

**“Who Is This Man?”
“The Scandalous Jesus”**

The Season of Lent has begun. We have begun a new sermon series “Who is this Man?” The next few weeks we will concentrate on seeing God in all the faces and experiences of Jesus. We have focused on the Tempted Jesus, the Compassionate Jesus and the Angry Jesus. Yesterday we concentrated on “The Scandalous Jesus.” Many of the images of Jesus we know and appreciate are of a caring and loving Christ. Those are very good images, but Jesus was also angry and scandalous. It seems Jesus regularly shocked people, important people, and religious people. He kept company with persons of questionable reputations, and he ate with women and men who were known sinners. His behavior was shocking and a challenge to the religious leaders of his day. May this Jesus be a source of strength and challenge during the coming week. Pastor Cindy

Things I’d like to remember from today’s sermon: **“The Scandalous Jesus”**

Prayer for the Week

O God, empty me of angry judgments, and aching disappointments, and breathe into me something like quietness and confidence. Catch my pride and doubt off guard that, at least for the moment, I may sense your presence and you’re caring, and be surprised by a sudden joy rising in me now and always. Amen
(adapted from a prayer by Ted Loder)

This week’s sermon may be viewed at <http://sundaystreams.com/go/firstwichita>

Study Guide

Monday, March 12, 2018 Luke 7: 31-35

Jesus gets to the point. John was a deeply spiritual man whose spiritual practices included fasting, no drinking of wine, a simpler more “ascetic” religion. Jesus was more laid back, he ate, he drank and both were called names. John was considered “demon possessed” and Jesus was a “glutton and a drunkard” and named as a “friend” of sinners. Jesus pointed out that it didn’t seem to matter which way a person lives, there are complaints and accusations. Jesus must have enjoyed his dinner time conversations because no one is accused of being a “glutton and a drunkard” if they don’t eat and drink with gusto. *Does Jesus being accused of being a “drunkard and a glutton” shock you? Is there anything about Jesus’ behavior that unsettles or shocks you?*

Tuesday, March 13, 2018 Luke 7: 36-39

Jesus goes to show that the statement “he is drunkard and a glutton” might be true. Jesus goes to a religious leader’s house for dinner. As he is eating, a woman comes and stands at his feet crying. She wets Jesus’ feet with her tears and pours expensive oil on them. She wipes and cleans his feet and kisses them. But the religious man is horrified, what kind of man is Jesus to allow such a woman to touch him, if he was of God, Jesus would know she was a sinner. First of all, women didn’t eat dinner with men and certainly didn’t make a spectacle of themselves around learned and religious leaders. *How would you respond if a woman or man who was a known sinner and a known scoundrel showed up with people you consider spiritual and religious leaders? Would you be horrified? Would you want them to leave and or the leadership to force them to leave?*

Wednesday, March 14, 2018 Luke 7: 40-50

Jesus is very perceptive. He can tell that the religious leaders are uncomfortable, so he tells a story. The story is about debt and forgiveness and who is more appreciative of the forgiveness. It is obvious that the one who is forgiven most is the most grateful. So Jesus turns the story to the woman and notes what she did, and what his host did not: which was to have the ability to wash his dusty feet. Hosts would anoint their guests with perfume. The basic hospitality of the day was not offered by the religious leadership, but by a woman overwhelmed with guilt, and she offered her gifts to Christ. She is forgiven. The religious leaders are scolded and scandalized. *Are you like the woman who know loves much because you have been forgiven much? Do you experience this same grace in your life?*

Thursday, March 15, 2018 Ephesians 2: 14-16

Paul, writing to the church at Ephesus was describing a new way of being a community. It was not based on one’s family, place of origin or even religion. Paul proclaim Christ as the One who brings all together, “Jews and Gentiles into one group....Christ broke down the barrier of hatred that divided us.” Paul reminds the church that “Christ is our peace” and reconciles people who have been part of the journeying faith community and those who have never been part of it. Christ makes peace. This was so shocking and scandalous. People kept to their “own” groups, their own neighborhoods, and their own religious traditions. In Christ, God is offered to everyone, to EVERYONE! *Today, say a prayer for peace and for an opportunity to live out your faith as a beloved child of God.*

Friday, March 16, 2018 Ephesians 2: 17-22

These beautiful words are literally life changing and world changing. If taken seriously, these words will transform communities and transform lives. They are shocking because Paul claims that ALL people have access to God. There are no strangers, outcasts or outsiders. All are fellow citizens in the household of faith. All are built together in the love and grace of Christ. It is a scandal that anyone anywhere can be an equal part of the community of faith. *In your heart, where would you be challenged to accept someone into the church? How can Christ help you be more accepting and open to all people in all places?*