



WEEKLY STUDY

WEEK FOUR

Pastor Gary shared the story of a woman (a known sinner) who sought out Jesus in hopes that she could pour her tears and expensive perfume on him. It was a scene of extravagance and desperation, and it led to the forgiveness of sin. As you sit with Jesus this week, may you find grace and forgiveness in the pouring out of your soul before him.

Peace of Christ,
Pastor Mark Youngman

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional questions at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected visit prov.church/smallgroups.

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture and follow the daily prayer prompt.

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: LUKE 7.36-39 (ESV)

One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at table.³⁷ And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment,³⁸ and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment.³⁹ Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner."

- The woman in this story was in a desperate state. We could imagine the circumstances that led her to a life of sin. She clearly wanted a way out, and she bet all that she had on Jesus. Think about the risk she was willing to take. She went into a house of judgment in search of grace. She walked into a situation that could have led to her execution, and found life. **When have you had to take a risk in hopes of encountering Jesus?**
- *Jesus, I run to you today. I bring myself, imperfect and broken. I willingly pour out anything of value and ask you for forgiveness. Amen.*

TUESDAY: LUKE 7.41-50 (ESV)

“A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty.⁴² When they could not pay, he canceled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?”⁴³ Simon answered, “The one, I suppose, for whom he canceled the larger debt.” And he said to him, “You have judged rightly.”⁴⁴ Then turning toward 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 has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair.⁴⁵ You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet.⁴⁶ You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment.⁴⁷ Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little.”⁴⁸ And he said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.”⁴⁹ Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, “Who is this, who even forgives sins?”⁵⁰ And he said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

- Jesus’ short parable could be taken to mean: *the greater the sin the greater the forgiveness*. But in reality, the forgiveness remains the same for everyone. A person who comes face to face with their sin is most aware of their need for forgiveness. The woman demonstrated her desperation and found life at the feet of Jesus. The woman’s actions created an uncomfortable scene for the Pharisees, and it causes us to consider, **what discomfort am I willing to risk in order to be found at the feet of Jesus?**
- *God, thank you for sending your Son who invites me to approach with honesty and hope. Forgive me of my many sins and restore me to life. Amen.*

WEDNESDAY: LUKE 8.1-3 (ESV)

Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him,² and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out,³ and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod’s household manager, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their means.

- These might seem like verses that are meant to simply connect one story to the next in Luke. But notice how the list of disciples now includes women whose lives were changed by Jesus. They were no longer just a random part of the crowd, but an integral means of support for the mission. As random a collection of individuals as the original disciples were, this addition of forgiven and redeemed women makes it even more likely that we could see ourselves as qualified to be counted among the disciples. **How does this season in Jesus’ earthly ministry connect with the role of the church today?**
- *God, help me to see myself the way you do. I want to be known as a follower of Jesus. Amen.*

THURSDAY: GENESIS 1.26-27 (NLT)

Then God said, “Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground.”

²⁷ So God created human beings in his own image.
In the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

- Whether we know it or not, we get our identity from a wide variety of sources. If we are not connected to Jesus, we will let the world tell us who we are. Like the woman in Luke who poured tears and perfume on Jesus' feet, we might believe that our worst moments define us. Returning to the creation story in Genesis 1 reminds us that we are indeed created with the image of God within us. We are beloved creations of God—that is who we are. **Do you find it difficult to believe that you have the spark of the Divine within you?**
- *Almighty God, as I take a breath today, remind me that your first breathed life into me. I am created in your image O God! Amen.*

FRIDAY: 1 CORINTHIANS 3.16-17 (NIV)

Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst?¹⁷ If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for God's temple is sacred, and you together are that temple.

- God's people know all too well what it looks like when God's temple is destroyed. To be called God's temple does not mean that you are safe from attack, but it does mean that you were designed for God's purposes of worship and sacrifice—a place where God is known to dwell. If God's temple is sacred, and you (we) are God's temple then we can be assured that God's Spirit dwells within us. God sees us as sacred and set apart. **What does it mean for you to be called God's temple?**
- *God, I want to be a place where you are known to dwell on earth. Live in me and I will live for you. Amen.*

SATURDAY: PSALM 34.4-7 NIV)

*I sought the LORD, and he answered me;
he delivered me from all my fears.*

⁵ *Those who look to him are radiant;
their faces are never covered with shame.*

⁶ *This poor man called, and the LORD heard him;
he saved him out of all his troubles.*

⁷ *The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him,
and he delivers them.*

- The angel of the Lord encamps around us who have a reverence and a healthy fear of God. God is with us, he abides with us, he hangs out in our neighborhood and delivers us from our fears and our troubles. **Have you had an experience of God answering when you sought him?**
- *Lord, send your angels to set up a home around me. I need you to deliver me from troubles and make my face to shine! Amen.*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Reflect again on Friday's reading. Paul's words, *Don't you know?* are words we might say to someone we are trying to hold a proverbial mirror in front of. *Don't you know what is true? Don't you know who you are?* Using the questions posed by Pastor Gary in this week's message, discern whether or not you see these truths or have trouble believing that they are true.

Don't you know:

- You are more than the labels assigned by others

I know it because _____

I have trouble believing this

Don't you know:

- You are fearfully and wonderfully made

I know it because _____

I have trouble believing this

Don't you know:

- You reflect the image of the living God

I know it because _____

I have trouble believing this

Don't you know:

- Angels encircle you

I know it because _____

I have trouble believing this

Don't you know:

- Jesus loves you

I know it because _____

I have trouble believing this

Don't you know:

- Jesus sees you as you are

I know it because _____

I have trouble believing this

Don't you know:

- Jesus looks beyond your faults

I know it because _____

I have trouble believing this

Don't you know:

- You are somebody

I know it because _____

I have trouble believing this