

THE KING WE NEED

Discussion Guide: Loved People Love Generously

Passage: Luke 7:36-50

Summary: As Jesus shares a meal with the religious leaders, a scandal takes place! A woman known in the city as a “sinner” enters and pours out extravagant love on Jesus. The religious leaders are aghast! Jesus’ response cuts to the heart: we love others in proportion to the love we have received.

Discussion Questions:

1. Just like the woman and Simon, the Pharisee, we all carry very real guilt and shame. Guilt is the feeling we feel when we have objectively done something wrong. When we sin, or do not trust God, we will feel guilt. Shame is the feeling that there’s something wrong with us. We often experience shame because of the ways other people reject or abandon us. How do you experience guilt and shame? How do you know the difference between them?
2. John Bradshaws writes that we deal with our toxic shame (which says that they are unloveable) by either becoming more than human or less than human (up on the shame ladder or down). How do we see those two ways of coping with shame in the woman (her past) and in Simon the Pharisee?
3. The Pharisee only had disdain for the Jesus and the woman. He was looking down on them from the top of the shame ladder. How does the guilt and toxic shame you carry prevent you from generously loving others?
4. The woman found freedom because of what she received from Jesus: forgiveness and peace. Forgiveness removed her guilt. Peace, or “wholeness”, assured her that she was “okay.” Why was Jesus the only one who could give her forgiveness and peace? Why is he the only One who can remove our guilt and shame?
5. It’s only when we are freed from our guilt and shame that we are able to love others generously and be ourselves. How do you see that freedom displayed in the story? Have you experienced this kind of freedom?