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# Sunday School Lesson

TOPIC:

## “Saved by Faith”

Luke 7:36-50

VERSE DISCOVERY: Luke 7:36-50 (KJV, Public Domain)

### Prepare

- Before class, do a quick search to find out and note the different ways oil was used during the Bible era. Feel free to write down some of your finding and even share pictures of oil being used in different ways.

Then, ask the class on the many ways oil is used today (feel free to bring in examples of various oils). What are the similarities? What are the differences? Open a discussion about the value of oil both then and now, but make sure your class knows, the lesson wasn't really about the oil or the expensiveness of the gift represented in the perfumed oil. The lesson is about one woman's heart toward her Savior. It's about a change that took place in the life of this sinner, and the love she couldn't help to express in the service she performed for the Lord, such as washing His feet with her tears and the oil, and drying them with her hair.

Jesus isn't after the gifts, He's after our hearts. No matter the value of any oil then or now, a heart turned to Him in the most precious gift of all.

- A heart turned to Jesus is a repentant heart full of faith. It's a heart that He frees from the ravages of sin. Do an online search and find an object lesson about Jesus cleansing us from sin, or the removal of sin, or a repentant heart to use as a lead-in for this lesson.

### Explore – Full Lesson Available on pages 5-11

In Matthew 26:7 it says, **“There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat.”** From those words, that so echo closely to the text covered in this lesson, I wrote:

*“Each of us possesses the precious. Each of us has within our being an ointment of appreciation to our Lord. Each of us carries the sense that without Him we are nothing, therefore, what I do have I pour out for Him.*

*Much of our culture is self-seeking. But God is asking for flags of surrender to be waved for service. That we give up and pour out all for Him. That we show the world a thing or two about true love; true appreciation to a Savior who poured out all for us.*

*Do I mean empty your bank accounts? That's not what I am speaking of here. I'm talking about service. Good examples of selfless service are hard to find in our age. The way for many to see something beautiful in Christian service is blocked by the hoarding of blessings to oneself. The gain for self has dimmed a light that once so richly shone. Self has taken place on a pedestal that it was not meant to mount.*

*Jesus calls us to the service of this woman who gave up her best to bless. When was the last time we gave up our best to bless others? When was the last time we put our wants and desires on the back burner and put the thoughts and cares of others in the forefront?*

*Despite scathing ridicule, the woman unashamedly approached Jesus with her expensive, yet still, inadequate gift. You see, for all He did for us, no gift can repay. The costliest of earthly possessions and service can't scratch the surface of reward for what He accomplished on the cross. Yet, we are compelled to press forth and give our best.*

*"In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works..." (Titus 2:7, KJV). It's time for a new pattern to be laid. The foundation of self must dissipate, and new groundwork needs to be founded on who He is in our lives and all that He has already done. It's time to show the world a different lifestyle. A life built on pouring out.*

*When we pour out for Jesus, the preciousness within us becomes evident. Man can then see the good that was once hidden. He can see the difference that was once disguised. When we release the precious that is in us, we become vessels that honor the Lord; for it was on the cross when He poured out the precious for us.*

*The world needs a visual aid. When they see us break the box and release the preciousness of good works inside, they will "glorify your Father which is in heaven," (Matthew 5:16, KJV)." (©WordForLifeSays/When the Precious is Poured)*

## Activities

- The woman, considered a sinner, released her tears to flow over the Savior's feet in humility, gratitude, and repentance from her heart. The Savior spoke release over her and forgave her sins.

Anyone who has ever come to Christ has experienced this release. Jesus Christ fulfilled the obligation of every sin debt against us and offered us freedom and new life in its place.

What advice would you give someone who is struggling and needs to find this holy release you have experienced? Write your response on the **Adult Journal Page**.

For kids, the woman who came to the dinner received love and forgiveness from Jesus. How can you tell someone about the love and forgiveness Jesus offers? Write it on the **Kid's Journal Page**.

- In the **Draw the Scene** section, students can color the provided sheet. For the drawing portion of this exercise, students can draw the oil flowing from the flask onto the footprints that represent Jesus' feet.
- Students can put together an **Alabaster Flask Lace-Up Craft** by printing out the sheet on site (cardstock is best) and decorating before punching holes around the perimeter of the flask. I used gold ribbon to lace with and I also cut a slit in the top of the vase to symbolize expensive oil flowing from it.
- Alternate activity sheets such as **Word Search, Crossword, and more** are available for those who want to only work with printed materials.

## Review

- Commit to memory the base verse from the lesson: ***"And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." Luke 7:50***
- Fill out the review sheet provided (page 12)

## Life

Release and forgiveness are a wonderful feeling and truth to behold and experience from Christ. Write five Bible verses based on receiving God's forgiveness (ex. Matthew 6:12; 26:28; Acts 13:38; 26:18; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; 1 John 1:9). Carry these with you to remind you the precious gift you have received from Jesus far outweighs any gift you or any other can give.

TOPIC:

## “Saved by Faith”

Luke 7:36-50

### VERSE DISCOVERY: Luke 7:36-50 (KJV, Public Domain)

*Forgiveness is something none will make it to heaven without. It doesn't matter who you are or what one has done in life, from the highest to the lowest, without accepting the life Christ offers through His salvation and forgiveness, we will not make it in. The Bible records, "If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with You, that You may be feared," (Psalm 130:3-4).*

*Who could stand? Absolutely no one! (See Romans 3:10). Without His covering and remission of sins, the pathway to heaven will be blocked. It doesn't matter if one's walk of life is a Pharisee or a prostitute (as some suppose the woman in this lesson was). There is not an individual who is worthy enough to enter the gates of glory without Jesus' forgiveness.*

*Question: What would happen if today God sat down and took account of all the wrongs we have done? What would it be like if we stood before Him unable to pay what we owe? We were there! Jesus knew the predicament that humanity was in. He knew that man could never get himself out of the debt of sin, so through Him we obtain that freedom along with grace, mercy and compassion as a people who don't deserve it.*

*The Bible reminds us, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," (Romans 5:8). I guarantee if we were to look at ourselves, we could not fathom how many times our accounts would have gone unpaid had it not been for the blood of Christ. But thank God, He acted in love to save to us! No just us – but everyone who comes to Him in faith regardless of the background of sin.*

*The verses of study in this lesson will tell of one woman's enormous expression of love for Jesus at having her sins forgiven and the criticism it brought.*

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## A SINNER'S PRECIOUS GIFT

**Luke 7:36-38** “And one of the Pharisees desired him that he could eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee’s house, and sat down to meat. And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.”

It wasn't unusual then nor is it today for a respected teacher/preacher of God's word to be invited to dine with officials. Jesus opened Himself to people from all walks of life (even the Pharisees who were often seen at odds with Him), and without reservation **“he went into the Pharisee’s house, and sat down to meat.”**

We are not told exactly how long He was there but during the process of the meal came a disturbance at dinnertime. **“A woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster box of ointment.”** At this point of the lesson it is not immediately known her plans but just the fact that this woman of ill repute, who many suppose her to be a prostitute, dared entered a Pharisee’s house and draw near to a respected Rabbi drew eyes of speculation at her coming.

Some reading her story today may think how bold of her to come near to Jesus in her dejected state. Rest assured, those at dinner didn't think her bold. They probably thought her even more rude and full of sin to think to defile the atmosphere with her presence. Honestly, what Pharisee would normally let the likes of her come into his very home? It was unheard of. Since the crowds often gathered to hear Jesus speak wherever He went, she came in amongst some of the others until who she is caught the attention of the religious elite.

Nonetheless, she was there with all that she had in her facing the shame of her wrongs she saw etched in the faces of the onlookers. Yet, they were not the audience whose attention she was seeking. Her heart drew her to the feet of Jesus. This is where she stood humbly holding her precious gift, an **“alabaster box of ointment,”** (an expensive gift to say the least which spoke volumes of her sacrifice). With the feelings of all that she was as opposed to all that He would

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do for her – it was overwhelming. This is what happens when sin meets with Savior. The tears would not be bidden to stop. The heart and spirit within spoke through the flow from her eyes.

Living in sin for so long she recognized her unworthiness before the Sovereign. It doesn't take a genius for us to see that she saw herself and Jesus in a different light than everyone else present. Did no one else there see their sin for what it was? Did any present even believe they had sin to repent of? Or, was it just the nature of her sin drew extra scowls as opposed to the hidden things in other's hearts?

Regardless, her heart response came through **“weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.”** Her actions there may have seemed inappropriate to those eyeballing her, but she received no correction from Jesus. Sorrowfulness over one's sins is always a most appropriate response and she expressed that sorrow in the humblest way she knew how.

The feet were particularly dirty, especially in the day where sandals and dirt roads met daily. From a previous article titled *Wash Me Jesus*, I wrote (speaking of Jesus washing the disciples' feet):

*“In case you didn't know, this was a very gross job reserved for the lowest of servants in the house. The roads were not paved but rather dusty and muddy and littered with all types of animal material left behind (if you catch my meaning). Open sandals were the norm of fashion which really didn't do anything to keep the elements of all that had been stepped on out. Feet stank and were blistered, sore and probably repulsive to us today. No such thing as a pedicure back then.” (Word For Life Says)*

Yet, this is where this sinful woman positioned herself and performed the task that others didn't want. She did it without complaint, rather she cried over her pitiful state compared to His holiness. Her tears become the water basin and her hair became the towel. Anointing his feet with the costly gift of love, somehow, she knew despite its extravagance, it would never be enough to repay what He would do in taking away her sins. Therefore, with love and sorrow meeting together in her heart, she kissed His feet unashamedly.

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## CHRIST'S PRECIOUS GIFT

**Luke 7:39-43** “Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner. And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.”

As if her actions weren't appalling enough, Simon the Pharisee thought Jesus' were more so. The self-righteous have a way of silently judging the actions and suppositions of others while maintaining a high regard for their own interest and view of self.

This Pharisee was taken aback more by Jesus, I think, than this woman. She was a noted sinner, and nobody expected better of her. But, Jesus... He had his mind made up about Him. Whatever reason pressed on him to invite Jesus to dinner in the first place, the fact is at this point he thinks of Jesus in a low fashion to the point of questioning in himself whether or not He is truly a man of God at all or not: **“If he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.”**

The word “if” tells the story of where he believes Jesus is coming from. A prophet is a holy man of God. Throughout history they have been special vessels set aside to be God's spokesmen. One who claims connections with God as tight as Jesus claims should know or at least sense sin when they see it. Therefore, why would He let the likes of her even come near Him, let alone touch Him as she has done? One conclusion comes to mind as far as the Pharisee sees. To him, Jesus is not a real prophet.

Too bad so many focus only on what appears to be so on the outside in that day as well as our own. Earlier, explaining His choice to eat with sinners, Jesus taught, “They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick,” (Luke 5:31). Jesus was not, and has never, and never will entertain sin! Please get that right! However, Jesus knows that people from all manner of life need a Savior regardless of how the rest of the world views them. It may be harder for those

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such as the self-righteous Pharisees to see their need, but for this woman and others like her, she had no problem weeping at the feet of Jesus.

Jesus, knowing what he was thinking, used this as an opportunity to shed some spiritual light on the darkness of his heart and others in the room who may be inwardly scowling as well. With a parable He spoke of a **“creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.”** Both owed the creditor, one more than the other, significantly so; yet, neither had means to pay back accordingly. In either situation they were both subject to whatever the creditor should do to penalize their faulty stance.

In that day they couldn't file bankruptcy and get a clean slate to start over. There were no government assisted credit remediation programs. In other areas of the Bible it tells of stories where children could be taken to work off debt (2 Kings 4:1-7); he and all his family could be sold into slavery (Matthew 18:24-25); and, so on. A debt owed would be a debt repaid one way or another. I find it no small coincidence that when teaching the disciples how to pray they Lord's Prayer, the words rendered in midst, plead: “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,” (Matthew 6:12), for truly it is and was a debt owed that could never be repaid by human standards.

Nonetheless, in the telling of His parable, Jesus noted the actions of the creditor. He took it upon himself, as the one who had the power to demand payback, to remit the balance and cancel the charge against both. **“He frankly forgave them both.”**

Simon was probably startled a little by its telling because not too many persons would cancel a debt so easily and not demand payment. Rarely does one walk away from money, especially if it was yours to begin with. The creditor had the right to obtain what was lawfully his, but he chose, out of compassion (we are assuming), not to do so.

Drawing him out of his musings, Jesus asked, **“Which of them will love him most?”** Simon's response, whether he wanted to admit it or not, was appropriate. He said, **“I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most.”** He that stood to lose the most but gained the most grace instead – it is he that will be the most grateful and **“love him most.”**

When forgiveness erases debt and pardon has been enacted that a life may remain to thrive in freedom, it inspires love. “He that covereth a transgression seeketh love...” (Proverbs 17:9). If

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this is true for a man how much more with God? Jesus therefore said, **“Thou hast rightly judged.”**

**Luke 7:44-47 “And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.”**

If Simon failed to do what was according to custom for an honored guest one must question his real motives for inviting Jesus to dinner at all. Was there a genuine interest in Jesus and what He represents, or was it another worked up ploy of some of the Pharisees to trap Jesus in words or actions? At this point one can only speculate.

According to custom everything the woman did in an over the top fashion should have already been performed as normal service for a guest coming into a house, especially the house of a respected Pharisee. We have already discussed about the feet being washed (which Simon failed to provide for). But, other social codes performed were the kiss of greeting by the host (which Simon failed to do; for examples see Romans 16:16, 1 Corinthians 16:20, 2 Corinthians 13:12), and anointing the head with oil (which again, Simon fell short of social courtesy). These were ways to express honor and respect, and help refresh one when coming into a house, particularly to a dinner or feast. But this sinful woman offered up extravagant oil for His feet whose perfume would fragrance the whole house.

Jesus said of her, **“Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much.”** Her actions spoke volumes of being remorseful and repentant. No, her works did not save her. No, her expensive gift did not make room in heaven for her. At some point she realized the great relief Jesus could bring to her messed up life. Did she hear Him through a previous teaching? Who knows? What matters now is her humility of heart before the Savior seeking forgiveness.

Jesus said, **“For she loved much”** because she was forgiven much. Whereas one who believes they are alright may not express the same deep regard for forgiven sin. As opposed

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to **“whom little is forgiven,”** that individual may take for granted the gift of grace, as hinted at in the story of the two debtors.

**Luke 7:48-50 “And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.”**

**“Thy sins are forgiven,”** were the blessed words the Savior spoke over the sinner here and in our life as well. Jesus didn’t justify what she did, but He forgave her. Let me make this very clear again, God will never, ever condone our sin or pat us on the back for it, but we can be free from them. Like that woman, we could be standing in the midst of our mess, but He is ready, holding the keys to your release. **“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness,”** (1 John 1:9). Turn to Him in all humility of heart, confess and accept it today!

**“Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.”** Coming to Jesus with all our wrongs and trusting Him to heal and forgive is a walk of faith; steps that begin with believing in Him as the Savior of our soul. It’s the only way to find true peace in one’s life.

No matter who you are or where you are from, Jesus can forgive any sins of those who come to Him in faith and trust in His free gift of salvation. Today, if you are not born again and you want to find release as the woman in today’s lesson did, I urge you to take care of it immediately.

Speaking with Nicodemus one night, Jesus said, **“Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God,”** (John 3:5). **“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost,”** (Acts 2:38).

Be blessed, come to Him in faith and accept His forgiveness today!

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**TOPIC:**

## “Saved by Faith”

**Luke 7:36-50**

**Please Answer the Review Questions Below**

1. **T or F.** The Pharisee, named Peter, welcomed Jesus in his house for dinner. (Luke 7:36, 39-40)
2. The woman who came in the house during the dinner was a \_\_\_\_\_. (Luke 7:37)  
**A. Sister      B. Sinner      C. Servant      D. Saint**
3. Recall the actions of the woman in the space below. (Luke 7:37-38)

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4. Why did her actions bring criticism? (Luke 7:39)

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5. “Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she \_\_\_\_\_ much.” (Luke 7:47)

**A. Sorrowed      B. Cried      C. Loved      D. Needed**

6. **T or F.** Simon, the Pharisee, believed Jesus was the Son of God. (Luke 7:39)

7. Jesus told the story of two debtors. They both owed, one more than the other, but both were not able to repay. The creditor released them both from their obligation. How does this story compare with what Jesus did for us on the cross?

Jesus told the woman, “Thy faith hath saved thee.” How does faith play a key role in experiencing that release?

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