



Encountering Forgiveness (Luke 7:36-50)

1. John Newton, wrote in his famous hymn:

*"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
that saved a wretch like me"*

Unbelievers sometimes object that referring to yourself as 'a wretch like me' is spiritually and psychologically unhealthy. How would you respond?

2. There are two different people encountering Jesus in this section. Read through Luke 7:36-50 and put together a comparison picture:

| | <i>Simon the Pharisee</i> | <i>The Sinful Woman</i> |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Status in society | | |
| Attitude to self | | |
| Attitude to Jesus | | |
| Level of grumpiness | | |
| Level of Joy | | |
| Jesus assessment of their character? | | |

What attitudes are most appropriate to have when you encounter Jesus?

5. In your prayers, how often do you thank God for sending his son to die for your salvation? Should this be increased?
6. Reread the mini-parable about the two debtors (7:41-43). Does Simon answer the question correctly? How does this parable condemn him?
7. Look at the physical situation of v44. Why does Jesus face the woman when talking to Simon? Why does Jesus have to say 'Do you see this woman'?

How might our relationships with other people be enhanced if we were less spiritually proud? How might our conflicts be transformed if we were most mindful of our own sin before we judged others faults?

8. In 7:49 we find the key question of Luke's gospel. What does forgiving sins tell us about Jesus' true identity? (compare with Luke 5:21)
9. John Newton, the hymn writer of *Amazing Grace*, famously said these words on his deathbed:

*“Although my memory's fading, I remember two things very clearly:
I am a great sinner and Christ is a great Savior.”*

How can we imitate John Newton's joy in forgiveness in our daily life?

How likely are we to show such humility and joy in Christ on our own deathbed?

Invest some time praying that you would again come before Jesus as the forgiver of your sins, that you would be humble and sober before him, and walk in the joy of his forgiveness.