

Diving Deeper into Discipleship for January 23, 2022

Pastor Pete Fowler | *Open Invitation: Forgiven and Faithful*

Sermon Reflection Questions:

- Why do you think the "well-known sinners" around us today often don't respond to the Church like the woman responded to Jesus? What can we do to change that?
- What holds you back from a life of self-abandoned worship of God, like we see in this story?
- Do you, like Simon, have trouble "seeing" people because you can't get past the labels you've created for them in your mind and heart?
- Do you tend to think you only need a little forgiveness? Thank God today for giving you freedom from your many sins!

Devotional Reading and Reflection

- **Luke 18:9-14** | How is this parable similar to the passage in Luke 7 about the sinful woman? What do the attitudes and actions of the people in these stories teach us about God's gift of forgiveness and justification?
- **Isaiah 66:1-2** | According to the passage, what attitudes/actions are common among people that God looks upon with favor?
- **2 Samuel 6:16-23** | How is David's "extravagant" worship similar to the woman who anoints Jesus in Luke 7?

Weekly Spiritual Practice

January Practice: Simplicity | Minimize with Generosity

(from *Celebration of Discipline* by Richard Foster, pg. 79-80, 91)

- The Christian discipline of simplicity is an inward reality that results in an outward lifestyle. Both the inward and the outward aspects of simplicity are essential. We deceive ourselves if we believe we can possess the inward reality without it having a profound effect on how we live. To attempt to arrange an outward lifestyle of simplicity without the inward reality leads to deadly legalism.
- Experiencing the inward reality liberates us outwardly. Speech becomes truthful and honest. The lust for status and position is gone because we no longer need status and position. We cease from showy extravagance not on the grounds of being unable to afford it, but on the grounds of principle. Our goods become available to others.
- Develop a habit of giving things away. If you find that you are becoming attached to some possession, consider giving it to someone who needs it. Masses of things that are not needed complicate life. They must be sorted and stored and dusted and restored ad nauseam. Most of us could get rid of half our possessions without any serious sacrifice. We would do well to follow the council of Thoreau: "Simplify, simplify."