

Articles and Sermons :: No Kiss - Leonard Ravenhill

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No Kiss

“Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. . . . To whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little” (Luke 7:40, 47).

I might suggest that this was the most exciting day in the life of this man, Simon the Pharisee. He had managed to get the most amazing Man in history into his home. I am quite sure Simon thought to filter the number of people he would have come into the place to eat.

So his first problem was the folk. Of course he got the VIPs there, that’s the thing we do—it’s the thing the Scripture says you shouldn’t do, but we do it. You should have a banquet where nobody can invite you back. But I’m sure he got the millionaire, and the mayor, and the magistrate, and the marvelous people. I think he woke up at night and said, “No, I’ll cross that man out and I’ll put this name in.” Eventually he had the right folk.

Secondly, he had to have the right food. If you were inviting the President of the United States I think you’d prepared something very special; you wouldn’t have hamburgers and potato chips.

Finally, after he decided on the folk and he decided on the food, then I think he decided on the flowers; he wanted the right kind of aesthetic atmosphere. Everything was lovely, the garden, the table . . . he had worked out every detail. He said to himself, “This is going to be a day that I shall never, never, never want to forget.” It became a day that he never, never, never wanted to remember!

He said, “This is going to be the day of my exaltation.” It became the day of his humiliation!

He said, “People are going to leave this banquet talking about my liberality.” They left it talking about his stupidity!

He was so intent, he was so sure that everything was right. It became one of those days where everything goes beautifully wrong.

I can just imagine that he got down and conditioned all the servants there and said, “Now, alert me when so-and-so comes.” Everybody and everything at the banquet was in the right place. And I think in the middle, somewhere after a few of his guests had come, one of the servants signaled and said, “Master, I need to talk you. You know that certain woman in town?”

“Oh, don’t mention that abominable woman. If she comes near, turn the dogs on her.”

“Well, master, I’m sorry, but she’s . . .”

“She’s where?”

“Well, she’s here. She’s sitting at the feet of Jesus.”

“Well, how did He get in?!”

Jesus has an awful habit of coming in at the back door. That’s how He came into the world, with a suspicion of illegitimacy on Him—“He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister” (Mt. 20:28).

I wish some ministers would remember that. We are to be the love slaves of Jesus Christ. We are not here to seek prestige or power or personality, or to show off. We’re the least of all men; we’re servants.

I can see Jesus coming in at the back door. And Simon comes and says, “He’s no prophet. If He were a prophet He’d know what kind of woman this is. She is a sinner.”

Jesus then goes on with a beautiful story: "A certain man had two debtors. One of them owed him five hundred pence, the other fifty. He forgave them both. Who will love him most?"

"The man with the biggest debt."

"That's right; she loves much . . . she is forgiven much."

I can imagine that woman trembling outside of the door and saying, "I'm not invited." Isn't it an amazing thing? We don't know who went to the banquet except the woman who wasn't invited!

It's going to be like that on the Great Day. The first are going to be last. Some of the greatest preachers you know will be at the very end of the line, and some little widow that gave her life to prayer is going to be right at the head. You see, God's values are not our values. He isn't going to give me a reward because I preached so many sermons, or you singers because you sold so many records. We put the accent where God never puts it. We put an accent on working for Jesus. But that's not the first thing that God requires. "The Father seeketh such to work for Him"? No, no, no.

I believe God is getting less worship today than He's ever gotten, despite the crowds we are getting. We want to work ourselves to death, run here, run there, come home exhausted and we've a plane to catch tomorrow and everybody is waiting for us.

This little woman stood outside the door with a trembling heart. You could have seen it pounding under her dress. "I shouldn't go in." But she said, "I am going to go in."

Charles Wesley has a wonderful hymn. I don't know whether he got the inspiration here, but I think he might have. It says this: "Oh, let me kiss Thy bleeding feet."

Could I ask you how long it's been since you were at Jesus' feet? This woman is only found at the feet of Jesus. Each time she's seen in the New Testament, she is there at His feet.

She was there to learn. When her sister was making a big banquet, Jesus said that Mary had chosen the better part. You say, "That isn't my personality." But that's not what it says. I hear people say, "I've got a Mary personality," or "I'm a Martha." That's not what it says—it says she chose. And you have to choose to be spiritual, you have to choose the calendar of your life, you have to choose to put Jesus first. Not in eternity, but even now.

This woman brings her gift. It is only a pound, but it is very precious. A smart American said this: "Do your giving when you're living, then you're knowing where it's going." That's better than anything Shakespeare ever said. This woman brings her precious gift of ointment.

Now, notice what she did. According to custom she should have washed His feet and kissed His cheeks. But those feet . . . she is going to see them in a few days with nails driven through. She doesn't anoint His head, she anoints His feet. She doesn't stand in front of Him, she gets behind Him. She says, "Wash those feet with water? Never." So she washes them with tears. "Dry those feet with a towel? Never." So she takes her beautiful tresses down and she takes His feet and she dries those blessed feet with the hair of her head.

I've often thought of those feet that were weary upon that dusty road, those feet that sometimes had thorns in them and got gravel between the toes and were awfully uncomfortable. And a precious woman one day said, "I won't wash His feet with water; I'll wash His feet with my tears, if I get the chance. I won't dry His feet with a beautiful towel; I'll use the hair of my head," which is the crowning glory of a woman. And she dried His feet with her hair.

She should have anointed His head, but she anointed His feet. She should have kissed His cheeks, but she kissed His feet. She says, "I am not worthy to stand in Your presence; I can only bow in lowliness and humility."

But listen, did you get the point? She not only washed His feet with tears. She took that ointment and put it on His head and on His feet. And then she took the hair of her head and wiped the feet where she'd put her tears and her ointment. So the fragrance that she poured out on Him came back on her!

You see, we think that if we read a lot of books about the deeper life, as good as they are, they will make us a saint. I've

e got news for you. Even reading the Bible won't make you a saint! You've got to get it in your bloodstream.

I believe I could line the altar, indeed I've seen the altar lined with hundreds, night after night in mass meetings. Yet I believe, at the end of the day, Jesus Christ could say to me, "Thou gavest Me no kiss."

Why? Because I was so busy serving Him, I forgot to worship Him. The priority that God wants in our lives is that we worship Him in spirit (Jn. 4:23).

God seeks those who will worship Him. And I say again, I like what Wesley said, "Let me kiss Thy bleeding feet, and bathe and wash them with my tears."

When did you last seize Him by His feet and say, "Master, I can't go another inch without meeting You"?

God wants us to worship Him. And I try to do this: I try to say at the end of the day, "Lord, it's not what I preached over TV or radio to millions. It's not the one or two or three people I visited who were sick. But, Lord, did I kiss You today? Or did You look down and say, "Son, you were very busy, very active; you made some new friends, people said you preached well. But listen, son, thou gavest Me no water, thou gavest Me no oil, thou gavest Me no kiss."

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