



LOST NO MORE

November 2016, revised

This was written during some of the most painful times in my life. I drew close to Jesus by picturing myself as this woman, crying tears like hers. His compassion and love became real to me.

When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. As she stood behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

Then Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

Luke 7:36-38, 48

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I wonder if the woman, thought to be a prostitute, instinctively recognized Jesus as someone who regarded her as a special person, someone He deeply loved. Did she recognize Him in the way someone might recognize a long lost mother or father whose love she vaguely remembers but hasn't felt for a long time?

What would life have been like for her, making a living by giving herself to strange men? How would she have felt about herself? Unclean? Worthless? Very likely. What would she need to feel better? I'm sure what she needed was for someone to show her real love—someone who would love her for her heart, not her body. Did she even recognize that need in herself? Or did she simply experience an emptiness, an emptiness she had not been able to fill?

Then Jesus came along, the person who could offer her love and who could fill the emptiness she had inside. She was overwhelmed.

Her tears tumbled down like the tears of a child. In the greatest expression of gratitude, one that she didn't plan and couldn't have helped, tears spilled over Jesus' feet as He was reclining. With love, and in an act of worship, she wiped His feet with her long hair. She kissed them and poured perfume over them.

For so long she had been without care or guidance, lost in a world that didn't care about her as a person—a world where others received love, but not her.

She knew Jesus' reputation for kindness and compassion. She had heard how He loves and understands, even those deemed most sinful. He promised the kind of love a parent might show a child. How she longed for that! In Jesus she found it. In fact, she found much more. In Jesus she found a love greater than any other love in the world.

The woman's tears gave expression to the huge release she felt, knowing that Jesus would forgive her sins and not judge in the way the world judged her. With His forgiveness He gave her the opportunity for a new life.

This woman's experience can be true for you and me as well. We too can approach Jesus with gratitude, releasing all that is painful inside. Better than anyone or anything in this world, Jesus can provide what we need: compassion, love, forgiveness. He can help us get a fresh start. We will hear Him say:

"I love you deeply. You are clean and you belong to me."

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