series titled “at the table with Jesus.”

Though we're not able to gather around the table  
in that physical, tangible way this morning,  
my hope and prayer is that we'll each sense  
Jesus' invitation to draw near  
as we encounter the goodness of God

through the Gospel this morning.

If you'd like to read along,  
Our passage today is from the Gospel of Luke,  
chapter 7, verses 36-50:

<sup>36</sup> When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. <sup>37</sup> A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. <sup>38</sup> As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

<sup>39</sup> When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner."

<sup>40</sup> Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to tell you."

"Tell me, teacher," he said.

<sup>41</sup> "Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. <sup>42</sup> Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?"

<sup>43</sup> Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven."

"You have judged correctly," Jesus said.

<sup>44</sup> Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. <sup>45</sup> You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. <sup>46</sup> You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. <sup>47</sup> Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little."

<sup>48</sup> Then Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

<sup>49</sup> The other guests began to say among themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?”

<sup>50</sup> Jesus said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

Now, last week we encountered Jesus eating at the home of Levi the tax collector, and the Pharisees showed up and wondered what Jesus was doing hanging out with tax collectors and sinners. that story was from Luke chapter 5. now this morning we're just a couple chapters further along in Luke and things are sort of reversed. Jesus is eating at the home of Simon the Pharisee, and yet the central figure in this story is a sinner - this woman who is somehow also present.

Biblical Scholars have all sorts of various theories as to why she was present and what was the nature of her sin and whether the Pharisees were really being terribly rude not to have a servant there to wash Jesus' feet - all of that speculation has some value, but is more or less beside the point for our purposes this morning.

The beauty of this story,  
the heart of this story,  
lies in what the sinful woman saw  
as opposed to what the Pharisees saw.  
this story shows us a group of respectable people  
more or less maintaining social conventions,  
treating this day, this day of hosting Jesus for a meal,  
like an ordinary day.  
Treating Jesus like any ordinary guest.  
A guest not necessarily worthy even of extra honor  
like oil for his head or a servant to wash his feet.  
And we have a woman, in contrast,

who breaks through and disregards all social convention  
because she sees the truth as it really is.  
She sees that this is no ordinary day,  
no ordinary guest,  
and social conventions are meaningless in light of the glory  
she has suddenly become overwhelmingly aware of.

Have you ever been in a situation where something so extraordinary  
happened that social conventions went out the window?  
perhaps you were in a meeting with people you didn't even know very well  
when all of a sudden you saw the most gorgeous double rainbow  
out the window.  
perhaps you stood up and exclaimed, "oh my goodness! look at that! "  
and even though the presenter was interrupted mid-stream  
they weren't offended because everyone recognized  
this was a moment worthy of attention and awe.

- proposal at game
- somber setting - child exclaims, everyone laughs.
- birth of Abby

There are times, even in our own lives,  
when our eyes are opened to something so extraordinary  
that their recognition and honor supersedes  
any wish to remain polite and proper.

This story of the sinful woman  
and her outpouring of tears, expensive perfume,  
and lavish adoration in the home of Simon the pharisee  
is one of those times.  
She has opened her heart to Jesus,  
received the very forgiveness of God and the healing of her heart.  
She sees clearly just who this dinner guest is.  
Not simply a 30-something carpenter-turned traveling preacher.

No - she sees. She knows.

God, Godself is reclining at Simon's table,  
and no one notices.

Jesus is present,

and so Simon's house has become like the holy of holies in the temple -  
all should remove their shoes,

fall on their faces and cry,

"glory!"

All should cry out with the prophet in Isaiah chapter 6:

<sup>5</sup>"Woe to me!" "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live  
among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the  
Lord Almighty."

She sees, this sinful woman.

And she has discovered, to her amazement,  
that she has seen the king, the Lord Almighty,  
and yet she is not ruined, but healed.

She is not condemned in her uncleanness,  
but forgiven and restored.

She is, in fact, the only one in the room  
who sees clearly.

And all she can think to do  
is to wash the dirty feet of the One  
who is both God and man,  
who came to seek and save the lost.

To pour an entire jar of expensive perfume  
on this one who is rightful Lord of all the Universe,  
to dry with her hair this one,  
the eternal lover of her soul,  
spouse of her heart,  
Lord of her whole being.

The sinful woman was the only one in the room  
who saw the

“glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace  
and truth.” Jn 1:14.

She saw Jesus and knew in her heart that, again as John says,

“... though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize  
him. <sup>11</sup> He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive  
him.” Jn 1:10–11.

The sinful woman knew him, received him,  
and honored him that day.

The pharisees were embarrassed by her presence and her actions.

Their eyes were fixed on

keeping things boxed in, proper, polite.

They didn't feel any great need for the kind of salvation and forgiveness  
Jesus offered,

and so they missed their opportunity to join in.

Their eyes were closed to the fact that Simon's house that day  
had become the holy of holies, full of the presence of God.

Their eyes were shut tight against the reality of their own need for forgiveness.

They missed the glory of the One and only Son of God that day,

they missed the invitation to draw near to the lover of their souls.

My prayer for each of us this morning  
is that we would be among those whose eyes are open.

That we would, like the sinful woman,  
be willing to break through all hesitation,  
all convention, all constraint

to pour out our grateful adoration at the feet of Jesus.

My prayer for us this morning is that

we would have eyes to see  
when the Spirit of God comes and transforms  
some mundane place, some regular moment  
into the holy of holies -  
that we would have the guts to stop,  
to look to Jesus, no matter what else is going on.