

JESUS CAN HEAL

Preschool
Week 4

PARENT BIBLE STUDY

Read: Luke 7:36-50

Mary and Simon the Pharisee show us two distinct reactions to grace.

While Simon the Pharisee and Jesus reclined at Simon's table for dinner, they were interrupted by Mary, a disheveled, upset, and grieving woman, who was probably a prostitute. No one said a word as she cried hard, anointing the feet of Jesus with oil and using her tears to wash them. The room was probably awkwardly silent. Simon watched the whole scene with a condescending, hardened heart and thought to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner," Luke 7:39.

Simon must've gotten that nasty feeling in the pit of his stomach when Jesus called him out on something he'd only thought about. Jesus answered Simon's arrogant thoughts with a story about two men who owed their moneylender a debt, and when Jesus asked the obvious question, Simon knew the answer: the man who was forgiven a greater debt would more deeply love the forgiver of that debt.

Simon was probably starting to connect the dots, but Jesus helped him. Mary, the "sinner", had loved Jesus well because she understood how much he'd forgiven her for. She'd lavished Jesus with gifts and honor from the moment she had stepped inside Simon's house. Jesus said her faith saved her. He healed her heart. Simon, on the other hand, neglected some of the most basic Jewish hospitality traditions when Jesus entered his home. He didn't treat Jesus well as a normal guest, let alone treat him as the honored guest as he should have. Because of this, Simon completely missed Jesus and the sweetness of his grace.

We can be a lot like Simon and a lot like Mary, depending on what areas of our lives we're willing to dig into. In some ways, it's easy to accept God's grace, but there are some parts of our lives that we feel like we still have together all on our own. We aren't willing to accept or don't even see our need for grace. We can pray for a heart like Mary's – a heart that understands Jesus and his big, amazing grace. We can ask God to give us a heart that will love much because it understands how much it's been forgiven.

In what ways do you ever act like Simon? In what ways do you respond like Mary?

Take an honest look at your heart and ask Jesus to help you understand your need for grace in all parts of your life.