



GROWTH GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS Winter Quarter - Lesson 2 - Week of January 22, 2023

Lesson: JESUS ANOINTED BY A SINFUL WOMAN

Bible Verses: Luke 7:36-50; Mark 2:15-16; Matthew 9:10-17

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. How do you demonstrate your gratitude to Jesus daily?
2. Do you ever get emotional when you think about how God has dealt with you?

DISCUSSION

Read Luke 7:36-50. A religious leader invites Jesus to his home for a party. Earlier in this chapter, we read that John was wary of Jesus because he seemed to like parties. Jesus was about going where the people were so that He could teach. Here we find Him at yet another party. Now a party in those days was a public event. Homes had open courts and the uninvited could stand around and observe the guests and the festivities. They ate, as the Romans did, with a table in the middle and many couches. Lying with their heads at the table and their feet out, the guests would form a pattern that resembled a great big star.

Jesus was reclining in this manner at the home of Simon when a woman in the crowd came up and wept over Him. Her tears washed His feet, and she dried them with her hair. In those days, it was forbidden to unbind your hair; only loose women did so. After all this, she poured expensive ointment over His feet.

Simon's reaction reveals a good deal about who he was and his reasons for asking Jesus to the party. He did not invite Jesus as a social equal and he did not provide the usual amenities for Him: the anointing of oil for the head, the ritual of foot washing, and a kiss of greeting. He invited Him as a curiosity. He heard that Jesus was a prophet and he wanted to see for himself who this questionable celebrity was.

1. Why do you suppose Luke included this story?
2. What did Luke mean to reveal from this story?
3. Is this story told in other gospels?
4. What was the relationship between Jesus and the Pharisees?
5. What do we learn about Jesus from this story?

In Simon's opinion, Jesus flunked the first test. Simon said to himself, "*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.*" And Jesus, reading his heart, said "*Simon, I have something to say to you,*" and He pointed out that this woman had done the things that Simon did not do. Because she had been forgiven so much, she washed His feet with her tears and anointed not His head but His feet with expensive ointment. Her sins, which were many, were forgiven because she loved so much.

This woman was notorious for her sins. Most suppose that she was a prostitute. Her presence in the Pharisee's home showed courage and determination. She came believing in the saving-power of Jesus and wanting to honor Him. We can imagine that as the woman anointed Jesus' feet with oil, she was overcome with emotion.

1. Who is this woman?
2. How did this sinful woman get in the house?
3. There is a lot to disrespect about this woman. What do you admire?

Note the word reclining in Luke 7:36. People reclined on low couches at festive meals, leaning on their left arm with their head towards the table and the body stretched away from it. The sandals were removed before reclining. This woman most likely intended to anoint Jesus' head but instead anointed His feet.

Jesus spent much of the three-and-a half years of His ministry hanging out with sinners. He talked with them, ate with them, cried with them, and served them. He cared about them and listened to them. Jesus said in Matthew 9:12, "Healthy people don't need a doctor - sick people do." That is why He spent His time with the needy. Jesus is the friend of people who are willing to admit that they have problems. You don't have to be perfect to be a friend of Jesus.

The essence of the gospel is agape, which is the Greek word for the love of God. God's love is unlike any other love. He loves you just the way you are now. Every other kind of love is conditional to some degree. Let's learn from His great example of agape love.

Prayer Focus: God, help me to love people from all walks of life.