

INTRODUCTION

In the sermon on Sunday, David shared two stories of women who were outrageously grateful. They displayed their gratefulness in similar lavish ways. However, gratefulness does not always come easily, though it's absolutely vital to our faith. How do you develop outrageous gratefulness as a lifestyle, transforming a simple "thank you" into an extravagant response to God's amazing grace in our lives?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to be grateful?
2. Read Luke 7:36-50. How is the woman described? What different emotions does she display? What would motivate someone to do this?
3. What is the point of the story of the creditor cancelling all debts? Do you think Simon understood what Jesus was saying to him?
4. In Barnes' Notes on the Bible, it is noted that *"Among Eastern people it was customary, before eating, to wash the feet; and to do this, or to bring water for it, was one of the rites of hospitality. The reasons for this were, that they wore 'sandals', which covered only the bottom of the feet, and that when they ate they reclined on couches or sofas. It became therefore necessary that the feet should be often washed. In Israel during this time, it was customary for a host to offer water for guests to wash their feet."* Why do you think Simon did not offer this?
5. How does Jesus respond to the woman in Luke 7:50? What does this tell you about her gesture of love and gratefulness to Christ?
6. Read John 12:1-8. What stands out to you about this story?
7. Mary took what was likely the most extravagant thing she owned and poured it on Jesus. What is the most extravagant thing you have done for Christ?
8. What was Judas' reaction to Mary's action? Why did he react this way?
9. Both of these women expressed outrageous gratefulness to Jesus. It is sometimes easy to feel grateful, yet difficult to express it. When is it a struggle for you to express gratefulness?

Study Questions for Community Groups

10. Read the following verses and list why the author expresses their gratefulness to God:

Psalm 118:24 _____

1 Chronicles 16:34 _____

1 Corinthians 15:56-57 _____

1 Thessalonians 5:18 _____

Psalm 103:1-5 _____

11. Do your prayers include expressions of outrageous gratefulness like this?

SCRIPTURE

³⁶When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, He went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. ³⁷A 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. ³⁸As 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. ³⁹When 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." ⁴⁰Jesus 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. ⁴²Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?" ⁴³Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven." "You have judged correctly," Jesus said. ⁴⁴Then 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. ⁴⁵You did not give Me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing My feet. ⁴⁶You did not put oil on My head, but she has poured perfume on My feet. ⁴⁷Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little." ⁴⁸Then Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." ⁴⁹The other guests began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" ⁵⁰Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace." Luke 7:36-50

¹Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. ²Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with Him. ³Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. ⁴But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray Him, objected, ⁵"Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages." ⁶He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it. ⁷"Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of My burial. ⁸You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have Me." John 12:1-8

APPLICATION

Cultivate gratefulness by doing any or all of the following:

- Create a list of the attributes of God (grace, mercy, all-powerful, etc.) and each morning spend time in prayer, thanking him for one-two of them.
- Do a study on gratefulness/thankfulness in the Bible.
- Write a note to someone who had a great influence in your life, sharing with them how they impacted you.
- Find a prayer partner to regularly pray prayers of gratitude with.