

Why and How to Crash a Party
Luke 7:36-48

An attitude of superiority, masked as righteousness, can infect each of us. We see it in Luke 7:36-48. By this time in His ministry, the Pharisees had given Jesus every reason to dislike and distrust them. Accepting this dinner invitation is a sign of Jesus's magnanimous attitude toward those who disapproved of Him.

Simon's self-righteous, superior attitude is clear. He is blind to his own spiritual poverty. Jesus exposes this with the parable of the two debtors: the one forgiven more loves more. The woman knows her deep need for grace; Simon doesn't think he owes a thing.

Simon offered no defense for not offering Jesus any of the things a guest would expect from his host. These omissions were a sign that, though Jesus had been invited, He wasn't truly welcome. To Simon, Jesus was an inferior. Simon thinks he is the superior patron hosting a traveling teacher. In reality, God's purpose walked right through his door, offering Him a seat at the table of the Kingdom. Yet, with his attitude of superiority, he completely misses the moment of divine visitation. He holds himself aloof from Jesus, while the "sinful woman" crashes the party, touches the prophet, and walks away justified.

Simon and people like him, judge and then limit their love and service to those they see as sinful and beneath them because they believe they have been forgiven little. The woman and people like her, love and serve others because they understand they have been forgiven much—so much that they could never repay it. This episode asks a single question: Who is able to recognize God at work and join Him in gracious, loving ministry?

If we aren't careful, like Simon we can forget our massive sin debt and develop a deeply rooted attitude of superiority. So, whose attitude do you exhibit?

An attitude like Simon's brings fruitlessness and even death.

An attitude like the woman's brings fulfillment and life.