

Discussion/Reflection Questions

1. Why do you think the Pharisee invited Jesus to dinner? Does Luke give any clues to answer this in the context of the passage? And why do you think that Luke does not name the Pharisee until verse 40?
2. If you had to guess what the woman's "sinful life" was, what would you guess? And if you were thinking about what a "sinful life" might be today, what would you have in mind? If your thoughts are about the so-called big sins, why did you not also think of the so-called small sins like selfishness, lying, gossip, unkindness, greed, etc? Does God have a "big sin" and "small sin" list?
3. The story that Jesus tells about people and their debts and their inability to pay back sounds very much like what we hear about on our news today (bad debts and "bailouts"). It seems clear from the story (verses 40 – 43) that the person who is forgiven the bigger debt will be most grateful. Why then do you think that Simon in verse 43 begins with "I suppose?"
4. Verses 44 – 46 tell us that Simon had not given the customary courtesy to his guest. Why do you think this happened?
5. Probably the most important question for us from this story is "so what?" How does this story impact us? What lessons should we learn from it, and how should we as individuals and we as a congregation live out the lesson(s) of this passage? What would a congregation look like that was known as a community of forgiven and forgiving people?

Conversations with Jesus (III)

Pastor Alan Robinson, November 30, 2008

Luke 7:36-50 (church Bible page 731)

(36) Now one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, so he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. (37) When a woman who had lived a sinful life in that town learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster jar of perfume, (38) and 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. (39) 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."

(40) Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to tell you." "Tell me, teacher," he said. (41) "Two men owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. (42) Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he canceled the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?" (43) Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt canceled." "You have judged correctly," Jesus said.

(44) 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. (45) You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. (46) You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. (47) Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little." (48) Then Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." (49) The other guests began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" (50) Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."