OVERWHELMED BY LOVE

REAL LOVE

I talk a lot about the unconditional love of Jesus. You might be wondering, “What exactly is that love like?” This story, told in the Bible, shows what this kind of love must have felt like to a sinful woman—a promiscuous woman, maybe a prostitute.

*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.* (Luke 7:37-38)

Physician and author Gabor Maté who has treated many with addiction and other problems, learned to understand people like this woman. He tells how many of his woman patients told him about the abuse and neglect they suffered as they were growing up. He talks about the great hunger these people have for “something,” though in most cases they don’t know what it is.

Although Maté himself is not a religious person, he identifies this as a hunger for God. He says there is a God-shaped void, or hole, inside these troubled people, a hole they seek to fill through alcohol, drugs, and promiscuity.

This kind of hunger is not experienced by promiscuous women alone. It is a need many of us have. When I heard him speak, many years ago, Maté said that he understands it because he himself had an addiction of sorts. He couldn’t keep himself from buying classical music CD’s, though he had more than he could ever listen to.

Underneath it all, I believe the woman in the story must have felt unworthy of real love, causing her to live the kind of life she did. Think of how much she must have hungered to experience real love rather than the physical desires she gave in to!

Maybe she didn’t even know that the unconditional love Jesus showed her was possible. She probably didn’t even realize that this was the kind of love she had longed for all along. When Jesus, through his kind acceptance of her, showed her what true love feels like, she was overwhelmed.

When you were a young child, were you ever separated from your mother for a long time? You might have cried with relief when she returned. Tears at being reunited with someone who loves you and could care for you are not uncommon. I believe those are the kind of tears this woman gave way to. I believe she found forgiveness for her sins, but also a healing of the spirit. She realized that Someone wonderful loved her and cared for her.

Can you relate to this woman? Are you hungry too? Do you feel as though you have a hole or loneliness inside that you don’t know how to fill? You too could find healing when you open yourself to Jesus’ love and let him fill you up with it. He accepts you just the way you are—unconditionally.

Listen to his words:

*“I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.”* (John 6:35)

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