

What does a saved woman look like?



We might be tempted to judge by

- Appearance
- Personal history
- Moral performance

Luke 7:36-39 (NRSV)

One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and took his place at the table. And a woman in the city, who was a sinner, having learned that he was eating in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster jar of ointment. She stood behind him at his feet, weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair. Then she continued kissing his feet and anointing them with the ointment.

Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw it, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him—that she is a sinner."

Luke 7:40-43 (NRSV)

Jesus spoke up and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." "Teacher," he replied, "speak." "A certain creditor had two debtors; one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they could not pay, he canceled the debts for both of them. Now which of them will love him more?" Simon answered, "I suppose the one for whom he canceled the greater debt." And Jesus said to him, "You have judged rightly."

Luke 7:44-47 (NRSV)

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 bathed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which were many, have been forgiven; hence she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little."

Luke 7:48-50 (NRSV)

Then he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." But those who were at the table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" And he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

Appearance?

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Personal History?

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Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw it, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him—that she is a sinner."

Moral Performance?

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Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw it, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him—that she is a sinner."

Back Story

- We have nothing that suggests she had spoken to Jesus previously
- We know she was a prostitute:
 - She survived by doing the most degrading thing a woman can endure
- Something she saw/heard from Jesus made her throw away her visible means of support and end her old life
 - The jar was broken

Back Story

- Probably still in Nain where Jesus raised a widow's son
- Jesus has been announcing the same thing everywhere he went

Jesus has been saying the same thing over and over again

Spirit of the LORD is upon **me**,
for he has anointed **me**:

To **preach** good news to the poor he has sent **me**:

To **proclaim** for the captives **release**,
and to the blind sight

To **send forth** the oppressed in **release**;

To **proclaim** the year of the LORD's favor.

Translation by Joel Green

He rolled up the scroll, gave it to the attendant, sat down,
all eyes fixed on him...

"**Today is fulfilled** this scripture in your hearing"

Back Story

- This woman believed Jesus
- She likely saw Simon and his friends intentionally insult Jesus by refusing him guest hospitality protocol
- She couldn't stand it, comes in, and honors Jesus when the righteous insult him risking continued spite and rejection by those around

Why is she weeping?

- Gratitude?
- Anger?
- Grief?
- Repentance?
- We're not told

She wants them to see Jesus as SHE sees him

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Jesus wants all to see her as HE sees her

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Jesus says something of her that he says of none of the other esteemed guests

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What does it mean that she is “saved”?

- This doesn't seem to be a context discussing “life after death”.
- There were likely a very practical reasons she was a prostitute and we have no reason to believe Jesus resolved this for her.
- We have no record of subsequent contact with Jesus and it doesn't look like the town big-wigs are looking to welcome her into “respectable” society

What we need

- Faced death with assurance, confidence even joy (in this case face poverty for her)
- To live with your own past, to get absolute peace of conscience. Deep self-acceptance, able to see ourselves as forgiven 100%
- To forgive your enemies regardless of what they've taken from you, from the heart, 100%.

Did Simon get it?

- Faced death? Simon's games surrounding social debt reveal a deep insecurity and a need to try to save himself.
- To live with your own past: Simon gives no indication he thinks he has anything to repent of. He's blind to himself so he has no need for Jesus
- To forgive your enemies: Simon is in danger of putting Jesus in the "enemy" category because he can't forgive this woman.

What has she gotten?

- Faced death? She has found something of such great value that revenue loss is nothing.
- To live with your own past: She can come into this room and honor Jesus in this sacrificial way out of pure joy
- To forgive your enemies: She doesn't fear a room full of "enemies", all she sees is Jesus and all she wishes to do is to honor him. She has found love

If it's available to her, it's available to you

- Her past was costly:
 - She caused enormous destruction in her own life and probably in the village
- Her future was uncertain:
 - Leaving her profession may have made her a beggar
- She was lost in love and gratitude no matter what anyone else said

How you can get what she had

- Believe his declaration
 - Today is the day of your salvation
 - It goes forward and never ends
- See his deep acceptance of you that your heart longs for
- Live out of that gratitude and the joy comes as you begin to be able to love even your enemies.

We have even more available to us

- He demonstrated his love by his death on the cross
- The coming age of God's reign began with his resurrection
- The Spirit of Christ is present to change our hearts and bind us together
- What holds us back?