



NETCAST ORIGINAL DEVOTIONALS

Series: Knowing Jesus

Date: March 23, 2026

Scripture: [Luke 7: 36-50](#)

Title: A Debt Owed and Paid

Author: Esther Baird

Read: [Luke 7: 36-50](#)

Devotional:

The other day I was driving when someone came flying out of an alley. I slammed on my horn and gave them a wave that clearly meant, “You nearly killed me!” They waved back in a way that clearly meant, “I totally saw you, you’re crazy,” which made me feel crazy... because I wasn’t crazy.

So I pulled in front of them and continued driving in a very calm, controlled manner, (to demonstrate what a decent person drives like). Then we got to a light, and I put my left blinker on. They pulled up alongside me, gave me another wave, this one meaning, “You are a terrible driver!” - - and pointed to a giant “No Left Turn” sign.

Well.

But I was the better driver! So I did the only reasonable thing, I turned anyway and got on with my life.

We’ve all been there, feeling like we’re the better person in a situation (when reality might suggest otherwise). And Simon, in our passage today, was in that exact place. It was his house. He was the theologically educated man. Clearly, he was the better person to interact with Jesus.

And yet, there was that sinful woman - - drawing Jesus’ attention.

The problem, like my driving, is that when we’re busy judging someone else, we often miss what’s going on in our own hearts.

The woman knew her heart. She knew the depth of her sin, and therefore the depth of her need for Jesus. Nothing was more important than being near him, honoring him, thanking him, giving everything she had in that moment.



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Devotional cont.

Simon, on the other hand, did not know his own heart. He stood in judgment, wondering how Jesus could allow this woman to act that way. If Jesus really knew who she was, he thought, he wouldn't let her touch him, let alone cause such a scene.

But of course, Jesus did know who she was. He knew her past, her sin, her "unclean" status. And he also knew Simon's heart... his judgment, his pride, his blindness.

So Jesus told a parable to explain how grace really works: when you understand how great your debt is, you understand how great the forgiveness is. Simon didn't see it. The woman did.

And if we're honest, we are like both the woman and like Simon. At one level, we know we need help. At another, we think, "Maybe not as much help as that person over there."

But Scripture is clear: "All [that means you and me] have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). No matter how good your life looks - - your job, your home, your service in Kids Min at church, your effort to be kind to your rude coworkers - - it's not enough. We all fall short.

The more we know Jesus, the more we begin to see just how deeply we need him and how impossible it is to overcome our sin and darkness on our own.

My childhood pastor used to say, "Cheer up, Christian, you're worse off than you think!" And it's true. The longer we follow Jesus the more we understand our need for grace, but the more able we are to extend that same grace to others.

Knowing Jesus means knowing the depth of our sin, *and* the certainty of our hope. Because of him, our debt is paid. We are free to sit at his feet, to follow him, and to love others the way he first loved us.



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Reflection Questions:

- Simon and the woman see themselves very differently before Jesus. In what ways are you more like Simon, quick to evaluate others but less aware of your own need for grace?
- The woman’s actions flow out of her understanding of forgiveness. How does your awareness of how much you’ve been forgiven shape the way you worship, love, or respond to Jesus?
- Jesus tells a parable about two debts: one large and one small. Do you ever minimize your own “debt” compared to others? How might that affect your relationship with God and with people?
- Jesus ends by confirming the woman’s faith and offering peace. What would it look like for you this week to live with the confidence that your debt has been paid and you are at peace with God?

Notes:
