

w/b 16th September 2018

Theme: COME AS YOU ARE - The Forgiven Woman: A Loving Witness

Getting Started

Tell about a time in your life when you were incredibly thankful and relieved.

Jesus has been performing great miracles before the people, and teaching with great authority. One day, he accepts a dinner invitation into an astute citizen's household, and surprising things happen!

1. Have someone read **Luke 7:36-50**. In v36-39, how is the woman described? Look carefully at what she does. What different emotions does she express here? How do you think she feels about herself? What would motivate this woman to crash a dinner party, bring this expensive gift and weep before Jesus?
2. What might we learn here about approaching Jesus?
3. In v39, how does Simon, the host, react to this uninvited guest? How do you think he feels about himself? How does he feel about Jesus? (Notice also the deference he gives Jesus in v40.)
4. Jesus responds to Simon with a story in v40-43. Notice all the facts. What is the point of the story? What is the significance of the creditor's cancelling the debts?
5. Notice the interesting turn that Jesus takes toward Simon in v44-47. How is Simon different from the woman? How is she better than he? Who do you think is the worse sinner here, the woman or Simon? *(Note: this is not an easily answered question. There should be quite a bit of discussion since there are good arguments on both sides.)*
6. In v47, what is the response that Jesus wants in those whom he forgives? Do you think this characterises the lives of those who are believers in Jesus, forgiven by him? Does it characterise your life?
7. What is significant about Jesus' words in v48? Since only God can forgive sins, and Jesus forgave sins, what is he saying about himself? How do the guests respond (verse 49)?
8. How do you think the woman felt in v50? How has she shown faith? According to the witness of this woman, what is true faith in Jesus?
9. With which person in this story do you most identify, and why?

In Closing

Go over again the woman's steps to commitment and faith (*deep repentance, love for Jesus, unabashed and almost wasteful commitment to him, faith put in him, sins forgiven*).

Have you ever made a deep commitment of faith in Jesus like this woman?

What would prevent you from doing that?

Or, many people have difficulty believing that Jesus really loves them. If you are in that situation, what barriers do you feel are hindering you from accepting Jesus' love?

Perhaps pride like Simon's? Or perhaps fear, or broken trust? What would help you to begin breaking through these barriers and accepting the love Jesus has for you?

(Offer the group some extra time to think through these issues. Allow those who wish to share their thoughts to do so.)

Or, the response that Jesus wants from those he forgives is love (verse 47). What would it mean for you to love Jesus the way this woman did? Does this love characterize your life? Your group's life? How can you demonstrate love this week?