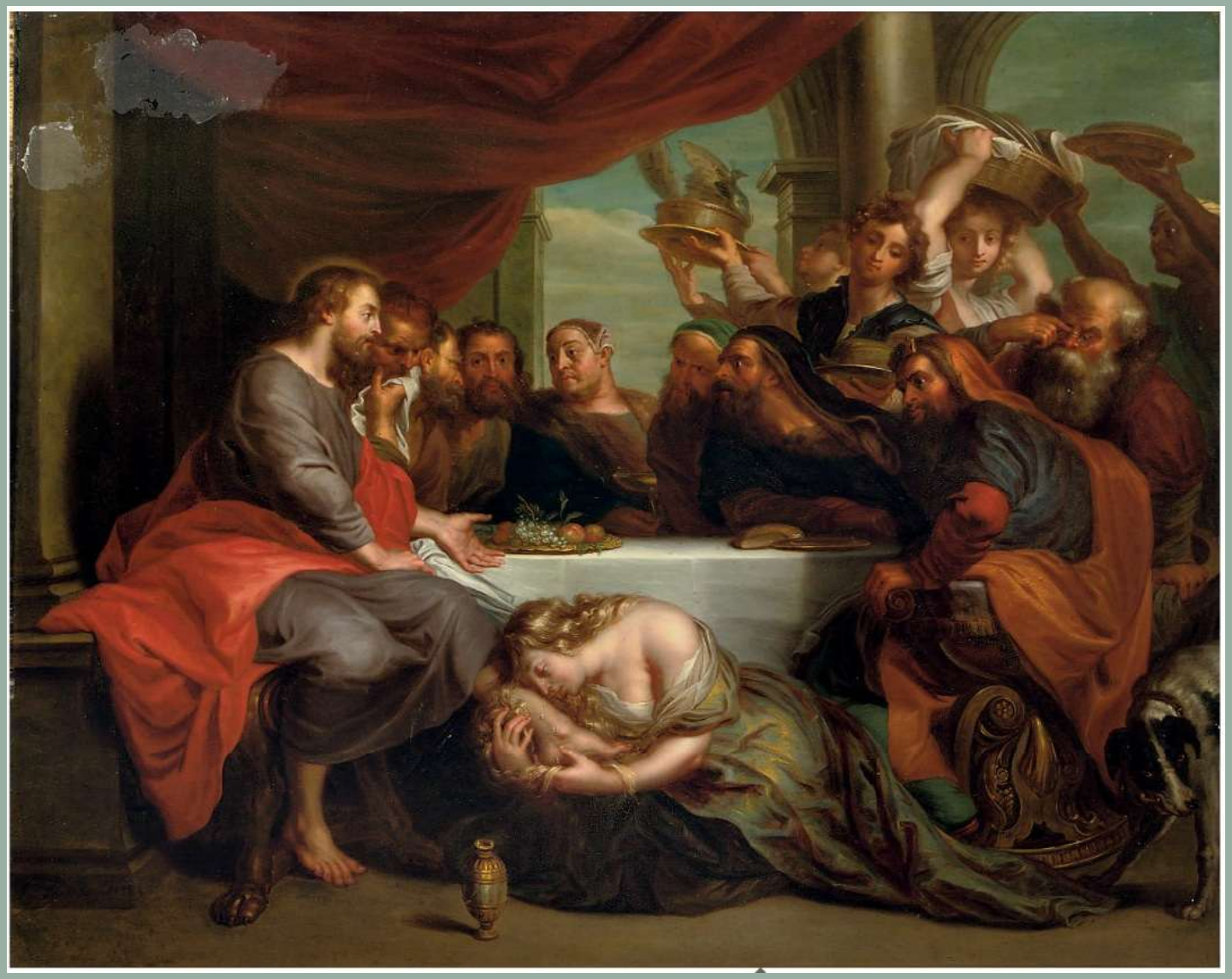


Week 4: The Two Debtors

Luke 7:36-50

The Parables of Jesus

Week 1 – **Understanding Parables**

INTRO: Matthew 13:35

Week 2 – **The Prodigal Son**

LOSTNESS: Luke 15:11-32

Week 3 – **The Good Samaritan**

GOODNESS: Luke 10:25-37

Week 4 – **The Two Debtors**

SINFULNESS: Luke 7:36-50

Week 5 – **The Workers in the Vineyard**

FAIRNESS: Matthew 20:1-16

Luke 7:36

Context

(1) One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to have dinner with him, so, Jesus went to his home and sat down to eat.

Dinners and banquets were high-profile events requiring all the formal welcome courtesies including:

- Kiss - welcome & acceptance
- Foot washing - cleansing
- Anointing with oil - honor & respect
- Seating at table - place of honor

Other Pharisees were present.
Dinners/Banquets were open to the public.
Members of the public were expected to listen from the adjoining rooms but not intrude

Luke 7:37a

Preamble - Woman

(2a) When a certain immoral woman from that city heard he was eating there, she brought a beautiful alabaster jar filled with expensive perfume.

The woman was involved in some immoral activity. Using the descriptor “certain”, she was known by the guests. The woman was considered a moral outcast.

The woman likely heard Jesus teach on repentance and had a change of heart. She decided to attend and show her gratitude to Jesus. It was with great humility she attended the banquet.

Luke 7:38

Preamble - Woman

(2b) […expensive **perfume** brought] (A)
Then she knelt behind him at his **feet**, (B)
weeping. Her **tears** fell on his feet, and (C)
she **wiped** them off with her hair. (C')
Then she kept kissing his **feet** and (B')
putting **perfume** on them. (A')

The women was at Jesus' feet, behind him as he reclined at the table – a posture/place of humility. She was ashamed to face him and look at him.

Women were not allowed to touch a man, speak to a man, or even look at a man.

Letting her hair down to wipe Jesus' feet was publicly forbidden and was grounds for stoning.

Luke 7:39-40

Preamble - Simon

(3) When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would know what kind of woman is touching him. She’s a sinner!”

Then Jesus answered his thoughts. “Simon,” he said to the Pharisee, “I have something to say to you.” “Go ahead, Teacher,” Simon replied.

Simon was appalled by the woman’s actions, believing that allowing a sinful person to touch Jesus would have made him ritually unclean.

Simon looked at the exterior and saw the woman as a practicing sinner.

Simon regarded Jesus as an illegitimate rabbi/prophet for not rejecting the woman for breaking social rules.

Luke 7:41-42a (NKJV)

Parable of Two Debtors (AB B'A')

(4,4') "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. (A)
One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. (B)
And when they had nothing with which to repay, (B')
he freely forgave them both. (A')

Jesus used an Aramaic word for **debtor** that also means sinner implying that the two men had both monetary **debt** and moral **debt**.

500 denarii was equivalent to two years of income.

Luke 7:41-42a (NKJV)

Parable of Two Debtors (AB B'A')

Simon focused on the **differences** between himself and the woman.

Jesus focused on the **commonalities** between Simon and the woman.

Regardless of the amount they each owed,

(A) **Both** were **debtors**

(A') **Both** were forgiven their **debt**

(B) **Both** owed the **creditor**

(B') **Both** were unable to repay the **creditor**

Luke 7:42b-43

Epilogue - Simon

(3’) Who do you suppose loved him more after that?”

Simon answered, “I suppose the one for whom he canceled the larger debt.”

“That’s right,” Jesus said.

The women loved much by giving the sacrificial gift of expensive perfume.

Simon grudgingly agreed with Jesus by saying, “I suppose”.

Simon’s answer revealed his lack of gratitude and his failure to grasp the depth of his own sinfulness.

Luke 7:44-46

Epilogue– Simon (AA' BB' CC')

(2'a) Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon,
"Look at this woman kneeling here.

When I entered your home,

(A) **you** didn't offer me water to wash the dust from my feet,
(A') but **she** has washed them with her tears and
wiped them with her hair.

(B) **You** didn't greet me with a kiss,
(B') but from the time I first came in,
she has not stopped kissing my feet.

(C) **You** neglected the courtesy of olive oil to anoint my head,
(C') but **she** has anointed my feet with rare perfume.

The woman exceeded what was customary.

- Washed feet with her tears (vs. common water)
- Continuously kisses Jesus' feet (vs. single kiss)
- Anointed feet with costly perfume (vs. inexpensive oil)

Luke 7:47

Epilogue– Simon (AA', BB')

(2'b) "I tell you,

(A) her sins—and they are **many**—have been forgiven,
(A') so, she has shown me **much** love.

(B) But a person who is forgiven **little**
(B') shows only **little** love."

Jesus acknowledged the woman's lifestyle of sinfulness.

Jesus applied the parable to the women (explicitly)
and to Simon (implicitly).

Luke 7:48-50

Epilogue – Woman

(1’) Then Jesus said to the woman, “Your sins are forgiven.”
The men at the table said among themselves,
“Who is this man, that he goes around forgiving sins?”
And Jesus said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

Jesus forgave the woman’s sin at an earlier time.
Here, he was simply acknowledging her sin were forgiven.

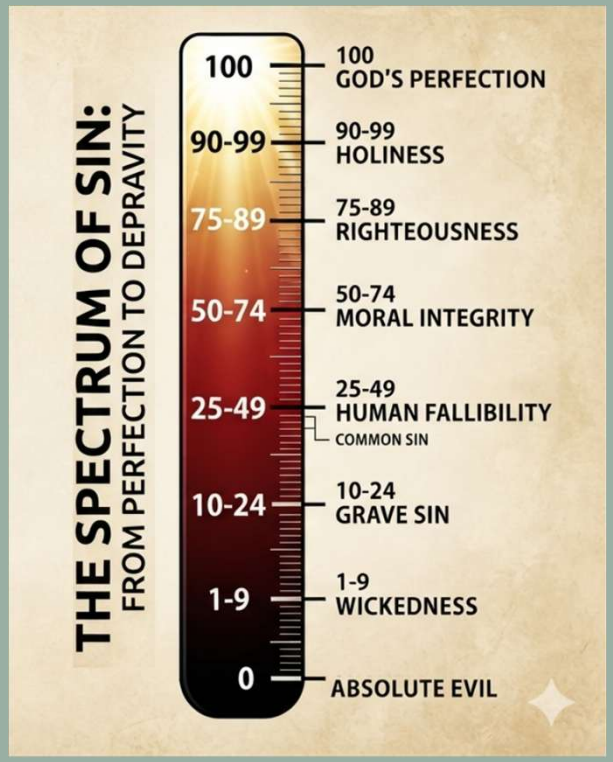
The Pharisees were reacting to Jesus’ authority to forgive sin. Elsewhere, they accused Jesus of blasphemy. (Luke 5).

The woman exhibited genuine repentance and faith.
She was saved from her many sins.

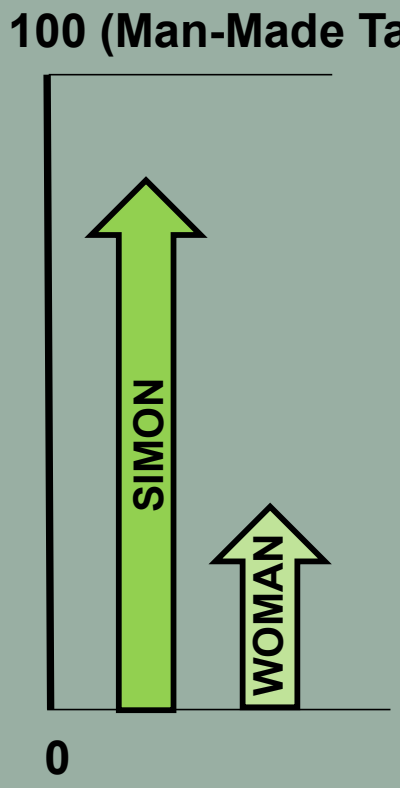
It is unknown how Simon responded to Jesus’ rebuke.

Relative Sin

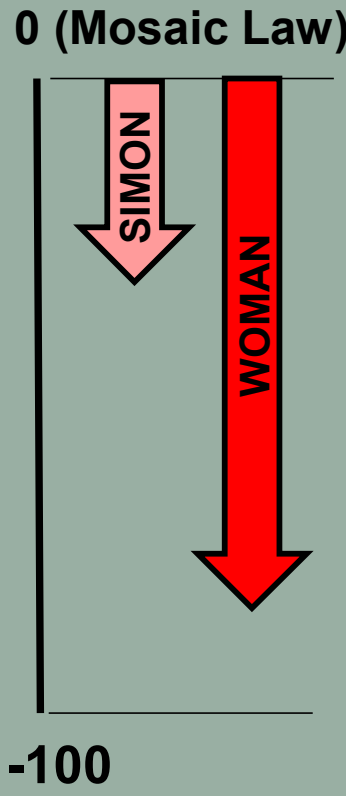
to God's Law, to Others



Man's Frame of Reference



God's Frame of Reference



What I DO

Measuring Up

Falling Short

God's Way of Salvation

If we **confess** our sins,
he is faithful and just and will
forgive us our sins and
purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9 (NIV)

What Jesus **DID**

WORKSHEET

Parable of the Two Debtors

Luke 10:25-37(NLT)

Parable of the Two Debtors

Luke 7:36-50 (NLT)

SINFULNESS

Presented in Inverted Parallel Literary Form

	Verse	Summary
1	[36] One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to have dinner with him, so, Jesus went to his home and sat down to eat.	Pharisees
2	[37] When a certain immoral woman from that city heard he was eating there, she *brought* a beautiful alabaster jar filled with expensive perfume. [38] Then she *knelt* behind him at his feet, *weeping*. Her tears fell on his feet, and she **wiped** them off with her hair. Then she kept **kissing** his feet and **putting perfume** on them.	Woman • Wash • Kiss • Anoint
3	[39] When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know what kind of woman is touching him. She's a **sinner**!" [40] Then Jesus answered his thoughts. "Simon," he said to the Pharisee, "I have something to say to you." "Go ahead, Teacher," Simon replied.	Simon judges wrongly
4 4'	[41] Then Jesus told him this story: (AB B'A') "A man **loaned** money to two people— (A) 500 pieces of silver to **one** and 50 pieces to the **other**. (B) [42] But **neither** of them could **repay** him, (B') so, he kindly **forgave** them **both**, canceling their debts. (A') NKJV: [41] "There was a certain creditor who had two **debtors**. (A) One **owed** five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. (B) [42] And when they had nothing with which to **repay**, (B') he freely **forgave** them **both**. (A')	The parable (Commonality of Simon and woman)

Parable Worksheet

Parable of the Two Debtors

Luke 7:36-50 (NLT)

SINFULNESS

Main Characters:

Main Events/Scenes:

Turning Point:

Historical-Cultural Gaps (THEN ↔ NOW):

Earthly & Heavenly Parallels:

Earthly Principle & Heavenly Principle:

Additional Literary Styles

Standard Parallel Form

(AA' AA' AA' AA')

Romans 5:16-19 (NLT)

(A) For **Adam's sin** led to **condemnation**,
(A') but God's free gift leads to our being made **right** with God,
even though we are guilty of many sins.

(A) For the **sin of this one man, Adam, caused death** to rule over many.
(A') But even greater is God's wonderful grace and
his gift of **righteousness**, for all who receive it will live in
triumph over sin and death through this one man, Jesus Christ.

(A) Yes, **Adam's one sin** brings **condemnation** for everyone,
(A') but Christ's one act of **righteousness** brings a
right relationship with God and new life for everyone.

(A) Because **one person disobeyed God**, many became **sinners**.
(A') But because one other person obeyed God,
many will be made **righteous**.

Step Parallel Form

(ABC A'B'C')

Luke 11:9-10 (NKJV)

(A) **Ask**, and it will be **given** to you;

(B) **seek**, and you will **find**;

(C) **knock**, and it will be **opened** to you.

(A') For everyone who **asks receives**,

(B') and he who **seeks finds**,

(C') and to him who **knocks**

it will be **opened**.