

Blessings without Strings

We are all so blessed just as the woman was in this story. She knew she was a sinner and she wanted to be saved from

her sins. She believed that Jesus was the one who could save her and so she sought Him out. Maybe it wasn't in a very orthodox way, at least not according to the Pharisees. They kept trying to see if they could trick him and get something he was doing that they could use against him. One Pharisee named Simon decided he would invite Christ for dinner. He wanted to impress this stranger who was wondering about town and performing miracles. He put out a festive banquet and invited the people he wanted to have. But when the banquet was started a woman came in who was known around the town as a sinner. She entered the home of Simon and was carrying an alabaster box with her with an expensive ointment. She went to Christ and wept. She washed his feet with her tears and dried it with her hair. Then she anointed His feet with the oil.

Well, the Pharisee wasn't about to go this far! Simon began to doubt if he had really chosen the right person to attend the banquet. After all, if this was a real prophet he would have known that she was a sinner; and he was a Pharisee. He wasn't a common sinner!

Christ knew what was going on inside his head and he approached Simon and told him he had something to say to him. Simon told him to speak what was on his mind. Christ told him *"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 said as many of us would that the one who had owed the most would be the correct answer. He was thinking that this sinful woman certainly would not have given much to Christ.

Christ then told Simon that the woman had washed his feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. She had kissed His feet. Simon had done none of these things. He hadn't even given him water to wash his feet. Christ then told him *"Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little."* Luke 7:47. The lady had given all she had. Simon was putting on a banquet, but with the wrong attitude.

How often we do things for the wrong reason or try to impress people for the wrong reason. We all sin. The best words we hear every day are *"Thy sins are forgiven."* Luke 7:48. Even the other people eating there began to question and wondered if this man could really forgive sins. We have that same gift today and every day. All we need to do is show God our love for Him in many ways and he will forgive us our sins. We don't have to wash someone's feet and pour perfume on them. He heals us just as we are with all our sins. God has a gift for us each day, but we sometimes don't accept it and think we can "go it alone" until something happens and then we call on God.

"But those at the table began to say to themselves, 'Who is this who even forgives sins?' And Jesus told the woman, 'Your faith has saved you; go in peace.'"

Luke 7:49-50

"A man without ambition is dead. A man with ambition but no love is dead. A man with ambition and love for his blessings here on earth is ever so alive."
Pearl Bailey

Read some of the lyrics from “Count Your Blessings” by Johnson Oatgman.

*“When upon life’s billows you are tempest-tossed,
When you are discouraged, thinking all is lost,
Count your many blessings, name them one by one,
And it will surprise you what the Lord has done.”*

*Count your blessings, name them one by one,
Count your blessings, see what God has done!
Count your blessings, name them one by one,
Count your many blessings, see what God has done.
And it will surprise you what the Lord has done.”*

“Thank you God for all your blessings to me and my family. For the strength you give me each day and for all the people around me who make life more meaningful.”

Have you taken a minute to count your blessings today. Don’t forget a good night’s sleep, the sun rising, and the beauty around you. I challenge you that you cannot count them all in a minute!

Prayer: God, You have promised us abundant blessings. You have promised to forgive our sins and give us eternal life by grace alone without any strings attached. We have all of this because Christ sacrificed His life for our sins when He died on the cross. Please help us to realize and be thankful for all Your blessings. Amen

1. Why did the Pharisee invite Christ into his home?
2. Why did the woman think it was so important for her to meet Christ?
3. Are we willing to go where we are not welcome to tell others about Christ?
4. How do you interpret “Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.”?

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“I’ve got no strings on me.”
Pinocchio

*Feel God
in every gentle touch.
See God
in every happy face.
Hear God
in every caring word.
Receive God's blessings
every day of your life.*

“Praise be to God who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight.”

Ephesians 1:3-4

What strings have we attached to ourselves? All God’s blessings come without strings attached.