

Scandalous Grace — Sermon Outline

Theme: The Friend of Sinners is a scandal to the worthy, but the only hope for the ashamed who seek forgiveness.

Text: Luke 7:36–50

Big Idea: When the world we've made (pride, performance) collides with the world God made (mercy, grace), only the humble receive the healing of Jesus.

I. Introduction: Two Realities at One Table

- A. Opening & Prayer
- B. Two realities
 1. **Adam's world:** judgment, arrogance, self-rule.
 2. **God's world:** mercy, forgiveness, courage, wisdom, love.
- C. Collision point: Every encounter with Jesus exposes which reality rules our hearts.

II. The Dinner Party Setup (Luke 7:36–38)

- A. Host: **Simon the Pharisee**—religious standing, social control.
- B. Guest of honor: **Jesus, the Great Physician.**
- C. The interruption: **"A woman... who lived a sinful life"** enters uninvited.
 1. Tears on His feet.
 2. Hair as towel (socially shocking).
 3. Alabaster perfume poured out—costly worship.
- D. Thesis of the scene: True holiness exposes the gap between appearance and reality.

Text (Luke 7: 36-50)

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

38 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 people 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 forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?”

43 Simon replied, “I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven.”

“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—as her great love has shown. But whoever 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.”

III. The Heart Revealed (Luke 7:39–46)

- A. Simon’s silent verdict (v.39): *“If He were a prophet...”*
- B. Jesus ’knowing reply (v.40): *“Simon, I have something to tell you.”*
- C. Parable of the two debtors (vv.41–42)
 1. One owes **500 denarii**, the other **50**—**neither** can pay.
 2. **Both** are forgiven—**which** loves more?
- D. Simon’s correct but incomplete judgment (v.43).
- E. Jesus ’contrast of hospitality (vv.44–46):
 1. **No water / no kiss / no oil** from Simon.
 2. **Tears / kisses / perfume** from the woman.

IV. The Gospel Pronounced (Luke 7:47–50)

- A. The logic of love: Forgiveness → Love (v.47).
- B. Declaration: **“Your sins are forgiven.”** (v.48)
- C. Identity of Jesus questioned: **“Who forgives sins?”** (v.49)
- D. Assurance: **“Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”** (v.50)

V. The God Who Knows Us Completely / coram Deo

- A. **coram Deo**—we live before the face of God; nothing hidden.
- B. Comfort: The One who knows you best loves you most.
- C. Everyone is in the story: both debtors; both need grace.

VI. The Physician at the Table (Luke 5:31–32)

- A. Jesus ’mission: not the “healthy” but the **sick**.
- B. Grace **levels the ground**—tears up spiritual résumés.

- C. Tragedy of Simon-thinking: the problem isn't being sinful; it's **pretending you're not**.

VII. The Scandal of Grace

- A. To the proud, grace looks reckless and unfair.
- B. Justice = what we deserve; Mercy = withholds what we deserve; **Grace = gives what we could never deserve**.
- C. Table of Jesus = recovery ward, not hall of fame.
- D. Result:
 1. Woman—**empty-handed** → **forgiven & full**.
 2. Simon—**full of himself** → **empty & angry**.

VIII. The Warning to the Religious (Matthew 7:21–23)

- A. Impressive ministry ≠ known by Jesus.
- B. The question is **relationship**, not résumé.
- C. Grace is free, but only the **humble** stoop to receive it.

IX. Where Do You Sit at the Table?

- A. No neutrality—guest, Pharisee, or penitent at His feet.
- B. Diagnostic questions:
 1. Am I **watching** or **worshiping**?
 2. Do I see **people** or just **their sins**?
 3. Does my life carry the **aroma of grace**?

X. The Fragrance That Fills the Room

- A. Perfume as **worship**; grace **lingers**.

- B. Reversal of contagion: not uncleanness spreading to Jesus, but **holiness** spreading to her.
- C. Cross logic (2 Cor. 5:21): He became sin so we become righteous.

XI. Application

- A. **For Seekers/Unbelievers**
 4. Two false beliefs: *I don't need Him / He could never love me.*
 5. Truth: He already **knows** and still **invites**—"Come to Me..." (Matt. 11:28).
 6. Turn from self-reliance to the **Great Physician**.
- B. **For Believers**
 1. Remember your **need**; stay amazed by grace.
 2. Posture: **Kneel**, don't spectate.
 3. Mission: See people as Jesus does—church as **hospital**, not museum.
 4. Practice the aroma: Forgiven **forgive**; Healed **heal**; Loved **love**.

XII. Invitation

- A. The table is set; the Host is calling.
- B. Come not because you're **worthy**, but because you're **wanted**.

XIII. Transition to Communion

- A. This is the feast for the forgiven; the meal for the sick made whole.
- B. Examine hearts; come as repentant sinners, not performers.
- C. Sit beside the woman; that's where **Jesus** is seated.

XIV. Closing Prayer & Benediction

- A. Prayer: Carry the fragrance of mercy into the world.

- B. Benediction: May Christ lift you, fill you with peace, and send you as the **aroma of grace**.