

The Jesus We Thought We Knew

March 25, 2018

VIII. Jesus' Mission: A Revolution of Grace.

A. Today, the Church that we are most familiar with attracts the type of people that Jesus was most suspicious of. The educated. Those of reputation. Those of social status. The prosperous. In short You and Me!

1. What has changed since the Early Church?
2. Why don't "sinners" and "second class citizens" feel comfortable around some of us as they did around Jesus?
3. How did Jesus, the only perfect person in history, manage to attract the imperfect?
4. A Bible School student once said, "Legalism in the Church has created a barrier of strict rules that makes non christians feel uncomfortable."
5. What would it take for the Church to become a place where everyone, the people of position and the homeless to feel welcome and a legitimate part?

Luke 7:36-49 (NIV)

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?”

B. We can observe multiple scenes like this one in the Gospels!

1. The woman caught in adultery.
2. The Samaritan woman at the well. Many many others!
3. Jesus’ grace was slippery and hard to get your mind around.
4. Sin was very concrete, visible and easy to point out!

C. Wendy Kaminer, a Jewish lady said this about Christianity:

“As an article of faith, this doctrine of salvation by grace is remarkably unappealing to me. It takes, I think, remarkable disregard for justice to idealize a God who so values belief over action.”

1. In the time of Christ, society was in effect, a type of “religious caste system”.
2. The Pharisees generally flipped out over Jesus’ socializing with children, sinners, Samaritans, lepers and lunatics!
3. From the comfort of our “U.S. middle class, 21st Century” caste, we readily lose sight of the message of Christ!
4. The Gospel seen through Third World eyes can look different from the Gospel preached in many U.S. churches today!

D. We can read of Jesus’ life and ministry, but then easily lose its true importance in the comfort of middle class America in the 21st Century!!

1. Remember, Jesus gave God a face!! He may not have ended all of the suffering of a fallen world.....today, but He did answer the question on the lips of many..... “DOES GOD CARE?”

Hebrews 1:1-3, (NIV)

1 In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, **2** but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. **3** The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. **8** But about the Son he says,
“Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever;
a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.
You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions
by anointing you with the oil of joy.”
He also says,
“In the beginning, Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth,
and the heavens are the work of your hands.
They will perish, but you remain;
they will all wear out like a garment.
You will roll them up like a robe;
like a garment they will be changed.
But you remain the same,
and your years will never end.”

2. Remember, Simon Peter cursed and denied that he even knew who Jesus was!
3. Then later he was anointed and commissioned to lead the Church into the future!!

Romans 8:1-4 (NIV)

8 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, **2** because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.

3 For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, **4** in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Romans 8:1-4 Easy-to-Read Version (ERV)

8 So now anyone who is in Christ Jesus is not judged guilty. **2** That is because in Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit that brings life made you[a] free. It made you free from the law that brings sin and death. **3** The law was without power because it was made weak by our sinful selves. But God did what the law could not do: He sent his own Son to earth with the same human life that everyone else uses for sin. God sent him to be an offering to pay for sin. So God used a human life to destroy sin. **4** He did this so that we could be right just as the law said we must be. Now we don't live following our sinful selves. We live following the Spirit.