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## Lives Changed by Jesus

### Week Four | The ~~Sinful~~ Forgiven Woman – Honouring Jesus With What We Have (Luke 7:36-50)]

*For a brief overview of why (and how) to engage in each of these practices, you can read the Guideline For Growing on our website*

<https://www.gymeabaptist.org.au/growing/pages/guideline-for-growing>

#### OVERVIEW:

In this series we will be exploring several New Testament characters whose lives were changed by an encounter with Jesus. Over the course of the series we will dive into the transformation they experienced, the focus of their encounter, the required response, any friends who were involved, and the invitation into mission. The importance of these five aspects will vary but will be a consistent part of the discipleship menus.

As in previous “menus” there will be a variety of activities to take up. These can be done by yourself (God and You), with a couple of friends (You and a Few), or in a Life Group (You and a Crew). As with any menu, choose what you resonate with you. In other words, there is no need to do all of the menu!

Just one more reminder that you can listen to the sermon that accompanies the discipleship menu can be found on our website or wherever you listen to podcasts. You may also want to listen to The Big Ill podcast; a mid-week podcast that explores three big questions raised by the sermon.

#### PASSAGES TO READ

Make Luke 7:36-50 the central reading this week. Read it aloud multiple times.

As you do you may want to picture the scene in your mind and picture where you are in the scene. Who do you associate with? How close are you to the “action”? This kind of imaginative reading is a very helpful way to read narrative texts.

Additional texts that you may want to read and reflect on include: 2 Kings 5:1-19a; Luke 20:1-4; Acts 5:17-42; 2 Corinthians 4:7-12

With each, consider the role honour, especially towards God, plays. Elisha and Namaan, the widow’s mite, sharing in Jesus’ suffering

## QUESTIONS TO REFLECT ON (JOURNAL)

In this week's sermon (which you can listen to again on the GBC Sermon Podcast) Belinda drew our attention to the social tension at this dinner party caused by Simon's dishonouring of Jesus by failing to welcome him properly and the woman's attempts to cover that shame with her own "welcome". At the heart of Jesus' interaction with Simon is a simple parable of two debtors who are each forgiven their debt, one large and one even larger. The point, as Simon acknowledges, is that those who are forgiven much, love much. The inverse is also true; that those who are forgiven little, love little. This will be the focus of the following questions.

1. The parable functions like an extended proverb and as such, there are times when it is "true" (Proverbs are general rules of thumb, and their "truth" is contextual. For example, there are times when too many cooks spoil the broth and others when many hands make light work. Both are "true" but in different contexts.). In what ways is this parable "true"?
2. It is obvious that the truth of the parable is not a mathematical formula. In other words, there are other ways to increase our love for Jesus apart from increasing our sin (see Romans 6:1-4 for a different take on this!). What are other ways we can increase our love?
3. How is Jesus dishonoured in our world today? How can we honour Jesus?
4. The forgiven woman risked further social shame by seeking to honour Jesus as she did. What risks might we face as we seek to honour Jesus?

## JUSTICE

This is yet another "new" activity for these menus and is once again taken from Adele Ahlberg Calhoun's book *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*.

To practice justice as a spiritual discipline is to desire "to love others by seeking their good, protection, gain and fair treatment." (281). Practices include:

- Being a good steward of what you own.
- Supporting just causes with your time, action and financial support.
- Treating others impartially and fairly.
- Providing for the poor, needy and oppressed through the means available to you.
- Refusing to buy products of companies that take advantage of the poor.

As you have perhaps noticed, some of these spiritual disciplines are more a matter of the direction of our action than the actions themselves. If we undertake the activities with a heart turned to God, nearly anything is transformed into a spiritual discipline!

Take one of the bullet points (or another of your own making) and use it as a way to reflect on the character and mission of God.

## A THEME TO PRAY ABOUT

Make it your prayer to honour Jesus this week in all you do.