

If This Man Were a Prophet; Luke 7:36-39

- I. Preconceived Ideas
 - a. We all have them
 - b. We think that someone is going to act or be a certain way based on the information we have about them
 - c. But, more often than not, our preconceived ideas are incorrect
 - d. We make judgments based on partial information or rumor
- II. Simon
 - a. Simon the Pharisee was one such person – a learned man of the Law of Moses
 - b. He invited Jesus into his home – that is what you did with a prophet of the day, invite them in and listen to what they had to say
 - c. Luke 7:36–38 (ESV); ³⁶ One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee’s house and reclined at table. ³⁷ And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, ³⁸ and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment.
 - d. Really quickly we learn that Simon doesn’t think too much of Jesus
 - e. Luke 7:39 (ESV); Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner.”
 - f. I think this attitude started way before he invited Jesus to dine with him
 - i. It was custom to open your home to those who wanted to listen to the prophet
 - ii. They were not invited in to eat, but would sit along the walls of the room and listen to the prophet speak
 - iii. It was also customary to provide certain things for your guests
 1. A basin of water for washing their feet
 - a. We don’t quite understand this custom
 - b. Abraham extended this courtesy to the Lord when He came to visit Abraham
 - c. Genesis 18:4 (ESV); Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree,
 - d. In Judges 19 we have the story of the Levite who stayed in Gibeah – his concubine was violated and killed
 - e. Judges 19:21 (ESV); So he brought him into his house and gave the donkeys feed. And they washed their feet, and ate and drank.
 2. A warm greeting – in this case a kiss on the cheek
 3. Oil for anointing
 - iv. Simon failed to give Jesus any of the courtesies afforded to dinner guests

- v. Then we see Simon thinking, “**IF** you were a prophet” (emphasis mine)
- vi. Simon had made up his mind already
- g. We often let preconceived ideas color our thinking about people, or even about Jesus
- h. If there is a God and Jesus is His Savior, then how can all these bad things be happening in our world – why would God allow COVID 19 to ravage countries
 - i. It is not God who is doing this – let’s put the blame where it belongs
 - ii. 1 Peter 5:8 (ESV); Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.
 - iii. God is not the one who is prowling around looking to devour us
 - iv. God is the one who provided us a way of escape – a release from the bondage of sin

III. A Woman of the City

- a. Some scholars equate the phrase “who was a sinner” with a prostitute
- b. The Pharisees considered anyone who did not keep all the rules and rituals of the Talmud a sinner
- c. We do know, from Jesus’ response, that her sins were moral and not ceremonial because Jesus did not tell her to cleanse herself and then present herself to the priest
- d. This ‘woman of the city’ recognized God’s way of escape – Jesus the Savior
- e. Luke 7:41–47 (ESV); ⁴¹ “A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴² When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?” ⁴³ Simon answered, “The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt.” And he said to him, “You have judged rightly.” ⁴⁴ Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. ⁴⁵ You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. ⁴⁶ You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. ⁴⁷ Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little.”
- f. Look at the difference in these two people’s actions
 - i. The woman recognized her own sinful behavior and came to the only one who could release her
 - ii. She gave Jesus what the learned Pharisee did not
 - iii. Luke 18:10–14 (ESV); ¹⁰ “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’ ¹³ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ ¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

IV. Jesus

- a. We must put away our preconceived ideas and see Jesus as He presents Himself to us in the Bible
- b. The Bible is the only authoritative work that gives us any information about Jesus
- c. Luke 4:18–21 (ESV); ¹⁸ “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” ²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ And he began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”
- d. Jesus equates Himself with the subject of this prophecy, the Messiah
- e. Matthew 26:63–65 (ESV); ⁶³ But Jesus remained silent. And the high priest said to him, “I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.” ⁶⁴ Jesus said to him, “You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.” ⁶⁵ Then the high priest tore his robes and said, “He has uttered blasphemy. What further witnesses do we need? You have now heard his blasphemy.
- f. John 8:58 (ESV); Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.”
- g. These words were written by those who walked with Jesus
- h. Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! John 1:29