

This passage begins with the account of a sinful woman anointing Jesus' feet in the house of a Pharisee. Other anointings with some similarities are described in Matthew 26:6-13, Mark 14:3-9, and John 12:1-8.

It seems clear that the Matthew, Mark, and John passages relate an event different than the one here. It takes place in Bethany, not Galilee, and at the house of Simon the Leper, not a Pharisee named Simon. In John the woman is identified as Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus. There is no basis for thinking she had a reputation as a sinful woman. And combining the other accounts tells us that Jesus' head and feet were both anointed.

Perhaps the most significant differences are the

lessons learned. Here they are about faith, salvation, and worship (in that order!). They fit well in Luke 7, toward the start of the Lord's ministry. In the other gospels Jesus declares that the anointing is for His burial, appropriately placed as the crucifixion of the Christ approaches.

Another clarification: A common tradition identifies the sinful woman as Mary Magdalene. Scripture provides no support for this view. Mary Magdalene is introduced in the next chapter of Luke and figures in all the resurrection accounts. She was likely an upper class woman from the city of Magdala who patronized Jesus along with others mentioned in Luke 8:2-3.

Questions:

1. What attitude toward Jesus does the woman display in her actions of verses 37-38?
2. What is the attitude of the Pharisee, as demonstrated by his words and actions?
3. How does Jesus show that He is indeed a prophet?

4. What do we learn about the role of women in Christ's ministry from 8:1-3?
5. In the parable of the sower, what is the main factor that determines whether a seed flourishes?
6. What three forces opposing the gospel do we see in this parable?
7. Explain verse 8:10.