



# **STORIES OF LIFE!**

**The Gospel of Luke**

## **An Extravagant Love Story**

**Luke 7:36-50**

**Message #25 of 50 – S803**

**Sermon given on August 5, 2018**



**Sunday Morning Service**

**Pastor Rick Lancaster**

# An Extravagant Love Story

*Luke 7:36-50*

## Opening Comments

- Turn to **Luke 7**
- We continue a study through the Gospel of Luke – **The Stories of Life**
- As humans, one of the ways we express love is through the giving of gifts
- The more we love someone, the more extravagant we will be when giving gifts
- We will spend more than is necessary or prudent – some might even think it is wasteful
- But great love gives greatly – extravagantly!
- There have been many times when Kelly has expressed her love toward me extravagantly
- 12 years ago, she surprised with a puppy for my birthday, sadly we lost Noah recently
- Another memorable one was when she rented me a Corvette for my birthday
- Insert picture of **Corvette**
- Both were expressions of extravagant love because she knew those things would be special to me
- As amazing as those gifts were, they pale to insignificance compared to the extravagance of the love of God that offers mankind
- **Pray**

## Teaching

- **An Extravagant Love Story**
- Jesus has been busy all-day healing and teaching
- **Luke 7:36**
- This was an act of common courtesy by Simon the Pharisee
- Beyond that we can only speculate about the Pharisee's motivation

- Whenever a traveling prophet or teacher came into town, it was expected that someone take him in and feed him, give him a place to rest
- ‘sat down to eat’ = ‘reclined to eat’
- Table u-shaped, much lower than our tables
- Guests reclined on an elbow on cushions with feet extended out from the table
- **Luke 7:37-38**
- In verse 47 we are going to see that her motivation is love for Jesus
- This is one of those places where we wish we had the backstory of this woman’s actions
- Somewhere, and at some point in time, Jesus touched her life
- She has been moved powerfully to an expression of extravagant love
- ‘weeping’ = to wail, to bawl – unrestrained crying – making a scene
- All eyes are on her and what she is doing
- I am sure most people were uncomfortable with this scene – at least one is offended by it – offended that Jesus allows it
- **Luke 7:39**
- Everyone there knew this woman was a ‘sinner’ – probably a harlot/prostitute
- The Pharisee knew it – his guests knew it – she knew it – and so did Jesus – but Jesus knew more than just what she was
- The Pharisee would never let her touch him – make him ceremonially unclean
- The Holy Spirit reveals the Pharisee’s thoughts to Jesus
- **Luke 7:40-43**
- Jesus is about to show Simon the Pharisee his hypocrisy and lack of love
- He sets it up with a brief parable of two debtors who are unable to satisfy the debts they owe
- The creditor forgives both the debts – who will love him more for it?
- Then, we come the application of the truth of this parable
- **Luke 7:44-46**
- Jesus contrasts her actions with Simon’s

- Each of the things Jesus mentions were customary acts of common hospitality in that culture
- Simon omitted these things, which Jesus probably would have not mentioned had it not been for Simon's wrong attitude toward this woman
- Try to imagine the scene – everyone reclining and enjoying the meal
- Suddenly this woman appears, walks up to where Jesus is reclining and drops to her knees
- In her trembling hands is an alabaster flask – very expensive oil – which she probably intended to anoint His head with, just as Simon should have offered to do when Jesus arrived
- As she knelt there, she couldn't hold back her tears of joy
- As her tears fell, they landed on Jesus' feet, and because Simon had not offered water to wash His feet, her tears left streaks where they mingled with the dust of the road
- And because she had come to anoint Jesus she had no towel to wipe His feet clean of her tears and the dust, so she used the symbol of her beauty, her hair
- As she looked down on the feet of Him who had so changed her life, she could not stop herself from kissing His feet in an act of humble adoration – Simon neglected to give Jesus the customary kiss of greeting on the cheek
- It was customary to anoint the head of your guests with oil – probably common olive oil – refreshing – symbol of welcome – she came with fragrant oil – highly valuable
- Simon is offended by her actions – Jesus acknowledges and commends her for them
- **Luke 7:47**
- Jesus doesn't minimize her sin or justify them – she was a great sinner
- All her sins were forgiven
- Now, don't get the wrong idea – it wasn't because of what she did to Jesus that earned her forgiveness
- Nothing you can do to earn forgiveness – it is the grace of God – unearned, unmerited

- Jesus is saying, you can tell how much she has been forgiven because she loved extravagantly
- But someone, like you Simon who loves only a little, shows you have not been forgiven as much as she was
- That might not have resonated with Simon, until you go back and examine the parable a little closer – but first
- **Luke 7:48-50**
- This woman's extravagant acts of love were evidence of what she knew Jesus had done for her
- She knew what she was, and she knew that because of Jesus she was no longer bound by her past
- She was free, and she knew it, and so she loved extravagantly
- We don't know how Simon reacted to this exchange with Jesus
- Jesus was trying to get Simon to see something about himself
- Simon was a Pharisee – he lived his life striving to live according to the Laws given to Moses by God
- Believed that by living according to those laws, that He was not a sinner, that his adherence to the Law made him righteous
- Jesus outed him as a sinner, maybe not as bad as the woman, but still a sinner **Romans 3:23**

**All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God**

- Some people sin more than others do – but everyone sins
- Everyone does things that they want to do that God disapproves of
- There is one huge truth in this text that we can't miss
- Let me give you a modern illustration of this truth
- Let's imagine for a moment that we don't buy cars the way we do
- Suppose you had to drive a car that reflected how big a sinner we are
- Insert picture of **Lamborghini**
- You may not know what a Lamborghini is when you see one on the road, but you notice it – at least I do
- The woman in our account would be a Lamborghini sinner – everybody who saw her knew she was a great sinner
- Insert picture of **Honda Civic**
- There are some cars on the road that are so common that you wouldn't notice it at all – This is Simon the Pharisee – doesn't look like a sinner

- A Honda Civic costs about a tenth of what a Lamborghini costs
  - A day is coming when we are going to have to settle with our creditor – God
  - You will drive you Lamborghini life or your Honda Civic life up to the checkout window
  - Simon the Pharisee believes he is going to be okay on that day
  - He will set before God all his achievements in the keeping of the Law
  - He will lay out all the good things he has done for the poor
  - He will tell God about all his religious practices – his prayers, fasting and giving to the temple
  - Turn to **Matthew 7**
  - God will look upon them with sadness and tell them, ‘This is not the currency of heaven! You can’t use these to settle your debt!’ Like trying to make car payment with Monopoly money! It’s of no value!
  - Nothing you do on this earth will pay your debt for sin
  - Jesus addressed people like Simon the Pharisee
  - **Matthew 7:21-23**
  - Simon believes his righteousness will somehow offset the few sins in his life
  - The sinful woman knows she is spiritually bankrupt – knows that she could never pay for her Lamborghini life
  - And then she meets Jesus – He helps her to see the reality of her Lamborghini life and invites her to repent and she does
  - She then has the currency of heaven **Psalm 51:17**
- The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart—these, O God, You will not despise.**
- The Son had set her free and she was free indeed – she tossed the keys to her Lamborghini life at the feet of Jesus and He canceled her debt
  - **Psalm 34:18**
- The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit.**
- She had experienced the extravagant love of God through forgiveness by faith in Jesus and her response was to love extravagantly
  - So, my question to you is, what do you think is going to pay your sin debt?

- If you think there is anything you can do or not do in this life that will satisfy your debt for sin, you may be eternally mistaken
- Only forgiveness through the cross of Christ can save you
- Jesus died on the cross to pay your sin debt – only His death could satisfy your debt to God
- I am guessing that most of you have accepted Christ
- So, my question to you is, how much do you love Jesus?
- Knowing her story, we know the sinful woman loved extravagantly
- Want to end with six super-quick things she did
- First – **Went** – She went where Jesus was – Where will you go to express your love to Jesus – Where does He want you to go?
- Second – **Wept** – These were tears of overwhelming joy – If Jesus has saved you – there ought to be an obvious emotional response of joy
- Third – **Washed** – She served Jesus by doing what someone else should have done – what you do to the least of Christ’s people, you do to Him – What are you doing for Jesus to show Him your love?
- Fourth – **Wiped** – It was culturally unacceptable for her to let her hair down in public – She publicly humiliated herself to express her love for Jesus - Extravagant love does not allow political correctness or pride to hinder its expression
- Fifth – **Worshipped** – Then she kissed His feet in adoration, ignoring those who were watching or judging her actions – she had an audience of One – Extravagant love calls for abandoned worship for Him whom we love
- Sixth – **Wet** – She anointed His feet with what was probably the most precious thing she owned – it was, for her, extravagant – Can you say that you have given extravagantly to Jesus?
- Do you love much or little? If you need to, go to God and ask Him to remind just how much he has forgiven you
- Insert picture of **Lamborghini/Honda Civic**
- And then you start loving Jesus extravagantly, because He loved you extravagantly first!
- **Pray!**