

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

GOAL

The goal of this lesson is twofold:

1. *To help students understand and follow* the actions of Jesus in their own lives through Bible study, hard questions, activities, and specific life application.
2. *To make it easy for you* to facilitate and teach students. That is why the Facilitator Guide is packed with easy-to-use instructions, timeframes, and questions that promote thinking and draw out real responses.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- A copy of the Facilitator Guide for you and any other facilitators
- A copy of the Student Guide for each participant
- Be sure to check out the Live It Out section ahead of time to prepare. You'll need:
 - *copies of menus from local fast food or sit-down restaurants (ideally that have the ingredients listed) along with paper and pencils*

BACKGROUND

This lesson is found in the DINNERS WITH JESUS set of *The Black Letters of Jesus*

1. Hey, You...Yeah, You! (Matthew 9:9-13)
2. A Dinner to Remember (Matthew 26:14-30)
3. Name Calling (Luke 7:36-50)
4. Back Up (John 21:4-19)

ROOT SUGGESTION

This lesson correlates well with other lessons in the Identity Root of *Deep Discipleship*. Here's an overview of the Identity Root, which helps students discover their unique identity in Christ:

God created humans in his own image, unique in all creation. Then sin entered the picture, and all people developed a warped version of their original identity. Christ came and died on the cross and rose again to offer us a new identity, even better than the first. He took on our sin and shame so we could take on his righteousness. He identifies with us so we can find our identity in him—a redeemed identity.

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HOW TO USE: Small Group or Large Group

The Facilitator Guide contains everything in the Student Guide, plus some additional material. This table outlines the elements of each lesson and provides an approximate timeframe, which you can adapt to meet the needs of your group.

☐ For a **SMALL GROUP** setting, use the white boxes below.

☐ For a **LARGE GROUP** talk, refer to the grey boxes on the right

		FOR A SMALL GROUP SETTING		FOR A LARGE GROUP TALK
		FACILITATOR'S GUIDE	IN STUDENT GUIDE	<i>*include personal illustrations to make this a powerful talk</i>
LESSON ELEMENTS	OVERVIEW	Read before facilitating	X	Read before facilitating
	OPENING QUESTIONS	Get students thinking and begin conversation (2-3 minutes)	✓	Use these questions as an ice breaker
	WHAT THE BIBLE HAS TO SAY ABOUT IT	A Bible Study with discussion questions (15-20 minutes)	✓	Main Scripture and teaching
	A SECOND LOOK	Another take on this study with discussion questions (10-15 minutes)	✓	Use as an illustration to bring the topic to life
	LIVE IT OUT	An experiential activity to help students reinforce and internalize the lesson (10-15 minutes)	X	Consider using this as an object lesson
	APPLY IT	A practical application for students to do this week (2-3 minutes)	✓	Use this as a springboard to present students with practical next steps
	THINK ABOUT IT	Challenging quote to consider	✓	Challenging quote to consider
	ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	Additional illustrations/object lessons	X	Additional illustrations/object lessons
	MEMORY VERSE	Verse to meditate on <i>*text or post the graphic included in your download</i>	✓	Verse to meditate on <i>*text or post the graphic included in your download</i>

NAME CALLING

DINNERS WITH JESUS

The Black Letters of Jesus: Jesus brings grace where others bring condemnation.

OVERVIEW

Everyone can get a clean slate. Regardless of what we've done in the past, Jesus now invites us to himself to change our futures by repenting and turning away from our sins. Being a part of his church means we give people space to repent and claim their new identities in Jesus instead of holding them to our last memories of what they did.

We find a great template for this in this lesson by studying how Jesus and another religious leader each treated a sinner differently. Jesus speaks the truth about how heaven views sinners, celebrating our repentance with his forgiveness.

OPENING QUESTIONS

- What are some nicknames people have given you in your life? Why were you given these?
- Is there a difference between "who" someone is versus "what" that person has done?

WHAT THE BIBLE HAS TO SAY ABOUT IT

When you were born, someone gave you a name. It probably sounded like gibberish to you at that moment, but it's your name, and it has likely come to mean a lot to you since then. Names have always had meaning. Throughout history, different cultures have given names that not only identified the person but what they did as well. For example, if your last name was Smith, you had a job as a Blacksmith. If it was Baker, your family worked at the bakery. So whether you enjoy your name, can't stand it, or plan to change it, it's full of meaning that was intentionally given to you.

FACILITATOR'S NOTE: It's mistakenly thought that "Christ" was Jesus' last name. However, "Christ" actually means "anointed one" or "chosen one" in Greek, which is equal to the word "Messiah" in Hebrew, so calling the Lord "Jesus Christ" means "Jesus the Messiah."

You've likely received plenty of other names over the years from people around you. Whether it was a nickname given, a position held, or an insult hurled in your direction, you've been named again. When you are named, someone is breaking down the big picture of who you are into a name that better sums up who they think you are. Those who tried to make you feel small hurled insults, while those who admired you gave you a name you probably like. And let's not forget that we frequently call ourselves names in our own heads as well.

Jesus had a way of naming people that shook their sense of identity in ways they didn't know they needed shaking up. This annoyed people who thought they had life all figured out, but it gave life-changing hope to anyone who knew they needed to change. In this passage, we see both types of people. Jesus is eating dinner at the house of a religious leader only to have the meal interrupted by a woman who had been named a sinner. Pay special attention to labels and "name calling" as you read all about it.

FACILITATOR'S NOTE: A traditional theory based on the context clues suggests that the woman in this passage was a prostitute, but the Bible doesn't directly say anything about it. Perhaps the silence is on purpose so that we won't compare our sins to hers but instead understand that we're all sinners.

Read Luke 7:36-50

Discuss:

- What name did Simon (the Pharisee) give the woman after she came into the room?
- In response to his comment, Jesus tells Simon a story (vs. 41-42). What is Jesus telling him and us through this story?
- What do you think the woman is trying to communicate with her actions?
- When Jesus tells the woman that her sins have been forgiven, what kind of new name would you say he is giving her?

A SECOND LOOK¹

According to the Olympic scoring scale for gymnastics, a "Perfect 10" is a thing of the past. In 1976, 14-year-old Romanian gymnast Nadia Comaneci became the first gymnast in Olympic history to receive a perfect 10.0. As a high school sophomore, Mary Lou Retton became the first American woman to achieve it in the 1984 games. However, after a series of controversial moments in multiple following Olympics, the scoring method was changed to account for a larger margin of both human error and human potential.

The new Code of Points instituted in 2006 divided judging responsibilities between two panels. One group of judges was tasked with evaluating gymnasts based on the level of difficulty and requirements of their routine, starting at "0" and working their way up. The other judges were tasked with discerning how well the gymnasts performed, beginning their deductions from "10." The final score of the routine would average these points together—essentially, between the highest high and the lowest low. A third group of judges would hold the other two groups accountable for their scoring and make adjustments if needed.

We're tempted to evaluate our own lives or others' this way, saying things like, "I may not be as holy as a priest or pastor, but at least I'm not as evil as Hitler." Simon the Pharisee struggled with this perspective; he allowed the sinful woman's behavior and reputation to distract him from seeing humility and repentance growing in her heart. Jesus' story wasn't just for him; it's for us also. We're all sinners who fall short of the "Perfect 10" glory of God, but his grace is amazing in helping our lives "add up" to more than we could ever accomplish on our own. We just need to come to him for forgiveness.

FACILITATOR'S NOTE: Simon the Pharisee questioned Jesus' status as a genuine "prophet" because prophets of God were held under the rule that if they spoke for God there would be no inaccuracy in their words or truth hidden. "If this guy didn't recognize out loud how sinful this woman was," Simon likely wondered, "then he can't be the real deal." Jesus modeled that knowing someone's sins and spotlighting them are two different things. The Lord only brought up her sin when Simon's sin of judgment reared its head, and even then, Jesus extended forgiveness.

¹ "Gymnastics at 2016 Rio Olympics: How the Judging and Scoring Works," accessed March 20, 2017, <http://heavy.com/sports/2016/08/judging-scoring-points-gymnastics-2016-rio-summer-olympics-simone-biles/>.

Discuss:

- What are some ways you “evaluate” your spiritual life?
- How do you deal with sin in your life?
- Based on Jesus’ comments to Simon the Pharisee, what is Jesus’ main priority when dealing with us in our sin?
- How would you explain repentance to a third grader?

LIVE IT OUT: NAME YOUR DISH

What you’ll need: Copies of menus from local fast food or sit-down restaurants (ideally that have the ingredients listed) along with paper and pencils. You can easily download most menus from students’ favorite restaurants online.

If you’ve ever stared at a menu in a restaurant you’ve never been to, you’ve probably experienced that awkward moment of wondering if there’s anything on it that sounds good. What you may not realize is that there is more available to you than what’s listed on the menu. The ingredients that are used to make its signature items can also be used to make you something that isn’t on the menu. All it requires is going through the authority of the manager or head chef first.

1. Pass out the different menus from the restaurants along with paper and pencils.
2. Have students in groups or as individuals look through the menu and circle 3 things that sound interesting.
3. Challenge students to take the ingredients from the dishes they circled and make something new. Have students create a name for this new dish and a short description that they would use to tell customers about it—including the list of ingredients and suggested price.
4. Invite everyone to stand up and present his or her item in its entirety.

Discuss:

- What was hard (or easy) about coming up with the name for your meal?
- In this activity, the manager’s viewpoint changes everything. How is this like Jesus’ perspective of the woman and Simon?
- What areas of your own life do you need to be re-named—to see with God’s perspective?
- What people in your life do you need to quit naming and see how they are named from God’s perspective?

APPLY IT

What is one way you can pursue repentance this week?

Be specific:

- What are you going to do?
- When are you going to do it?
- Is there someone who can keep you accountable?

THINK ABOUT IT

"Love says: I've seen the ugly parts of you, and I'm staying." – Matt Chandler, "The Initiating Love of God," Sermon, The Village Church, 31 March 2013.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- *Illustration:* King David is regarded as one of Israel's greatest leaders, but he almost was skipped over in terms of being noticed. 1 Samuel 16 records his family's not assuming he could possibly be chosen for such a great task, and yet the prophet Samuel cautioned not to look at outward appearance but like God does—at the heart (16:7).
- *Illustration:* Despair is the idea that we're stuck in something horrible "today" that will only continue or get worse "tomorrow." It's less logical and more a matter of our feelings taking over, as if whatever hard experience we're going through has become the loudest voice in our lives, like a balloon filling with a lot of hot air. Only when something (or someone, as is the case with Jesus) prods into it with truth will we emerge in a new way, bursting with hope that offsets the lie.

MEMORY VERSE

"But the LORD said to Samuel, 'Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.'"

1 Samuel 16:7 (ESV)



Disciples of Christ know God's forgiveness.

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