

QUESTIONS JESUS ASKED

Discussion Questions **LEADER GUIDE**

Week of 3/10/24

Leaders—Thanks for all you do each week to prepare and lead your group! Use the questions below as suggestions but feel free to modify them as needed. Also, there is no requirement for you to discuss every question!

Text: Luke 7:36-50

Icebreaker: What's the most desperate thing you've ever done or when have you felt most desperate?

The actions of "the woman of the city" (i.e., a prostitute) display desperation before Jesus, so that's what is behind this question. You could also restate it in a more general sense: "What kinds of things do people in desperate situations do?"

1. Read Luke 7:36-50. What was significant to you from these verses or from the sermon you heard this week? Why?

2. Verses 36-40 describe the scene for this passage. What does Luke tell us about the woman and how would you characterize her actions?

She's desperate, broken, humble, etc. She displays a love for Jesus, which he describes in vv. 41-47.

Application: We live in a different day and culture, but what could it look like for a person today to approach Jesus in a similar way as this "woman of the city" does?

This kind of desperation, or awareness of a need for Jesus, leads people to disregard things like social norms or embarrassment in front of others. Their need is so great that they don't really care what the people around them think or what social protocols they're violating. A person might break down emotionally in front of others or take a costly action that people in less desperate situations might avoid.

3. Verse 39 reveals the assumptions and perspective of the Pharisee, Simon. How would you characterize his thoughts expressed in this verse?

Simon thinks that a true prophet would shun this woman because the prophet would be aware of her sinfulness. Who would let her near?! He is self-righteous and grossly misunderstands God's grace and mercy. He misunderstands that Jesus cannot be made impure; rather, Jesus makes the impure pure.

Application: Have you encountered a similar perspective about who is fit to approach Jesus and who's not? If so, what happened?

4. Verse 42 contains this week's question. From verses 41-50, what is Jesus telling Simon by asking this question?

Jesus is telling him that the woman has demonstrated a greater love because she is aware of her great debt. The woman, ironically, is treating Jesus as though she is the hostess because she, rather than Simon, has done for Jesus what was customary toward a guest. Simon, meanwhile, didn't even bother to treat Jesus as an honored guest. Simon seems to believe that he is even more honorable than Jesus.

Application: How does our own sense of our indebtedness due to sin impact the way we respond to Jesus?

5. It's possible to think that Jesus is teaching that some have large debts to him and others have small debts. Is this true? If not, what is he teaching instead?

Jesus is teaching that our awareness of our indebtedness makes all the difference in how we respond to him. Consider these verses: Romans 3:23, for example, says "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." 1 John 1:8-9 states that, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 1:15, "The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, *of whom I am the foremost.*" Paul had no doubt grown in obedience to Jesus, but also had a growing awareness of his sin as he grew closer to Jesus. As we increase in holiness (i.e., sanctification), our awareness of all that is unholy in us also increases!

Application: Take time to pray for each other as a group that you would grow in your awareness of how great a debt Jesus has paid for you. Pray that this awareness would lead you all to grow in your love for Jesus and your experience of his peace (v. 50).