

June, 2026

God is love...

“But what is love?” I say to myself, and a voice within responds, “Who knows? But maybe a story will help.” Then in my mind, a story begins to unfold, and somehow I am in it; I am there and I am waiting; I am watching. Perhaps you know the story; perhaps you are there too.

The setting is ancient Palestine and the place is the house of some wealthy guy named Simon. The house looks a bit different from houses I’m familiar with but what draws my attention is not the house; it’s the fact that there’s a party going on inside, and there’s a lot of hustle and bustle and racket coming out of the kitchen. In the kitchen, I see a young woman. She appears small, and disheveled and nervous. She’s got a rag in her hand and she’s washing pots that the other servants keep pushing in her direction. But her eyes are constantly darting out the door of the kitchen, into the wide living area where Simon is entertaining a guest, some guy named Jesus who has become rather famous in the area. Suddenly, the disheveled woman drops her rag and on trembling legs she moves away from her washing station, toward the door. This sets off a ruckus in the kitchen: “Hey, what the heck are you doing? Get back to your post! Who do you think you are? Do your job!” But the woman pays no mind to any of them. Out the door she goes, making a bee-line for the guy named Jesus. Now the other guests are riled up. “Hey lady, who do you think you are? Hey, you just knocked over my drink. Who let her in here anyway? Get back here and clean this up! Simon, can’t you control your help?” But the woman appears to hear none of them. Though her heart is pounding with fear she ignores their shouting and their scoffing and she keeps going; zigging and zagging through the crowd; bumping this one and that one, and even tripping over Simon; all the while her eyes keenly focused on the man, Jesus. And then suddenly, she’s there, right where she wants to be. Her weakened legs give out and she falls at his feet. While her whole body quakes, it’s her hands that I notice most — they are shaking uncontrollably. Yet, out of her pocket she brings a small bottle of perfume; and as she pours it on his feet, she looks up into Jesus’ eyes and sees him looking straight back into her own.

It was at that moment, as her eyes locked on Jesus’ eyes, that I noticed that I was no longer watching the woman. Instead, somehow I was the woman. I was the scofflaw who, both propelled and drawn by some unknown force, had barreled my way out of the kitchen and straight into the presence of Jesus. Staring into his eyes, I saw that they were staring back at me and that they were filled with tears and full of love. The scoffers were still scoffing but I no longer feared them. *Perfect love had cast out all fear.* And as the Lord of Love peered into my soul I heard his gentle voice say to me, *Come, you who are weary and are heavy laden; Come! I have chosen you. You are mine!*

What happens inside you when you look into the eyes of Jesus?

Elizabeth Goodine, *Spiritual Director*