

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. **Enjoy discovering more about Him!**

"THE SIN OF PURITY" | LUKE 7:36-8:3 | PASTOR BRIAN BELL

WARM-UP QUESTION:

What comes to mind with the word "ointment"?

"An Immoral Woman Receives Forgiveness" (Luke 7: 36-38)

A woman known as a sinner breaks social norms and uses expensive ointment to anoint Jesus as she weeps at his feet in the middle of a dinner party. **How open are Christians today to people responding to Jesus like this woman? What are the costs and benefits of having emotional prayer and worship?**

"A Moral Man Gets 'Parabled' For The Sin of Purity" (Luke 7: 39-50)

Jesus defends this woman to Simon the pharisee, saying her outpouring of love shows she understands forgiveness. **What does that show about Jesus? What does that mean for people?**

"A Diverse Community" (Luke 8: 1-3)

Luke records some names of women who were part of Jesus' followers, which was unusual for that time and culture, because they had been healed and saved. **What are ways the Jesus followers today can cross cultural barriers and norms to invite people into God's family?**

REFLECTION QUESTION:

Jesus tells a parable about two men both had debt, one great and one small, but both were unable to repay and needed forgiveness. The story points to how both the pure and impure, moral and immoral both need Jesus and are loved by Jesus. **Have you been struggling with sinful desires lately? Self-righteous attitude? Both? Ask God this week to give you a grateful love that will lead to passionate worship.**

The Sin of Purity

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2-8 Cam/Shane: 678, HS, CK. CG. Women's. Marriage. Unfolding.
- B. Slide9 Missions Prayer: Join us TONIGHT at 6:30pm as we lift up the requests from our missionary/field workers, serving around the world. *In Agape Room.*
- C. Slide10 Israel: Go to App. Events (bottom). *Trip Brochure, Rsvp form. Also no Vax.*
- D. Prayer: My goal Jesus, is that we fall deeper in love with You, thru this story.

II. Slide11 Intro: The Sin of Purity

- A. In chapter 7 we've been looking at, *Who is this Jesus?*
 1. 1st, He is one who has power over **sickness** and **death**.
2nd, He is the One who is **The Promised One**. **And this week**, The Savior who is *worthy of our love*.
- B. Jesus has come to save *Immoral* people, & *Moral* people also. The *Impure* & the *Pure*. This morning, we meet **2 people** who are at the *North and South Pole* of the *social scale of life* in the 1st century. [the woman a sinner & Simon the sinner] and of course, *Jesus the Savior*. [Ps: Mary of Bethany did this at a *Simon/leper's* house] *comp diff*
- C. Brennan Manning said in *The Ragamuffin Gospel*, A man walked into the doctors office and said, doctor, I have this awful headache that never leaves me. **Can you give me something for it?** I will, said the doctor, but I want to check a few things out first. Tell me, do you drink a lot of liquor? **Liquor?** Said the man is indignantly. I never touch the filthy stuff. How about smoking? I think smoking is disgusting. I've never in my life touched tobacco. I'm a bit embarrassed to ask this, but you know the way some men are- do you do any running around at night? Of course not. What do you take me for? I'm in bed every night by 10 o'clock at the latest. Tell me, said the doctor, the pain in the head you speak of, is it a sharp, shooting kind of pain? Yes said the man. That's it – a sharp, shooting kind of pain. Simple, my dear fellow! Your trouble is you have your halo on too tight. All we need to do is *loosen it a bit*.

1. The trouble with **our ideals** is that **if** we live up to all of them, we become impossible to live with!
2. **Let's look at: An Immoral Women who Receives Forgiveness, and A Moral Man who Get's Parabled!**

III. Slide12a **AN IMMORAL WOMAN RECEIVES FORGIVENESS (36-38) READ THE SIN OF IMPURITY**

- A. Luke withholds her **name** and her **sin**. (A prostitute? Maybe? *A woman of the city, she had sinned much, what sort of women this is ... but it doesn't say tell us*)
- B. Also note, **she never says** anything in the story ... it's all about her **actions**.
- C. This **alabaster flask of ointment** - is *a years wage!* (it's **not old spice**, it's **not axe** body spray - we don't spray that on Jesus).
1. **And she's caught up in the moment of worship and starts to cry.** We understand that. We don't drive to church saying, *I think I'm gonna cry this morning.*
- D. Here we have a woman most likely **shamed** and **shunned** by society, who is **befriended** and **loved** by **Jesus**.
- E. I wonder if she meant to wet his feet with her tears, **or** if this was, *oh shoot I'm getting his feet all wet, let me try to dry them off?*
- F. **Now**, to dry them with her hair means, she let her hair down, which a woman only did for her husband. **This is undignified. Culturally unacceptable.**
1. **Slide12b But** she's so caught up in worship she forgets these normal social constraints. And she pours out her heart in worship. *"Grateful love for the Savior, leads to passionate worship of the Savior."* Tony Merida

IV. Slide13 **A MORAL MAN GETS "PARABLED" (39-50) THE SIN OF PURITY**

- A. (41-43) Simon gets **parabled**, it's simple but profound. [500d = 2 yrs. 50d = 2months]
1. This parable is **a picture of what Jesus has done for us.**
 2. **The gospel** brings *an impossible gift to us, in our hopeless condition.*

3. He cancelled the debt of **both** - This just doesn't happen!

a) Try this, go to your bank on Monday and **ask them** to forgive your mortgage or car loan. Tell him you went to church and you read this in the Bible. Oh, and that you would **love them a lot** if they did that!

And let me know how that goes for you.

B. **Slide14a** Jesus explains, Simon, the reason she did this is **she** is a 500 denarii sinner! She had a debt that **could not** be repayed. *And so do we!*

1. Why there **isn't great worship coming from us often**, is because we don't **Slide14b** realize, *We are a 500 denarii sinner!*

a) Maybe we, like our friend Simon here, *walk round with only \$50 bucks of conviction.* (or \$5)

2. **Slide14c** *Until we are disgusted by sin we will never be dazzled by grace*¹

3. If you just have *the cultures* view of sin, you **rename it, or minimize it, or dismiss it, but** you'll never get to this place of *worship*.

4. **Slide14d** *"Grateful love for the Savior leads to adoration of the Savior."*²

C. (44) *Simon, do you see this woman?* This is Simon about to hear the sound of the *snap* of a **bear trap** (*or a pharisee trap, or a moral trap, or a purity trap*).

1. **It's a further contrast.** Simon, you did not show me any of the norms of hospitality, *no foot washing, no kiss, no anointing.*

2. **Interesting,** To which of these did Jesus direct His severest words? To the **gross sins of the flesh**, or against insincerity and uncharitableness?

a) **Did you know that coldhearted selfishness is the most terrible defect in human nature?** Griffith Thomas [it's a *subjective debt* isn't it?]

D. It's easy for us believers to fall into *Simon's-Spiritual-Snag*.

1. The way we easily spot perversion in **others**, **but** miss our ugly heart.

2. *I call Pharisee* on us when we do!

E. **Slide15a** (47) **For she loved much, works?** [the **for** of cause, or the **for** of evidence?]

¹ Pastor Tony Merida.

² *ibid.*

1. The house exploded, **for** the gas was accidentally left on. **Cause**.

2. The house exploded, **for** I saw it w/my own eyes. **Evidence**. [here *evidence*]

F. **Then** this big point to Simon ... You are *little love*. You are a *stranger* to Jesus' forgiveness. You are *blinded* to your need of Jesus.

1. It's easy for us to *judge others* so we can look better. We often *look at her* to evaluate ourselves. **But** with *equal footing at the foot of the cross* we **Slide15b** need *the same forgiveness* as this woman. **Because** you can be *lost in morality* equally as much as being *lost in immorality*.

2. A lot of religions teach morality. **What's different about Christianity is Christ!**

G. **Slide15c** (48) *Your sins are forgiven* - not because she *earned* it, **rather** these are **evidences** that *she has already received forgiveness*. She was not *forgiven because of her love*, **rather**, she *loved because* she was forgiven. *Your sins are forgiven*, is really a word of **assurance**. [ps: only God can forgive sin] **This is the double blessing of the gospel:**

1. **Jesus forgives us our sin** (cuz there's more *mercy* in Christ, **than sin** in us) **and** we experience this forgiveness.

2. **Now after that, is the assurance that we are forgiven**. So we are not walking around *wondering* whether we are *in* or *not*.

H. (50) **What saved her?** It **wasn't** her works, it wasn't her reputation, it **wasn't** her behavior, it **wasn't** that she got religion. **What saved her was her faith**.

1. **You wanna get in on this?** It's *faith* in **Jesus**. This *faith saves*. And when you embrace it, you get to finally *go in peace/shalom*.

V. **Slide16a SIMON HAD, THE SIN OF PURITY** *purity is a powerful ideology*

A. **We see Purity in Scripture**, *both* how to **maintain** it, **and** how to **restore** it.

1. One who is **impure** is treated as an **outsider**. They are not *in the group*, *i.e. religious*.

2. But you can also be **impure** for a time **even as** an **insider**, when:
 You **eat** certain foods. **Mix** certain foods. **Prepare** certain foods **wrongly**.
 Have **sex**. During a **menstrual** cycle. Touch a **dead body**. Or are **sick**.

a) All of these make you **ritually impure**, **and** require cleansing.

B. So, if you have **sex all the time/outside of marriage**, as a **sex worker**, you're **permanently impure**. Same with someone who has **a chronic illness**.

1. **Then Jesus steps in** and starts **curing** those that seem to be **too far gone**, according to this **purity ideology**. [**He flips cause & evidence**] **i.e.**
Slide16b Purity doesn't bring/cause salvation; true purity evidences it.

2. **Then Jesus steps in** and forgives **tax collectors** from their **chronic stealing**, **and sex workers** from their **chronic impurities**.

a) Jesus challenges this **religious worldview**. He breaks through **this system of**
Slide16c purity **and** places **love** at the core instead.

C. Think with me, who do **you** today see as **impure**? See **we** build our own system of **purity** and **impurity** today, just like the Pharisees did then. [Pharisee means *separated*]

1. We do the same thing by shutting "**those people**" out. We need to protect ourselves from **them**. We shut the door and say, **thank God we are safe**. This is a mighty temptation. We fall for it all the time.

D. Lesson for us: The lady is **unwelcomed**, **yet** the **reproach** falls on Jesus.

1. She's not welcomed at first, **but Jesus** welcomes her. **He accepts** her. **He protects** her. **He defends** her. **He** takes the **scorn** on **Himself**. **He transfers** the shame on her, to **Him**.

2. **Slide16d** **And** that's what happened at the cross. **He has taken our shame, taken our place**. **And in Christ** **we** are **forgiven, accepted, protected, & defended**.

E. **Who** do **you** relate to this morning: the one who is **impure** **or** the one who is **pure**? The one who is **moral** **or** the one who is **immoral**? **Who** does Jesus wants to reach? both. Does the gospel still make you weep? Still make u sing? Still cause u to Worship?

VI. Slide 17a **A DIVERSE COMMUNITY (8:1-3)** *Read*

- A. The earliest manuscripts combine the 1st 3 vss of ch.8, to ch.7. What we see is Jesus through the eyes of women.
1. Jesus was so unique in that *he had female disciples*. Unheard of in that day. They *followed* Him, they *supported* Him. & *they just shine in the gospels*.
 2. What stands out the most with these ladies is their **gratitude & love** for Jesus that speaks so powerfully to us.
- B. What a diverse community He is attracting to Himself.
1. Jesus loves turning **sinner**s and **sufferer**s into servants. Praise God He's still doing that, and **we** are among them!
 2. Many rabbis refuse to teach women, **not Jesus**.
- C. (2) Mary Magdalene is so prominent later in the *resurrection* scene, **yet** this is the only pre-passion verse that we find her in.
1. There is no backstory for her, only this, *she was healed and saved from a 7-fold demon possession*.
 - a) **And you know what? Mary Magdalene never got over it.**
He's never gonna hear the end of it, I'm never gonna let Him go!
- D. (3) Joanna, hubby *Chuzza, Herod's Household manager*, shows Jesus' ministry has reached all the way into the palace. (Jesus reaching *not only* the **poor**, but the *wealthy*)
- E. **And Susanna**, which we know nothing of (all I could find is, that *Oh-Su-sanna* liked a guy with *a banjo on his knee*). *Oh Susanna, don't you cry for me, I come from Alabama w/a banjo on my knee.*
1. Each of these women are part of **the community**. Acts 1:14 **All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.**
 2. Think about what **community** means to these women. Especially *this great sinner*. Especially Mary Magdalene. What a beautiful band of men and women redeemed by Christ. [note *and many others*, is in the *feminine*]

F. Slide17b I think Luke is preparing us here, for the end of his book, where it is **only these ladies** that are *present at the cross, present at the burial, present at the empty tomb, and faithful to tell everybody what happened.*

G. Slide18 I saw this great meme on IG.

1. Jesus protected women. Empowered women. Honored women publicly. Released the voice of women. Confided in women. Was funded by women. Celebrated women by name. Learned from women. Respected women. And spoke of women as examples to follow. **Our turn!**

H. Keywords: Community, faith, forgiveness, mercy, religion, sin, love, worship.