

It Really is Amazing Grace - Luke 7:36-50

Imagine two people standing outside a hospital.

- One is seriously ill, but refuses to admit it. He walks confidently past the doctors, saying, "I'm fine. I don't need help."
- The other is just as sick, but she knows it. She comes through the doors weeping, reaches out for mercy, and gladly receives the physician's care.

The difference is not that one is sick and the other is healthy.

- Both need the physician. The difference is that one recognizes his need, while the other hides it behind confidence.

That is the contrast in Luke 7.

- Simon the Pharisee sees himself as a respectable man who has little need for Jesus.
- The sinful woman knows she is guilty, and she comes to Christ with tears, humility, and costly love.
- Simon offers Jesus no water for His feet, no kiss, and no oil; the woman gives what Simon withheld (Luke 7:44–46).
- Simon's problem is not that he has no sin—it is that he does not see the depth of his need.

Jesus says, "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little" (Luke 7:47, ESV).

What I want us to see this morning is the two different responses to need of Grace & Mercy

- "Luke 7 presents us with two people near Jesus, but only one truly comes to Him.
- Simon has respectable religion without repentance. The woman has a shameful past, but she comes to Christ in faith.
- The question is not, 'Which one has sinned?' The question is, 'Which one knows that he needs forgiveness?'"

Title of the Message: It Really is Amazing Grace

Luke 7:36-39 - Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. ³⁷ 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, ³⁸ 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. ³⁹ 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."

Luke 7:40-42 - ⁴⁰ And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you."

So he said, "Teacher, say it." ⁴¹ "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴² And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?"

Luke 7:43 - ⁴³ Simon answered and said, "I suppose the *one* whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have rightly judged." ⁴⁴ 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. ⁴⁵ You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. ⁴⁶ You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. ⁴⁷ 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."

Luke 7:48 - ⁴⁸ Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." ⁴⁹ And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" ⁵⁰ Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

In Luke 7:36–50, both Simon and the woman are sinners. The difference is how they respond when they encounter Jesus.

The Grace and Mercy of Jesus—and Two Very Different Responses

- Simon invited Jesus into his home, but he failed to recognize who Jesus was. He offered Jesus no customary kiss, no water for His feet, and no oil. He was near Jesus physically, but his heart remained distant.
- The woman came to Jesus knowing she had nothing to offer but her repentance, love, and worship. She didn't come defending herself or pretending to be worthy. She came broken and humbled before Jesus.
- Simon saw himself as a respectable man who had little need for mercy. The woman saw herself as a sinner who desperately needed grace.
- Jesus showed grace and mercy to the woman—not because her sin was small, but because His grace was greater.
- Her love was not the reason Jesus forgave her; her love was the evidence that she had received His forgiveness. "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much" (v. 47).

A strong takeaway

Grace says, "You don't deserve this." Mercy says, "You deserve judgment, but I will not give it to you."

- And when we truly understand the grace and mercy we've received from Jesus, the natural response is humble faith, grateful love, and worship.

As we dive in this morning, I want to remind us of what Grace & Mercy Are

- Grace: God gives us what we do not deserve—His favor, forgiveness, and salvation (Ephesians 2:8–9).
- Mercy: God does not give us the judgment we deserve; instead, He shows compassion and forgiveness (Titus 3:5; Lamentations 3:22–23).

Grace is receiving God's unmerited favor; mercy is being spared God's judgment.

The Big idea: Those who recognize the depth of their sin receive Christ's mercy with humble, grateful worship; those who deny their need expose the hypocrisy of their hearts.

Grace and Mercy Elevates Worship – Luke 7:37-38, 44-46

The woman entered Simon's house, stood behind Jesus, and wept at His feet. She wiped His feet with her hair, kissed them, and anointed them with perfume.

- Her actions were costly, personal, and humiliating. She did not come demanding acceptance. She came broken before the One who could forgive her.

- Jesus does not minimize her sin, but He demonstrates that His mercy is greater than her guilt.
- **Isaiah 1:18** - *"Come now, and let us reason together," Says the Lord, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool."*

Grace and Mercy Elevates Worship

As a result of grace and mercy, The woman's worship was visible:

She brought an alabaster flask of ointment, stood behind Jesus, washed His feet with her tears, dried them with her hair, kissed His feet, and anointed them (Luke 7:38).

- Her actions demonstrated humility.
- Her costly perfume demonstrated devotion.
- Her tears demonstrated repentance.
- Her love was not a payment for forgiveness; it was evidence that she had received grace.

Luke 7:47 - 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."

Grace and Mercy Elevates Worship

Here is the Truth we need to Apply to our Hearts.

- True worship flows from a heart amazed by mercy.
- This woman knew she was a sinner – She understood the depths of her depravity.

Words like Reverent, Repentant, Affectionate, & Extravagant could be used to describe her worship

- "When we come to grasp the depths of our separation from God and the greatness of His grace, we will worship Him extravagantly, repent humbly, and love Him deeply."
- We do not worship merely because of what Christ gives us, but because He has forgiven us and reconciled us to God

Romans 5:8 - But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Ephesians 2:12-13 - that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Romans 12:1-2 - I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

- "Reasonable" is from the Gr. for "logic." In light of all the spiritual riches believers enjoy solely as the fruit of God's mercies (Rom. 11:33, 36), it logically follows that they owe God their highest form of service.
- **Worship, not just singing, but every area of our lives are a logical response to God's mercy, not a way to earn it.**
- As His mercy transforms our thinking, it transforms the way we live (Romans 12:2).
- ***We do not worship to receive God's mercy; we worship because we have received God's mercy.***

Let me ask you – How is your worship? How is your Giving? Serving?

- We believe a Disciple of Christ shares out of the overflow of His love for Jesus
- At TFBC, we express this in **Give Time** – using your time, talent and treasure to expand the Kingdom of God!
- Maybe you cannot give extravagantly like this woman, but you can give ***cheerfully, consistently*** and ***generously*** to fund ministries and fuel the mission!

Grace and Mercy Exposes Hypocrisy – Luke 7:39-

Simon judged both the woman and Jesus: Luke 7:39

Luke 7:39 - 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.”

Grace and Mercy Exposes Hypocrisy – Luke 7:39-

From the perspective of a first-century Jewish audience, this scene would have been deeply shocking.

- To the people in that room, she was the kind of person a respectable Jewish man avoided—not someone who touched a rabbi.
- Her presence was scandalous, her touch was shocking, and her worship was socially unacceptable. But Jesus was not defiled by her sin; instead, His holiness and mercy met her at His feet.

The Pharisees had already rendered their verdict on Jesus.

- They believed Jesus was a blasphemer because He claimed the authority to forgive sins—an authority that belongs to God alone.
- They hated His message because He confronted their self-righteousness.
- They also despised the people Jesus welcomed—tax collectors, prostitutes, and sinners—people the Pharisees considered unclean and unworthy.
- In their minds, Jesus had crossed every boundary: He claimed God’s authority and embraced people they rejected.
- They had already decided who Jesus was. The question was no longer, “Who is Jesus?” but “What will we do with Him?”

Luke 7:39 – he (Simon) 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.”

- Simon thought the woman’s sin made her unworthy to approach Jesus. He failed to see that his own heart was equally dependent on mercy.
- Jesus told Simon about two debtors—one owing much and one owing little. Both were unable to repay, and both were forgiven. The one forgiven more loved more.
- Simon’s problem was not that he needed less forgiveness. His problem was that he did not recognize his need.

You can just feel the religious hypocrisy in Simon’s tone:

Luke 7:40-42 - ⁴⁰ And Jesus answered and said to him, “Simon, I have something to say to you.” So he said, “Teacher, say it.” ⁴¹ “There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴² And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me,

therefore, which of them will love him more?" ⁴³ Simon answered and said, "I suppose the *one* whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have rightly judged."

You see a similar contrast between the story in Luke 18:9-14 – Two Men Praying at the Temple

- One told God what a great guy He was, while the other would not even look up to heaven.

Luke 7 warns us that religious activity can hide a heart that has never truly been humbled by grace.

Simon was near Jesus, knew the religious customs, and hosted a meal—but he did not honor Jesus or recognize his own need for forgiveness (Luke 7:44–46).

Here is how to Apply the truth today

- **We can look respectable while remaining unrepentant.** Church attendance, Bible knowledge, and moral behavior cannot replace a humble heart before God (Mt 23:27–28).
- **We can be harder on obvious sinners than on ourselves.** Simon noticed the woman's reputation but overlooked his own coldness toward Jesus. Jesus calls us to examine ourselves before judging others (Matthew 7:3–5).
- **We can forget that we are debtors of grace too.** The difference between Simon and the woman was not that only one was a sinner; it was that only one recognized her need for mercy (Luke 7:41–43).
- **Grace should produce compassion, not superiority.** Those who understand how much they have been forgiven will become more humble, grateful, and willing to welcome repentant sinners (Ephesians 4:32).

Religious hypocrisy begins when we become more aware of someone else's sin than our own need for grace.

- *But when we remember the depth of our debt and the greatness of Christ's mercy, we stop standing over sinners in judgment and start kneeling with them at the feet of Jesus.*
- Our question should not merely be, "Do I look religious?" but, "Do I love Jesus because I know how much I have been forgiven?" (Luke 7:47–50).

Grace and Mercy Elevates Worship – Luke 7:37-38, 44-46

Grace and Mercy Exposes Hypocrisy – Luke 7:39-46

Grace and Mercy Erases Guilt – Luke 7:47-50

Luke 7:47-48 - 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." ⁴⁸ Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

Grace and Mercy Erases Guilt

I want you to see this truth: She Came Already Forgiven

- Notice Jesus' words: "Her sins, which are many, English translation are ...have been forgiven."
- The Greek tense of the verb **af-E-a-me** is perfect passive indicative.
- It is an action completed in the past with continuing results in the future.
- In a sense: **Her many sins have been forgiven, and she now stand in the continuing condition of being forgiven.**
 - She didn't come to Jesus trying to earn forgiveness. She came because she had already received forgiveness.

- We don't know exactly when or where she encountered Jesus, but something had changed. Her guilt and shame had been replaced by gratitude. Her desires were changing, and her heart was overflowing with love for the One who had forgiven her.

Jesus' point is simple: Great forgiveness produces great love.

- **Her love did not earn her forgiveness; it revealed that she had been forgiven.** Her extravagant worship was evidence of a transformed life.
- And contrast that with Simon. The woman knew she needed mercy, received grace, and responded with love and worship. Simon saw little need for forgiveness, so he showed little love.
- She had been forgiven—and she knew it.

Romans 8:1 - *There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit*

Here is the Take Away for us today:

- Her forgiveness was not something she was trying to earn through her worship; it was a settled work of God that produced her worship.
- She did not come to Jesus to purchase grace—she came because grace had already captured her heart.
- In the same way, we do not obey, serve, or worship in order to earn God's forgiveness. We respond to the forgiveness we have received through faith in Christ.
- The assurance of grace should not make us careless; it should make us humble, grateful, and eager to love Jesus.

Interesting Contrast...***Simon saw her worship but missed the mercy behind it.***

- ***He was near Jesus physically, yet far from Him spiritually.***
- ***The woman knew she was forgiven, and that assurance moved her to worship.***

So the question is not merely, "Am I religious?" but, "Has God's mercy produced love for Christ in me?"
(Luke 7:47–50; Ephesians 2:8–10).

Ephesians 2:8-10 - For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Those who know they are forgiven will not worship reluctantly; they will respond gratefully.

Friend, Has Your Faith Saved You?

- Has there ever come a time in your life when you have received the forgiveness of sin by Faith
- Bible is clear – All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God – None righteous
- The wages of sin in death – eternal separation from God in hell, a place made for the devil and his angels.
- God demonstrated his love for us in that while we were still sinner, Christ died for us
- Repent of Sin – Believe in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus -Call upon his name for salvation.

Believer, Disciples of Christ

- Religious hypocrisy is dangerous because the world is watching—and hypocrisy can make the gospel appear false. When our words profess Christ but our lives contradict Him, unbelievers may “blaspheme the name of God” because of us (Romans 2:24, ESV).
- Jesus warned against practicing righteousness merely to be seen by others (Matthew 6:1). Genuine faith should produce a life that supports our message: “Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable” (1 Peter 2:12, ESV).

The world may not understand the gospel, but it can recognize inconsistency. Hypocrisy gives people an excuse to reject the message we claim to believe. But authentic repentance and humble dependence on grace make our lives a credible witness to Christ.

For some of you, the guilt of your past is keeping you from living fully in the freedom Christ secured for you through His death and resurrection.