

# Daily Discipleship

## Luke 7:36-8:3

**Stories of Discipleship:** *A Forgiven Woman's Story*

**Focus Question:** *How has your life changed since being forgiven?*

### word of life

**“Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which were many, have been forgiven; hence she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little.”** Luke 7:47 (NRSV)

Read Luke 7:36-8:3

There are several stories in this text, but the forgiven woman's story is primary. The setting is Jesus having dinner at the home of a Pharisee, a man named Simon. (See Luke 7:40) That in itself might be an interesting story.

1. *How do you imagine that dinner conversation?*
2. *Why would Jesus have dinner with a Pharisee?*

The dinner is interrupted by an unnamed woman from the city. There is no explanation of how she is allowed to enter the room. She simply appears with her expensive alabaster jar of ointments, stands near Jesus, and weeps. Her falling tears bathe the feet of Jesus, so she uses her hair to dry his feet. Then she kisses his feet and anoints them with oil. It is a very sensual scene.

3. *Imagine someone doing this to your feet. Describe what it would feel like.*
4. *What was the reaction of the Pharisee?*

In the time of Jesus, it was customary to provide foot washing for guests, greet them with a kiss, and anoint their head with oil. For some reason, Simon has not extended this basic hospitality to Jesus. Yet in his thoughts, the Pharisee is critical of Jesus for allowing this lavish treatment by an obvious sinner. Jesus knows the woman's background, but he also knows the thoughts of the Pharisee.

5. *Why is the Pharisee so troubled about this woman?*
6. *What might have prompted her behavior towards Jesus?*

Jesus tries to teach the Pharisee by using an illustration of two people who owed money – one much more than the other. Both were forgiven their debts. Jesus ponders which of the debtors will love more. The Pharisee replies with the obvious answer. The person who has been forgiven the most would be inclined to love the most. But can the Pharisee connect his answer to the situation in his own home?

The woman shows her appreciation of being forgiven by extending lavish hospitality to Jesus. Though she is an outsider, she boldly demonstrates a tremendous capacity to love much. Her life has been transformed by the loving action of Jesus towards her. In response, her love for Jesus overflows into extravagant acts of adoration.

Those dining with Jesus are taken aback when Jesus forgives the woman. *How dare Jesus offer forgiveness!* Simon and those at the dinner miss the powerful gift of forgiveness and its ability to transform a life. Jesus proceeds to bless the woman with peace.

Luke 8:1-3 describes some of the women who financed his ministry. Jesus invites people from all walks of life to come and to follow him.

7. *What is the primary message of this passage?*

## **word** *among us*

Two brothers had spent their lives being mad at each other. They had refused to attend baptisms, dinners, weddings, and funerals connected to each other's family. As old men, they sat on their own front porches and harbored their anger towards the other.

Each man had a grandson who loved to play baseball. They didn't realize that their grandsons had met through some baseball practices and became best friends. It was at an All-Star game that the two brothers accidentally bumped into each other. Each man had come to watch his own grandson, unaware of the friendship between the two young players.

Just as the men locked eyes, their grandsons ran up to them and tried to introduce their new friend to their grandpa. Tension was in the air until the laughter of the grandsons melted the hearts of the grandpas. Tears began to flow as the old men embraced. Forgiveness was extended to each other as the crowd cheered on the hometown team.

1. *Give an example of being forgiven.*
2. *How do you describe forgiveness?*
3. *What does it feel like to be forgiven?*

As we experience God's grace, we share grace to one other. As we receive the forgiveness of our sins, we extend forgiveness to each other. As we become the recipient of God's goodness, we find ourselves changed with a greater capacity to become an instrument of God's goodness.

4. *How do you find your life has changed because of being forgiven?*
5. *How do you find yourself trying to extend forgiveness and grace to others?*

In the gospel lesson, the woman extends her gratitude to Jesus with lavish devotion. It is a contrast to the limited and stingy hospitality extended to Jesus by his host. Despite being an outsider, this woman's love is not to be limited or contained. This woman knows she is unworthy to anoint Jesus, but her deep appreciation of Jesus propels her into bold action.

6. *What surprises you the most about the story?*
7. *If you had been in that house, what might have been your reaction?*

Jesus sends the woman away by forgiving her and giving her peace. It is her faith in Jesus which has saved her. Imagine that woman leaving the house. Imagine her telling her story of Jesus to others.

8. *Take a moment to summarize the forgiven woman's encounter with Jesus.*
9. *What empowered her to break through boundaries and lavish her devotion on Jesus?*
10. *What has Jesus done for you?*
11. *How do you share your love for Jesus?*

## **Prayer**

Forgiving God, you have extended your love through the forgiveness of our sins. Sometimes it is difficult to let go and trust in that forgiveness. But you have set us free to be forgiving and gracious. Receive our grateful thanks. Amen

## **Dig Deeper:**

Galatians 2:15-21

## *last word*

This week, make a list of what God has done for you in your life.



*Daily Discipleship*

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6/17/07 Page 2 of 2