

**The Character of Jesus 21**  
**Jesus' Feet Anointed in the House of a Pharisee**  
**Luke 7:36 - 50**

- Characteristic: Forgiveness
  - All Pharisees were not equally embittered against Jesus (Nicodemus, John 3:1 – 21, 7:7:45 – 52). This Simon (v 40) appears to be investigating.
  - Alabaster flask: carved from gypsum (same material as sheet rock). Because of its malleability, it was easily sealed against a gypsum stopper. The oil made it translucent. This was a typical container for anointing oils.
  - Sinner: likely, she was a prostitute, but she may have been engaged in other unlawful pursuits. Whichever, she was well known. And, she likely had a good cash flow.
  - (38) The servants of Simon would have ignored her, so she had no access to water with which to wash Jesus as-yet-unwashed feet. The servants could not dismiss her without creating a scene. Such banquets were held in the courtyard of the house, and people could semi-freely enter the area. But, few uninvited did so for fear of being shamed by not being asked to join the meal.
  - Neither the woman's rationale for attending nor her identity is given. From Jesus comments, she apparently felt either forgiven or in need of forgiveness.
  - (39) Simon incorrectly assumed that a prophet would (1) know everything and (2) avoid contact with undesirables.
  - (40 – 43) Jesus was reading minds again.
  - (44 – 46) The servants of Simon had not performed the duties of hospitality upon Jesus likely because Jesus was obviously poor. Only the well-to-do were so honored.
  - (47) Note that all the characters loved because they were forgiven. They were not forgiven because they loved. (see 1 John 4:10, 19)
  - (48 – 49) Although not given directly, Simon assumed that Jesus was the one forgiving.
  - (50) Note that salvation is not the product of either being forgiven or loving. Forgiving is what God does as a natural outgrowth of His character, whether the individual is suited to the eternal kingdom or not. What saves us from ourselves is faith. Trusting God results in peace with God and with oneself.
- Applications of forgiveness:
  - Do we understand our own shortcomings?
    - We do not need to magnify small inadequacies. This practice focuses on failure, leaving nothing about which to rejoice. Rather, if we cannot see major flaws, we have been blinded through self-deception.
  - Do we love God for that re-established relationship despite our untrustworthiness?
    - We should not feel guilty or unworthy. The choice to forgive was God's, not ours. Rather, it is our job to respond appropriately.
    - Did the woman weep out of sorrow or joy?
  - Do we trust God that we are forgiven?
    - Guilt is distrust.
  - Do we have peace through that trust?
    - Perfect love casts out fear.