Luke 7:36-50  New International Version (NIV)

36 When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee’s house and reclined at the table. 37 A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee’s house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. 38 As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

39 When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner.”

40 Jesus answered him, “Simon, I have something to tell you.”

“Tell me, teacher,” he said.

41 “Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii,41 and the other fifty. 42 Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?”

43 Simon replied, “I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven.”

“You have judged correctly,” Jesus said.

44 Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. 45 You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. 46 You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. 47 Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little.”

48 Then Jesus said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.”

49 The other guests began to say among themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?”

50 Jesus said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”
Bible Study Guide
You are God’s Masterpiece

Introduce
The Gospel of Luke presents Jesus as both God and man, the Savior of the world. Luke especially emphasizes Jesus’ concern for the poor and marginalized and his confrontation of the Pharisees, experts in Jewish law who held their religious traditions higher than caring for actual people. In this passage, we see Jesus engaging the Pharisees over a woman they had labeled as a “sinner.”

Read Luke 7:36-50

Discuss
1. Why does the woman take a risk? How does she exhibit faith?
The woman approaches Jesus with love, while Simon quietly judges her. Jesus responds to them both. In a culture that would have seen women as less-than or even property, why do you think the woman risks approaching Jesus so boldly? Why does Jesus interpret her actions as “faith”?

2. What does Jesus reveal about himself? What’s the impact?
Jesus challenges Simon’s view of the woman by telling a story about love that flows from someone whose great debt had been forgiven (v. 41-43). In the honor-shame culture of Jesus’ day, his story elevates the woman and publicly corrects Simon. What is Jesus revealing about himself, and how does that affect the way onlookers view him and the woman?

Apply
1. Embrace Jesus’ honor and love.
Jesus asks Simon, “Do you see this woman?” Imagine yourself taking a risk to love Jesus publicly, and he responds by seeing you and challenging others to see you. How worthy do you feel of being seen by Jesus as his beloved and valuable masterpiece? What would it look like for you to accept forgiveness from Jesus, love him recklessly, and not worry about the judgment of others?

2. Extend honor and love.
This woman’s actions are still being discussed 2,000 years later, and her story invites all readers to identify with a beloved sinner, generously forgiven. However, Simon was unable to recognize his need for forgiveness, so his love for Jesus and others was selfishly limited. Who does our surrounding culture tell us is undeserving of attention and love? What steps could you take to follow the example of Jesus and honor those who feel most risky to love?

Conclude
Pray with each other.

For tips on leading a small group online, watch this!