

## Kenmore Baptist Church Message Outline 7/3/10 (AM-PM/DB)

### **SIGN I:** *Pointing People to Jesus as a BEGGAR*

(Luke 7:36-50; 2 Corinthians 2:14-17; 4:6-7)

Remember the story of the Prostitute with her alabaster jar of perfume? She cried tears of joy on Jesus' feet and fragrant the room in response to being set free—an aromatic witness. She knew how much her life stunk; she was truly poor in spirit. If you're forgiven much, then you love much. *How much have you been forgiven? And why is Jesus good news to you?* All evangelism is the overflow of worship, a loving response to God's grace that you can't help but tell others about.

**So if you want to point people to Jesus, then be a BEGGAR ...**

***Smell your own cess pit to share from the heart.***

### INTRODUCTION: OLD MODELS AND NEW SIGNS

- 1959 Billy Graham Crusades: Could it happen today?
- Changing Times and Plausibility Problems:  
pluralism, postmodernism, consumerism
- Post-Christian Attitude, Pre-Christian Understanding:  
arrogant, irrelevant, insular, bland
- Any surprise only 1 in 10 Christians share about Christ?

*"God brought us back to himself through Christ.*

*And God has given us this task of  
reconciling people to him." (2 Corinthians 5:18-19)*

- Time for new SIGNS: *Beggar; Story-Teller; Life-Guard; Cook.*

# Beggar



### THE BEGGAR: SOME BACKGROUND TO LUKE 7:36-50

- *Simon* the Pharisee and *Charissa* the Forgiven: a study in contrasts
- Parables: Less about explanation, more about subverting Kingdom blockages
- Poverty makes us uncomfortable—it stinks ... but then, so do we
- The story invites us in: Am I Simon (arrogant and judging), or Charissa (poor but forgiven)?
- *What did my forgiveness cost? How much do I love? What's my witness?*

**OBSERVATION ONE:** ... a money-lender with two debtors (v. 4/1)

**WE'RE ALL IN GOD'S DEBT ... sniff deep: our lives stink**

- Different debts, but the same condition
- Sin (hamartōlos); Debt (opheiletēs) ... to miss the mark and transgress, owing God
- Our tendency to judge: comparisons with others, the in and out, righteous and unrighteous. Even the Church can become a house for Pharisees.
- Created to love God (look up), love others (look out), and cultivate the earth (look around)
- Instead we've despised and ignored God, abused others, and vandalized the world: "*Homo curvatus en se es*" (humanity is self-obsessed, curved in ourselves: looking only inwards) ... because of us, this world is *not the way it's supposed to be*
- Our sin accrues a significant debt, and we each owe God (Psalm 14:1-3; Romans 3:23; 6:23) ... you pay for what you break, and the world's blood is on all our hands
- God goes beyond appearances to judge the heart (Matthew 5:17-48, especially verses 25-26): hate = kill; lust = adultery; unforgiveness = unforgiven; love your enemy and be perfect. Break one law and you've broken them all (James 2:10)
- Sniff deep: our heart's stink (Jeremiah 17:9; Matthew 15:18-20)
- We dress up the exterior, but we each have a cess-pit: can you smell yours?

**OBSERVATION TWO:** ... neither of them could pay (v. 4/2a)

**WE'RE ALL DEAD BROKE BEGGARS ... look deep: our pockets are empty**

- *Simon* and *Charissa* were both dead broke beggars
- Poverty is unattractive, and it stinks ... but look in the mirror. We are poor. We are broken. Our false perception that we are rich blocks God's grace (Luke 6:25)
- Christ came in poverty to make us rich (2 Corinthians 8:9; 13:4; Philippians 2:5-11; Hebrews 4:15). He came for the least, the last, the lost, the little, and the dead (Luke 5:29-32; 7:34; 14:21; 18:16-17; John 11:25-26): Which am I?
- Why can't we repay?
  - (a) All our works are tainted, and the wages of our work are death (Proverbs 16:2; 20:6; Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:23; 6:23)
  - (b) Even when we do good, we further borrow from God's grace (Ephesians 2:8-10; Philippians 1:6; Hebrews 13:21) .... Beware of the "debtor's ethic"
- Thus, blessed are the poor, for they shall inherit the Kingdom (Matthew 5:3-10). Christ's Kingdom is full of reversals: the last are first and Prostitutes enter before Pharisees (Matthew 20:16; 21:28-32)

**OBSERVATION #3:** ... he let them both off, so which loved him more? (vv. 42b-43)

**WE ALL NEED A SAVIOUR ... drink deep: the forgiven freely share**

- *Charissa's* awkward display of emotion was unreflective, unplanned, and totally authentic. This kind of raw love shocked everyone around her, a reflection of the *shocking* grace of a God who freely forgives and lavishes grace on sinners.
- Those forgiven much love much ... how much have you been forgiven?
- What did forgiveness cost? God's justice and love meet at the cross, seen in Christ's sacrifice (Romans 5:8; 1 John 3:16; 4:7-21) ... he took me at my worst.
- Faith (trust) in Christ's forgiveness restores those who've missed the mark, bringing God's *shalom*, reconciling us to God, each other, and the planet in right relationships of peace
- Forgiveness flows into worship, and worship naturally leads to witness—the aroma of Christ poured out for all to smell (2 Corinthians 2:14-17)
- God's power is made perfect in weakness, and our poverty is a Gospel Sign that my transformation can happen to you, too ... so wear your scars with pride (2 Corinthians 4:1-18; 12:7-10; Colossians 1:27). It's through the cracks in our lives that Christ's light shines (2 Corinthians 4:6-7)
- Thus, arrogance gives way to humility in our witness: evangelism is one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread ... "Come and see!"
- **Wayne's Story: Captive; Free; Witness.**

**CHALLENGE ... Recognize your poverty; Receive grace; Relate Christ's love**

- Which are you: *Simon* the self-righteous, or *Charissa* the forgiven? Is your identity wrapped up in judgment, or poured out in response to God's extravagant grace?
- As in Isaiah 6:1-8, we must first recognize our poverty and receive God's grace before we can powerfully relate Christ's love to a broken and poor world
- We are called to declare the praises of Him who brought us from darkness to light (1 Peter 2:9), and tell the world of the freedom we've found (Psalm 107:11-12; John 8:32; 10:10). When we've experience God's love and forgiveness, we'll naturally desire to love others and share the good news as the overflow of worship (1 John 4:19-21). But, this only happens *if* we've tasted God's grace (Psalm 34:8)
- Revelation 3:17-20: Repentance starts at home ... what kind of host will you be to Jesus? Let go of your false wealth, admit your poverty, and receive His riches.
- *Charissa*, a prostitute's previous encounter with Jesus? See yourself in John 8:1-11.

**So if you want to point people to Jesus, then be a BEGGAR ...  
Smell your own cess pit to share from the heart.**

## Luke 7:36-50 (Today's New International Version)

<sup>36</sup> When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. <sup>37</sup> 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. <sup>38</sup> 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.

<sup>39</sup> 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."

<sup>40</sup> Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to tell you."

"Tell me, teacher," he said.

<sup>41</sup> "Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, <sup>42</sup> and the other fifty. <sup>42</sup> 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?" [A *denarius* is about a day's wage, cf. Matthew 20:2]

<sup>43</sup> Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven."

"You have judged correctly," Jesus said.

<sup>44</sup> 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. <sup>45</sup> You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. <sup>46</sup> You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. <sup>47</sup> Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little."

<sup>48</sup> Then Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

<sup>49</sup> The other guests began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?"

<sup>50</sup> Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. When you hear the word "evangelism" and "evangelist," what kind of images come to mind? How are these images helpful or unhelpful in motivating you to share?
2. "Our culture is post-Christian in attitude, but pre-Christian in understanding." Is this your sense? Why, or why not?
3. A Beggar, a Story-Teller, a Life-Guard, and a Cook: how do these Signs change the caricature of evangelistic Christians as arrogant, irrelevant, insular, and bland?
4. As you read the story of the woman with her alabaster jar, what stands out most? What is the greatest contrast between her and Simon? Who do you most look like?
5. As you sniff deep from your own cess pit, can you smell your brokenness and debt?
6. "You are a dead-broke beggar with no way to repay God." Why is that? How does this make you feel? What would it mean to embrace the Sign of the Beggar?
7. Have you recognized your need for a Saviour? Share how you came to faith.
8. "Evangelism is one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread." With whom would you like to share? Lift this person up to God, and out of the recognition of your own brokenness and the overflow of worship, share from the heart.