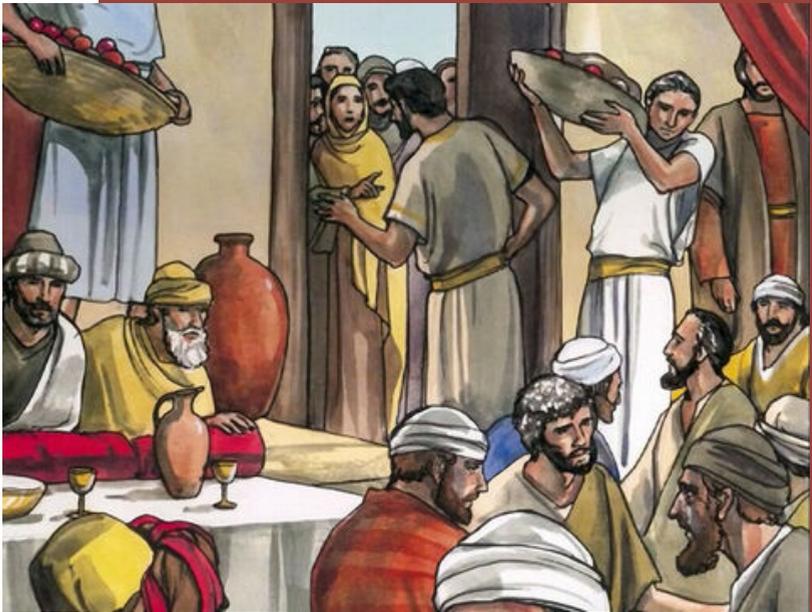

**EDITED AND
ABRIDGED
DRAMATIZED
STORY**

**FROM A SERMON
OF
REV. WILLIAM
BRANHAM**

ONE OF THE MEANEST MEN IN TOWN



PICTURE CREDIT:GOOD NEWS PRODUCTIONS INT.

One of the Meanest Men in Town

The sun must've been going down when the courier arrived. It had been a great day, and Jesus had been preaching and praying for the sick. The people gathered around just to hang on to one word that He said. The crowds were restless, and many still hadn't been prayed for. They were wondering where He'd be next - they didn't know one day from the other where the Spirit would take Him.

The disciples were worn threadbare from pushing back the people, and saying, "Don't press; just be reverent, and our Master will get to you just soon as He can."

And this courier came up. He must've talked to, let's say, Philip. And he must've said, "I have a message for your Master. I've come

from a business man, and I must get this message to Him.”

Philip might've said something like this, “Our master is well worn, sir, because He's been busy all day. We have witnessed with our eyes great miracles and signs that God has done by Him.”

But the courier wasn't interested in what the miracles were. He was only interested in what his master had sent him to say. Finally Philip, being a Christian gentleman, wove his way through with the courier, until he arrived in the Presence of the Master.

Phillip said, “This young man has a message from another city, where there is a great man. He wants to speak with You about his master.”

I can see the tired, weary eyes of our Lord when He turned and said, “What would you have, say?”

I've often thought, "What if I could've been that courier?"

But he said, "My master has given you an honour. He's having great feast, and he wants you to be his special guest at this feast. We would like for you to promise us that you would meet us on such-and-such a day. It may be an annual affair, and out of all the men, he chose you to come."

You know, I believe if I'd have been standing there that close to the Lord Jesus, I'd have forgotten all about what Simon had told me to say. The first thing I would've said, would have been, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." But that's the way many of us get. We feel that our daily task and what our work calls for is more important than anything else.

Oh, I'd loved to have fallen down at His feet there, and said, "I have a message from my master, but first I have a message too. Be merciful to me, O God. I'm a sinner. And I

know that Thou art the Son of God, and I've longed for this opportunity; and now I am kneeling here at Your feet; be merciful to me."

But he, like many of the young people today, had other things on his mind. He wanted to get the message off, and he was tired. His legs were sweaty from running to get over there, because he didn't know where the Master would be the next day. So he had Him cornered into a certain place that he could talk to Him.

In all His busy schedule and all that He had to do, Jesus still turned His weary eyes to this courier. He said, "Go tell your master, I'll be there."

Now, no doubt Jesus knew what was in store for Him when He got there, because He knew the secret of men's hearts. And He knew that there was something up Simon's sleeve, for how could a man, a Pharisee, have any fellowship and want to see Jesus Who he

hated? The Pharisees had nothing to do with Jesus. Darkness and light doesn't fellowship together.

When the world tries to pat you on the shoulder and say, "Would you just come on over here?" there's something wrong somewhere.

And Jesus knew when this Pharisee, Simon, invited Him over to a banquet dinner, there was something wrong somewhere. Yet in all of that, He was willing to go. He will always come where He's invited, regardless of the circumstance and what He knows will happen. You invite Him, He will be there. Yes, you can depend on that.

So the time drew near for this great banquet and this Pharisee was rich. There wasn't a middle class of people in those days. Perhaps like in India and around now, there's the really poor and the rich. Those who are really rich, are rich; and those who are poor, are extremely poor. There are no middle-class

people. So the rich have all the money; the poor have none. And sometimes when these rich people would give a banquet, they really put on a real banquet. So as the time set, the date drawing nigh, no doubt Simon set it for the time when his grapes would all would be ripe, so there'd be a lovely odour of great vineyards full of ripe grapes. The bees would be humming and they would kill their fatted lambs and have barbecue. They would really bring out the choice wines, and spread it out on the front yard, and invite their rich guests; and they really had a real time, but the poor could not even come inside the gate.

Finally the day arrived. The banquet was ready, the animals were killed, and the barbecue pits were smoking with fancy dressed meat with fine sauces poured over them. I imagine the poor were going by, licking their lips. But to come to one of these feasts, you had to be invited. And when you came, you had to be welcomed. Someone was there to meet you to take your invitation, and

they had down who was supposed to be there. “This is So-and-so that’s arrived” and they’d strike your name off.

In those days in the Orient, their only travel was either by horse-driven cart, or by walking. The rich could ride in a carriage or chariot, some rode on an animal’s back, and others walked. And when you were walking they had a loose garment, something like a robe that hung loose, and beneath that garment they had an underneath garment.

The lowest paid man on the job was what they called the foot wash man. He was really just a flunky. He made the least money of any of them, because at the home he only washed the guests’ feet when they come in. Then I think of our Lord. Sometimes we think that we’re somebody; when the God of heaven changed His cast from God to become man, and He took the position, not of the king, but a foot wash flunky to wash His disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith

He was girded. Our Lord, He gave us the example of taking the lowest place there was, to wash the feet of the guests.

And now, as they walked their feet got dirty because they had sandals - something like the Roman sandals they wear today. That was considered their shoes. And their robe swished along on the little trails that go up over the mountains. They didn't have the broad ways like we have today. Animals travelled these trails also - camels, and mules, horses, and different ways of travel. Along the road it became dusty, and as they walked in this dust, that robe sweeping in the dust picked up dirt. The heat of the Palestinian sun is very hot and they became sticky with perspiration. The smell of the horse, and the animals along the road, picked up in this dust and got on them and they would smell bad.

So when you invited a guest to your home, the first thing that happened after the invitation was to make this guest welcome.

Before they could really feel at home, they had to be prepared.

We invite Jesus too, but I wonder if we take care of Him when He comes, or do we shove Him off to one side?

When a man came to the door, the foot wash flunky was the first man he met, because he didn't smell right - dust all over him. So the first thing the foot wash servant did was slip off his sandals, wash his feet and legs; and then take his sandals and set them up, and give him a little pair of something like a slipper, a little cloth that he put over his feet to walk on the beautiful imported rugs of these rich people's homes. After that, when he reached upon the mantle, he got some perfume. Sometimes this was very, very costly. The guest held out his hands, and he poured the perfume in his hands, washed his hands over, then put it on his neck, washed off his face and his beard, then taking a towel, wiped it off - sometimes their neck was burning. This certain perfume was made

up of royal expensive frankincense. They claim that some of it was even somewhat like the queen of Sheba had brought to Solomon. It's found way up in the mountains and very rare. They make it out of a little bud of a rose that becomes an apple. They have to climb high, and it's very rare to make this perfume that the rich people use to anoint their guests when they come in. Then, they took the towel and wiped his face off, and his neck then would feel cool, his feet clean, and he was rested. He felt more like meeting the master of the house.

Then he went to the next room, and who stood there but the master of the house. When the guest came in now, he wouldn't feel like meeting the master of the house if his feet were dirty and his body was stinking with the smell of animals that had crossed over the trail, his feet all sore and dusty, and his neck burning. After he was washed up, the stink was off him, and he was perfumed and clean, he would meet the master who

would feel released to kiss him on the neck - the kiss was the welcome.

“Come on in. Just make yourself at home,” when he kissed him and greeted him. “Come in. Everything’s yours. You’re one of us now. Your feet are washed, and you’re perfumed over, and groomed, and now I have kissed you welcome. Now, just come into my home, and just go to the refrigerator, and get something to eat, lie down, do whatever you wish to. You’re just at home now, because I’ve made you welcome.”

How did that foot-wash flunky ever miss Him? I wished I could’ve been there. I’d have been watching for Him. I’d have had a special bowl of water ready for Him. I would’ve loved to have met Him. I don’t know; something must’ve happened. He wasn’t there; he missed Him. Nobody kissed Him; nobody washed Him; nobody groomed Him; nobody made Him welcome. But He came anyhow, because He was invited. I wonder, sometimes when we invite Him, do we think of those

things? Make Him welcome. Don't be ashamed of Him. Just when He comes in your heart, worship Him. "Lord, come to my heart." Then when He comes, are you ashamed, because you're standing the presence of somebody else? When you hear someone take His precious Name in vain, are you ashamed to walk up and say, "Don't do that. That hurts me so bad. That's my Master that you're taking His Name in vain." I wonder if we really welcome Him? I hope we do.

Why wasn't Simon interested in Him? How did they miss Him? But there He sat over in the corner just like a wallflower, His precious little head hanging down; everybody passing by. Oh, they were interested in the affairs. The pastor was there, and they had their social gatherings and their talking; but what about poor Jesus? Why, He wasn't welcomed. Why, He didn't even have His feet washed. There was a stink. He was unlovable; He was unwelcome.

I wonder, sometimes, in this great, beautiful way that we call holiness, sweetness, I wonder if our lives sometimes, that we present to people, doesn't make Him just a little unwelcome, too, because of our character. We don't live just right, the right kind of a person to represent Him. If He's come to our house we ought to be thankful.

There He was, setting over in the corner, yet leaving His busy schedule. He was right there on time. Jesus never fails an appointment. He keeps them all. You can depend on that. When He makes an appointment, He's there to fulfil it. And there's one appointment that we're all going to stand, because He's made it with all of us. That's at the judgment. He's going to be there, and you are too. We're all going to stand there.

But here He was over in the corner. When I think of it sometimes it just makes my heart feel funny. I think, "Jesus, setting in the corner with dirty feet. That's the way that

they'd left Him—with dirty feet. An honoured Guest, supposed to be, and they were so busy with their doings, till Jesus set with dirty feet.”

There was a little woman in that city, who made her living a very bad way. Perhaps she was a little late that morning getting on the street. She counted her little Roman denarii that she was saving, maybe to buy herself a better dress someday. And the way she made her money was ill-famed. She had a bad name among the people, yet let's think she was just a young woman that had been turned out on the street, not because she was delinquent maybe, but because she had delinquent parents.

Maybe, let's say, this little lady had a father and mother that didn't care for her, and she got on the street in the wrong crowd. When she did, she became an outcast. Nobody cared for her.

But she came out, after locking the door, and coming down little creaky steps back in an alley; and moving out, groomed herself to meet the publicans for more money through the day, of her way of making her living. The strange thing was there was nobody on the street. Everybody seemed to be gone.

So as she passed on down the street, “Why?” she wondered, “What kind of a holiday is it? What’s wrong? The people have all gone away for some reason.” And she smelled the aroma of that roasted lamb coming through the air. Maybe she hadn’t eaten for a few days, trying to save some of her money to get her a decent looking dress. She smelled that aroma, and she said, “Oh, someone must have a feast going on.” She followed it until she came close. And outside of the bars of the big fine mansion that Simon lived in, while the feast was going on, the poor people were standing there breathing in the aroma and licking their lips. The rich were in there drinking wine and making ready for their dinner and this little woman pushed her way

through. When they saw her coming they'd get back, because she was a bad character. Finally she made her way up, till she got to peep inside the bars, to see if she could just get a view of what was giving that satisfying aroma, to look at the barbecue pit to see how the lamb was being barbecued.

She looked all around through the audience, she saw Simon the Pharisee standing up there, with his speeches before the dignitaries of the city. Here's Doctor, Ph.D., LL.D. Jones, and the pastor, and here's his associate, and here's all the dignitaries from the different cities, standing there, you know, real and dignified. She thought, "Oh, look at that, how the rich have it all." Looking around, she thought, "Well, I'll tell you; they always invite, of course, their own class, and we never have a chance."

After a while her eyes fell to the corner. There set a little unnoticed person and she could tell that the dust was on Him. "Well, how did He get in there? Wonder who that

is?” He had His head down. Nobody was paying Him any attention. She thought, “I wonder how He ever got in? Why, He must have slipped in without being invited. His feet haven’t been washed, and His face is not groomed. Nobody’s paying any attention to Him. I wonder why?” And as she looked, He raised His head. Her eyes caught His. You know when that ever happens, something goes on. She looked Him in the face. She said, “I’ve never seen anyone look just like that. I wonder Who that could be? I wonder.” And maybe, to somebody standing by, she said, “Why is that Man setting there?”

Well, here’s one of Simon’s church members just coming up, so he might’ve said, “Why is that... Oh, don’t you understand? We’re going to have some fun today out of him. Simon, our master, he invited him here. You don’t know who that is?”

“No, I wonder.”

“Oh, that’s that Galilean prophet called Jesus of Nazareth.”

And when that Name struck that little woman’s heart, she said, “Jesus of Nazareth?”

“Yes.”

She looked back in the corner, and there He set. And she said, “Oh, to think that He’s invited, and He’s not groomed, neither are His feet washed. I remember that them telling me that a woman was dragged into the street to be stoned like I would be, and He forgave her every sin. If I could only do something for Him, maybe He’d forgive me my sin. But what can I do? I can’t even get in the gate. If I could only get to Him, I’d like to ask Him to forgive me.”

So she thought, “He’s not anointed, neither is He washed, neither is He made welcome. If I could only get His attention, I’d make Him welcome. If He’d only talk to me, I would make Him welcome.” She turns, and slips down the street, down and up the little

creaky steps in the back. She'd thought of something. She reached down in her stocking that she had locked away, and she picked up these pieces of Roman silver. Then she thought, "Oh, I can't do this. If I'd go and buy this alabaster, why, He would know exactly how I got that money, because they tell me He's Messiah, and I believe it. And if He's the Messiah, He will know that I'm the wrong type of person."

She took the money and started to put it back in the box, but something said, "This is your opportunity. You may never get it again."

That's a lesson. Don't ever turn away that first opportunity to meet Him. No matter what the price is, how much you have to confess you're wrong, do it now; because it's going to be known at the judgment anyhow.

She took the little silver that she was saving. She said. "But this is all I've got, but what difference does it make, as long as I can get

to Him.” Down the street she goes, and she drops into the perfume shop. He wouldn’t leave for the feast, of course, because he thought he’d miss a sale somewhere. She knocked at the counter, and he came out to see who it was. He started to turn back, but she poured out this Roman denarii. He didn’t want her in his place of business until he found out she had some money. But when she had money, oh, well, that’s different. You see?

“What do you want?”

“I want the best that you’ve got. I want, not just an ordinary alabaster box of this anointment; I want the best you got on the counter. It’s for a special occasion.”

That’s what you got to give to Jesus. Take your first opportunity to get to Him, and give Him your best. Give Him your heart. Give Him all that you’ve got, for He might not pass this way again. Let’s do all we can for Him while we can.

She takes the alabaster box under her arm, and up the street she goes. She comes to the bars, and there was Jesus with dirty feet, still setting there, no one paying any attention to Him. She thought, "How can I get in?" Just a few minutes before the toast was all made, and the fine, fancy wines drunk, and everything, she must've seen the foot-wash flunky had gone, so she slipped in, and slipped around in the back.

You know, there's something about it. If you ever get a look at Him, you'll do anything to get to Him. I don't care what it is. If you have to slip under the back of the tent or whatever is, you'll do something to get to Him. If He ever looks you in the eyes, and you can see Who He is.

So she slips in the back way. Why, Simon would've had her thrown over the fence if he'd known. But she was determined, no matter what. She was going to make an effort anyhow. As long as you get to Jesus, that's the main thing.

She came down around the side, around the side of the wall. And here He was setting there with His head down, and His hair dusty, His face all dusty, and His beard dusty. His feet with His old walking sandals on, and His limbs dusty and stinking. I can see her fall down at His feet. She came the right way - she fell down at His feet.

She looked up at Him. She got scared. She thought, “What—what if He—what if He says, ‘Who are you? What are you doing here?’” But I can just see Him reach His foot out. He knew she was coming. She said, “Oh, if He—if He knows—He knows I’m a bad woman... (He knows it anyhow). But I’d like to do something for Him. I’d like to show Him my appreciation, because I believe He is God. And I want to show something, some appreciation.” And when she looked up at Him, and He looked - she knew she was at the feet of Jesus. The great big tears begin to roll down her cheeks. She patted Him on the feet. She was at the feet of her Lord.

She began to pat His feet, and the great big tears of repentance began to roll down, spitting on His feet. She was so grateful to be at His feet. She looked, and His feet had become wet with her tears. She was weeping with her head down - her pretty curls must've all fallen down around her. She had no towel, and her clothes were too dirty, probably, to wash or wipe His feet, so she just took her hair and began washing His feet, and kissing His feet. She was so grateful. What beautiful water - tears of repentance, washing the feet of Jesus. Tears rolling off the cheeks of an ill-famed woman, washing the feet of Jesus - the sweetest water His feet were ever washed with, tears of repentance dropping on Jesus' feet from this beautiful young woman setting there.

After a while, Simon turned around and looked. "Hmm!" My, his face raged. "Now, look what's in my house! I invited this holy-roller here, and look His own class have come. There's birds of a feather."

Simon turned around. He whispers over to his set, said, “You see? That shows what a prophet He is. If that man was a prophet, He would know what kind of a woman that was washing His feet.”

The old hypocrite. You think Jesus didn’t know it?

Said Simon, “You see, I told you he wasn’t a prophet.”

See, they had their own idea about religion. They had their own idea about God, but it was a million miles from the real thing.

Simon was red in the face, “Now, looky here; we had this holy-roller here to have some entertainment out of him. I’ll prove that he isn’t a prophet. Calls himself a prophet; he’s only a telepathist. He’s only possessed of the devil. He’s a fortune teller. And that proves my point. There he is, setting there in the corner, and his own kind with him. And there this ill-famed woman, standing there washing His feet.”

Maybe the foot wash flunky was bidden not to wash His feet, just so they could make some show out of Him.

But she continued on, no matter what Simon said.

Now, Simon clearing his throat, and red in the face, and his righteous indignation rose up, and he was ready to explode. He caught the attention of all the people as he turned and straightened himself.

“Hmmm!” Self-righteous Pharisee.

There He’s setting there. Then she raises up, takes the alabaster box, and tries to break it. She’s nervous now, because when she looks up He’s looking right at her.

Don’t worry, He’s watching you too. He’s looking at you right now.

She was nervous. She tried to knock the top off. She just broke the top off, and poured it upon His head to anoint Him. Oh, all the crowd’s looking.

I can hear Simon say, “Didn’t I tell you? There’s your prophet. That’s him. See? He would know what kind of a crowd he was associating with.”

The woman was scared; she thought, “Oh, now what have I done?”

If He’d have moved one toe, she’d have jumped up and been out of there, like that. But He didn’t. He just held perfectly still and watched her. He was just watching what she was doing.

Now, when the hush come, she wonders, “What’s happened now?” And she looks up. “What’s He going to say?” I see Him rising up. He stands up. She’s on the floor. Her pretty hair is all down around her face. The tears have cut down through the streaks of her face. Her great big eyes looking up at Him. “Oh, is He going to throw me out? What’s He going to do for this service? I just wanted to do it, because I—I know He forgave a woman like me one time. And I

know He's God, and if I could just do something... And because I've done it, oh, I'm scared what's going to happen."

He stands up. He looks around. He said, "Simon, I've got something to say to you. You invited Me here as your Guest. And I left My revivals to come be your Guest. I left those who were crying and begging for Me to stay, to come be your Guest because you invited Me. I left those who were hungering and thirsting, to come to you and I was here just on time. I was here just at the right time. But when I arrived, nobody washed My feet. They weren't willing. And then there was nobody who anointed My head. There was nobody to anoint My head and My neck, and to wipe My face off, so I'd be presentable to the people. And, Simon, when I entered the door, you weren't standing there to kiss Me welcome. You weren't standing there, Simon.

You were too interested in the new building program and the things you got going on. You were too interested in getting more

members in your association. You weren't there to kiss Me. You were ashamed of Me before this company. You weren't there to make Me welcome, to kiss Me into your heart to make Me welcome. But ever since this woman has come in (He knew who she was), she has continually kissed My feet. She hasn't ceased, but she's kissed, kissed, kissed My feet. You didn't give Me any water to wash My feet with, but she's washed them with her tears. You didn't give Me any anointment, but she has continually anointed Me since I've been in here. I know she's a woman of the wrong kind, but—but I say unto you..." Oh, how He bawled Simon out.

Now He turns to her, and His eyes flash upon her. "You was the one invited Me, you church members. You invited Me but you didn't make Me welcome. You didn't wash My feet; you didn't give me anything to clean myself up with. You didn't give me the opportunity to speak through you, and other things to do. You wouldn't do it, 'cause you

were ashamed of Me. You let me set in the corner with dirty feet. But this woman has continually washed My feet with the tears of her eyes, that beautiful crystal water of repentance, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Verily I say unto you, her sins, which were many, are all forgiven her.”

That’s what I want Him to say to me: “Thy sins, which were many, are all forgiven thee.” I don’t want to be classy. I just want to take my life and wash His feet. At that day I want to hear Him say, “Your sins, which were many, are all forgiven you.”

Source:

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Town

Rev. William Marrion Branham

