

Jesus: The One who brings us honor

The prophet Isaiah believed that a Messiah would come one day who would literally give us honor for our shame, and dignity for our embarrassments. Check out what he said:

'Instead of your shame you shall have double honor, and instead of confusion they shall rejoice in their portion. Therefore in their land they shall possess double; everlasting joy shall be theirs.'

Isaiah 61:7 NKJV

He believed that this would happen as a result of that Messiah taking on the issues and inconsistencies of all humanity. All the moments, seen and unseen, where people have fallen short and messed up would be paid for. From that moment on, people would have the opportunity to live shameless lives. Here's one more quote from Isaiah.

'But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.' ***Isaiah 53:5 NKJV***

Isaiah wrote this thousands of years before Jesus came on the scene. But many believe that when Jesus died, he fulfilled words like the ones above. If we truly believe that His sacrifice has paid the penalty for our shortcomings, we can begin to live in freedom from past mistakes. God, who knows all things, no longer counts our past against us. Paul comments on this happening in our lives with this familiar verse.

'Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.' ***2 Corinthians 5:17 ESV***

In the New Testament there is a situation where Jesus encounters a female prostitute. But He does not feel the need to hold her responsible for what she has done. He honors her in front of people who would normally look down on her. He was the guest of honor at the party and He gave her dignity in their midst. But, it does not end there. Believing in the power of the sacrifice of Jesus also allows us to live different lives. Because the old ways are gone and the new has come. Check out Jesus' final words to the woman:

"Your faith has saved you; go in peace." ***Luke 7:50 ESV***

Jesus can tell her to go and live in peace because the punishment that brings peace to us has been laid on him. Not just in His death, but in His life as well. What an awesome opportunity: the chance to live without fear of being held back by past mistakes and the call to go and live better. Who would pass this up?

You should take a minute and read the entire story. After that, reflect on all the verses that you have just read. Do you feel like you live in peace? Are you constantly worrying about past mistakes and the future repercussions? Honor and dignity is available to you, all you have to do is ask for it.

The Story of the female prostitute:

One of the Pharisees asked him (Jesus) to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and took his place at the table. And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner." And Jesus answering said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he answered, "Say it, Teacher."

"A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?" Simon answered, "The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt." And he said to him, "You have judged rightly." Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven--for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little." And he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this, who even forgives sins?" And he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace." *Luke 7:36-50 ESV*

PRAYER: Jesus, I realize that there are things in my past that are difficult for me to deal with. They may even be the things that have kept me from coming to You. But, I ask that You would forgive me and replace my regret with Your peace. Help me as I try to build my faith in You. Amen.