

# "THE ONE HE *FORGAVE MORE*"

unit 24 | session 3



## CHRIST CONNECTION

Our sin created debt, a payment so extreme that we could never repay it with our own good works or sacrifice. Instead, Jesus willingly surrendered Himself as the sacrifice for our sin. He paid our debt with His blood and covered us permanently.

# **FORGIVENESS** AND GRATITUDE

This week, we're covering the passages and main points below. But we encourage you to dig in and read all of the content on this timeline.

## **Luke 7**

### **JESUS IS WILLING TO FORGIVE US**

#### **LUKE 7:36-39**

36 Then one of the Pharisees invited him to eat with him. He entered the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. 37 And a woman in the town who was a sinner found out that Jesus was reclining at the table in the Pharisee's house. She brought an alabaster jar of perfume 38 and stood behind him at his feet, weeping, and began to wash his feet with her tears. She wiped his feet with her hair, kissing them and anointing them with the perfume. 39 When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "This man, if he were a prophet, would know who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him—she's a sinner!"

### **FORGIVENESS PRODUCES GRATITUDE**

#### **LUKE 7:40-50**

40 Jesus replied to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." He said, "Say it, teacher." 41 "A creditor had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. 42 Since they could not pay it back, he graciously forgave them both. So, which of them will love him more?" 43 Simon answered, "I suppose the one he forgave more." "You have judged correctly," he told him. 44 Turning to the woman, he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she, with her tears, has washed my feet and wiped them with her hair. 45 You gave me no kiss, but she hasn't stopped kissing my feet since I came in. 46 You didn't anoint my head with olive oil, but she has anointed my feet with perfume. 47 Therefore I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven; that's why she loved much. But the one who is forgiven little, loves little." 48 Then he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." 49 Those who were at the table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this man who even forgives sins?" 50 And he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

## MAIN POINT.

Jesus forgives us when we humbly come to Him in faith.



## THEOLOGY CONNECTION

### FAITH

Biblical faith is the resting, or trusting, in Christ alone for salvation (John 3:16-21). More than being simply a mental agreement of historical facts, genuine faith begins with a recognition and confession of the truth of the gospel (1 John 4:13-16), followed by a receiving of Christ as Lord and Savior of one's life (John 1:10-13). Biblical faith is not blind faith, for it rests on the historical life, death, and resurrection of Christ.

# DISCUSSION

## JESUS IS WILLING TO FORGIVE US

LUKE 7:36-39

- Describe the woman in the passage. What can you tell about her heart?
- ♥ • What does our view of people living in sin reveal about our hearts? How does Jesus teach us a different way?
- 📖 • Why do the thoughts and motives behind our actions matter? Can we trust Jesus to really see us? Explain.

## FORGIVENESS PRODUCES GRATITUDE

LUKE 7:40-50

- 🧠 • How did Jesus expose Simon's thoughts? How does He expose our thoughts today?
- ✝ • Why does Jesus deserve our gratitude, regardless of our past or how great or small our sin seems?
- Why do we need to understand how deep our sin goes and how it hurts our relationship with God? How does this understanding make Jesus even better?



**WHEN HAVE YOU SEEN OTHERS AS TOO SINFUL TO BE WORTH YOUR TIME? WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE FOR YOU TO SEE THEM AS JESUS DOES?**

## CULTURAL CONNECTION

When people hurt us—even people we don't know—letting go of the hurt isn't easy. We might vent to our friends or even share a post on social media. Our temptation is to hold nothing back, to give up every detail. Maybe our goal is to shame the other person or to defend our feelings or responses; maybe we're just looking for sympathy on a bad day. Over time, maybe we cool down and offer forgiveness. Or, maybe we double down, and bitterness grows into a grudge. But here's the whole, tough truth: We have no right to hold grudges or withhold forgiveness. If anyone had a right to hold a grudge, Jesus did. But He did the opposite; He withheld nothing from us, giving His very life to bring life to us when we were dead in our sin (Eph. 2:1). Certainly, we might need to set boundaries for physical and emotional safety, but forgiveness can exist within those boundaries. Forgiveness heals our hearts and sets us free; unforgiveness holds us captive. Just as Jesus forgave us and set us free, so we must be willing to forgive others.



## DAY ONE

# ACTS 7:58; 8:1-3; 9:1-22



Have you ever taken a personality test? You can find one to suit any personality—from the incredibly detailed Myers-Briggs to the fun quiz you took online to tell you which character you’re most like from your favorite book or TV show. While personality tests can help you see yourself in new ways, they don’t actually tell you who you are or what type of person you are. Because the truth is that you are far more than any personality test could imagine or define, no matter how thorough the questions seem.

We often get caught up in personality types, and our brains naturally categorize people as those who are like us and those who aren’t, people who are “good” or “bad,” and even people who are worth our time and people who aren’t. But Jesus isn’t like us. If He looked at us the way we looked at each other, all of us would be doomed. Instead, He sees us with His Father’s eyes, knowing we’re only human but capable of being transformed by the work of the Holy Spirit. This is why Jesus didn’t care “what kind of woman” washed His feet with her tears (Luke 7:39) and why He used a man (Paul, formerly Saul) who once persecuted His people to play a major role in establishing the early church. Maybe you struggle to see how God could love you or forgive you because of what you’ve done in the past, but all that gets washed away with the blood of Jesus (Eph. 2:13). He died for you. Period. No stipulations or fine print can change that. Through Jesus’s life, death, and resurrection, you can be forgiven, free, and made new—no matter who you are, what you’ve done, or how others see you.

- **WHAT ARE YOU TEMPTED TO BELIEVE DISQUALIFIES YOU OR SOMEONE ELSE FROM BECOMING A BELIEVER OR PART OF YOUR CHURCH OR SMALL GROUP?**
- **WHEN HAVE YOU WONDERED HOW GOD COULD LOVE YOU BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU’VE DONE? HOW DOES JESUS’S LOVE CHANGE YOUR MIND?**

## PRAY

**JESUS, THANK YOU FOR LOOKING ON ME WITH EYES OF LOVE. GIVE ME YOUR EYES TO SEE OTHERS AND YOUR HEART TO LOVE THEM WELL. HELP ME TO SEE MYSELF AS LOVED, FORGIVEN, AND FREE.**



## DAY TWO

### LUKE 7:44-50; EPHESIANS 2:8-9

We've all had moments when a sinking feeling settled deep in our gut and we wondered, "How am I going to get out of this?" Maybe it was a failing grade, an awkward social situation, an injury or illness that caused you to need help doing everyday tasks. Or maybe you faced a more serious, life-or-death type situation, like being lost in a national park and needing someone to find you. All these scenarios require us to ask others for help—and hope that they respond by coming to our rescue. Some things we just can't do on our own.

The truth is, no matter the situation you find yourself in now, we all need a Savior. Because of our humanity and our sin, we are completely powerless to save ourselves. Nothing in us and nothing we do could ever make us good enough to stand before God. Only Jesus can do that. Jesus pointed out this truth to Simon, a Pharisee who imagined himself as "all good" before God because his religious community viewed him as righteous. Simon believed only the woman—the "sinner"—needed saving; she *did* need salvation, but she wasn't the only one. The woman expressed faith in Jesus by humbly kneeling before Him and grieving her sin, helpless to save herself but recognizing His goodness. And Jesus forgave her.

Jesus doesn't owe us anything, but He freely gives salvation to those who come before Him with humble repentance and faith—just like the woman in Luke 7. Jesus has done all the work to save us; our only part in our salvation story is to humble ourselves, repent of our sin, and accept the greatest gift we could ever receive.

- **WHICH IS MORE DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO ACCEPT: THAT YOU CAN'T DO ANYTHING TO SAVE YOURSELF FROM SIN AND DEATH OR THAT YOU MUST RELY ON SOMEONE ELSE (JESUS) FOR SALVATION?**
- **HOW DOES VIEWING SALVATION AS A GIFT AFFECT THE WAY YOU SEE JESUS?**

## PRAY

**LORD JESUS, OPEN MY EYES TO SEE YOU CLEARLY AS MY ONLY SAVIOR AND GIVER OF THE GREATEST GIFT. SHOW ME HOW TO LIVE MY LIFE IN HUMBLE GRATITUDE FOR ALL YOU'VE DONE FOR ME.**



### DAY THREE

## MATTHEW 22:36-39; ROMANS 12:1

Have you ever been in that awkward situation where someone got you a gift, but you didn't get anything for them? Maybe you were supposed to show up at a party with a gift but missed the memo. Or maybe someone ahead of you at the coffee shop paid for your order, and you didn't get to say thank you or didn't pass it on the person behind you. In these situations, you might've felt embarrassed, upset, or even guilty. When people do nice things for us, we want to do nice things for them, or we are inspired to do nice things for others.

Somehow, this doesn't always translate to our relationship with Jesus. He has given us a gift better than anything we could imagine: salvation from our sin and the hope of eternal life with Him. As believers, we easily become desensitized to this truth because we hear it so often, but that doesn't make it any less powerful. We might struggle to understand the right response to such a great gift, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't respond.

Knowing what Jesus has done for us should change us. When we trust in Jesus for salvation, we receive a completely new identity as children of God (Rom. 8:17; 2 Cor. 5:17)—and children of God live differently, as lights in a dark world. The apostle Paul puts it this way: Our entire lives are to be lived in worship of and in service to the Lord (Rom. 12:1). While Jesus gives tons of instructions for what our new identity should look like and what it means to worship Him with that new identity, He also summed up all God's commands like this: Love God and love others. This is our right response to all Jesus has done for us.

- **HOW HAVE YOU RESPONDED TO THE NEWS OF JESUS'S GREAT GIFT TO YOU?**
- **WHAT IS YOUR RESPONSE TO THE IDEA OF LIVING YOUR ENTIRE LIFE ALWAYS FOR JESUS—TO BE A LIVING SACRIFICE? WHY?**

### PRAY

**JESUS, I CONFESS THAT I OFTEN FORGET JUST HOW GREAT A GIFT MY SALVATION IS. FORGIVE ME FOR THE MOMENTS WHEN I FOCUS ON THE WRONG THINGS, AND GIVE ME THE STRENGTH AND COURAGE TO LIVE OUT MY NEW IDENTITY IN YOU.**



## DAY FOUR

# 2 CORINTHIANS 7:9-10

Shame and guilt are not the same, even if we sometimes believe they are because of the way our culture treats people who mess up. Shame means feeling like something you've done makes you unworthy of connection, blessing, or love; guilt means recognizing what you did was wrong and accepting the consequences of your actions.

Here's the thing: All of us, on our own, are unworthy of God's love and acceptance and belonging to His family. But God loves us because of who He is—because He is love (1 John 4:8). So, He sent Jesus to deal with our shame. Scripture says Jesus went to the cross “despising the shame” of it because of the joy He knew would come through His death (Heb. 12:2). The crucifixion was Jesus's declaration that shame had no power over Him, and through Him, no power over us either.

Shame over past sin and failure has no place in the life of a believer because that debt has already been paid for and forgiven. But guilt is another story. Guilt, or godly sorrow, comes from conviction, and conviction comes from the Holy Spirit (John 16:8). Conviction isn't condemnation (telling us we're doomed because of what we've done); conviction is the Holy Spirit revealing our sin to us, feeling grief over it, and turning toward God in repentance. In other words, conviction is a good thing, even when the process hurts! When we mess up, shame tells us to beat ourselves up, but guilt tells us to give up our sins by confessing them to God and trusting Him to forgive us as He has promised (1 John 1:9).

- **REVIEW LUKE 7:40. WHAT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT SAYING TO YOU RIGHT NOW? WHAT SIN COULD HE BE CALLING OUT?**
- **WHERE DO YOU NEED TO SET ASIDE SHAME OVER YOUR PAST AND TRUST THAT JESUS DIED TO FREE YOU FROM ALL YOUR SIN—PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE?**

## PRAY

GOD, HELP ME TO RELEASE ANY SHAME I FEEL OVER MY PAST AND CLING TO YOUR GRACE AND TO THE PROMISE THAT I AM MADE NEW. CONVICT ME OF SIN AND HELP ME TO ACCEPT YOUR FORGIVENESS.





## DAY FIVE

# LUKE 7:44a; 2 CORINTHIANS 5:16-20

If you've pulled an all-nighter to finish a school project or stayed up way too late hanging out with your family or friends, and then seen something odd, you probably know what it's like to question your vision. Maybe you blink or rub the sleep from your eyes and try to refocus. Or, if someone is with you, you might even ask, "Did you see that?" We don't always take in all the details at first glance. Truly seeing what's in front of us means we must choose to look and set our focus on whatever or whoever it is.

After witnessing Simon's judgment of the woman who washed His feet with her hair, Jesus turned toward the woman and asked Simon, "Do you see this woman?" (Luke 7:44a). The truth is, Simon didn't see her; he only saw her sin and her past. And he judged her harshly for it. But Jesus saw the woman. He saw through her sinful past and into her heart, which was humbled before Him in genuine repentance.

Jesus's eyes constantly settled on those who needed Him, and they were often those others ignored. He teaches us a different way of seeing people, which the apostle Paul describes this way: "We do not know anyone from a worldly perspective" (2 Cor. 5:16). When we become new creations in Christ, He gives us new eyes and a fresh perspective to see ourselves and others the way He does. Jesus reminds us that we too were sinners who needed His salvation and are now new creations in Him. With this new heart and new perspective, He helps us see beyond others' sin and their pasts and into their hearts, which He makes completely new.

- **WHAT TYPES OF PEOPLE DO YOU STRUGGLE TO SEE WITH THE NEW EYES JESUS GAVE YOU AS A BELIEVER?**
- **WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO SEE OURSELVES RIGHTLY IN RELATION TO JESUS BEFORE WE CAN SEE OTHERS RIGHTLY?**

## PRAY

**LORD JESUS, HEAL MY VISION, HELPING ME TO SEE MYSELF RIGHTLY AND TO SEE OTHERS WITH YOUR HEART AND PURPOSES IN MIND.**