Session 4: The Uninvited Guest	
SESSION GOALS	
Every session has a point—what each participant should walk away from the discussion knowing, feeling, and doing.	
<b>Main Idea:</b> Recognizing our own sin and accepting God's forgiveness frees us to extend grace to others.	
<b>Head Change:</b> To know that we are no better than other sinners, equally in need of forgiveness.	
<b>Heart Change:</b> To feel compassion for others that comes from humility in recognizing our own sin.	
<b>Life Change:</b> To acknowledge our own sinful tendencies and decide to forgive those who hurt us.	
Each session in <i>Table Talks</i> corresponds to a video segment featuring a recipe.  Feel free to watch the video as a group, make the recipe together, and use the icebreaker question below to spark conversation while you eat.	
<u>OPEN</u>	
When the headlines announce another scandal, what is your first reaction? Why do you think you react that way?	

Our world offers no shortage of public and private sin—some people have their disgrace blared in the media for all the world to see, while the rest of us suffer among personal relationships and situations. In today's session, Bianca walks us through an occasion in Jesus's life in which he is confronted with a sinful person and pressured to react a certain way. He chooses the way of grace and illustrates why we should do the same.	
VIEW	
Before viewing the session, here are a few important things to look for in Bianca Juárez Olthoff's teaching. As you watch, pay attention to the following questions.	
How was Jesus treated by his host?	
Why were the woman's actions so shocking?	
When faced with someone else's sin, what question should we ask ourselves first?	
Show Session Four: The Uninvited Guest (7 minutes).	
REVIEW	
Any gathering of people carries the potential for an awkward moment. In today's session, we heard about a woman approaching Jesus during a dinner party at a religious leader's home. Jesus, the woman, and the leader each have something to teach us about judgment, forgiveness, and grace.	
Read Luke 7:36–50.	
Jesus's dinner with Simon is a study in contrasts. It opens with Jesus entering the home of a Pharisee,	

one of the religious leaders in Israel. Pharisees were generally wary of—and sometimes hostile to —Jesus, so the invitation is somewhat surprising. Have you ever received a surprising invitation? If you attended the event, how were you welcomed?	
Bianca referenced the value of hospitality in Jesus's culture. Guests were to be treated with honor, including a welcoming kiss and an offer to wash their dusty, sandal-wearing feet. Look back at verses 44–46. How did Simon treat Jesus? What does his behavior as the host tell us about his attitude toward Jesus?	
Bianca also explained some of the social customs of Jesus's time. Dinner party guests reclined to eat —their tables were low to the ground and surrounded by comfortable pillows. Guests would lie down, propped on their elbows with their feet behind and to the side of them. The sinful woman entered without objection likely because the doors would have been left open for onlookers to gather around the edge of the room due to Jesus's fame. How do details about cultural customs help you understand this scene more clearly?	
The woman who came to see Jesus had a reputation for living a sinful lifestyle. No details of that sin are given. But anyone with a reputation for sin would have been avoided and condemned by some religious leaders as an outcast from the spiritual life in the community. But she was on a mission to bless Jesus. Approaching him at the Pharisee's home took courage. When have you risked censure or rejection to do something you felt God had prompted you to do? What feelings dominated you during that event? Would you do it again?	

The woman sacrificed a valuable possession—a	
jar of perfume estimated to be worth a year's	
average salary—to honor Jesus. What would it	
look like for you to offer God something	
extravagant? In what ways have you sacrificed for him?	
Simon judged both the woman's behavior and	
Jesus, wondering silently if Jesus truly understood	
what was going on. Knowing Simon's thoughts,	
Jesus, the master teacher, used a parable to teach	
him (and us) a lesson. Two people owed differing amounts to a lender, who forgave both upon	
realizing they could not repay him. Which of the	
borrowers loved the generous lender more? The	
one who owed the most, Simon answered	
correctly. <b>What truth was Jesus teaching</b>	
through his parable? What was he	
communicating to Simon?	
In comparing the sinful woman to the Pharisee,	
Jesus honored the woman as one who loved God	
more because she understood her sinfulness.	
Simon's self-righteousness showed through his	
poor attitude toward both Jesus and the woman.	
With which person, Simon or the woman, do	
you identify most right now? Why? When have	
you found yourself resembling the other one more closely?	
more closery:	
Simon seemed blind to his own self-	
righteousness. Bianca noted that the woman's	
example can help us look at ourselves and ask,	
"Where is the sin in my life?" What steps can you	
take toward identifying your own sin? Toward	
refusing to judge others' sins? Toward giving thanks to God for his forgiveness?	
manks to dou for his forgiveness:	

Notice Jesus's closing words to the woman in verse 50. What saved the woman? How can Jesus's benediction to the woman help you find peace even as you struggle to overcome sinful tendencies?	
BIBLE EXPLORATION	
God's plan to restore his people to relationship with him is a central theme threading its way through the biblical story. From the Garden of Eden in Genesis to the New Creation in Revelation, God constantly forgives rebellious, hard-hearted people. The word <i>forgive</i> applies in a variety of scenarios, spiritual and material. For instance, in Luke 7, both financial debts and sins are forgiven. In what sense are debts and disobedience related? Let's explore the concept of forgiveness in the Bible.	
What does it mean to forgive or be forgiven?	
The two Greek words translated "forgive" in Luke 7 carry meanings such as "grant, give, bestow on; deal generously or graciously with, pardon; hand over or release (of a prisoner); cancel a debt, leave behind, cancel, dismiss, depart from."	
So, when we see "forgive" and its related terms, we must evaluate the context of the paragraph to understand what connotations are being communicated.	
Like the two who owed money in Jesus's story, forgiveness can be tangible—when a specific financial, material, or behavioral obligation is no longer owed. The debt is canceled.	
Read Luke 7:41–43 again.	

NAMES IN FORCES IN THE STATE OF	
Who is forgiving whom? What is being forgiven?	
iorgiven:	
Let's explain the lender's forgiveness using	
different terms. For instance, "The lender waved	
away their debt." How else could you describe	
what happened?	
When have you been forgiven a debt,	
monetary or otherwise? How did you react	
when you learned you'd been forgiven? What	
happened next as a result? (Did you	
experience freedom to pay other obligations, to give or save? Were you able to pursue a	
different goal? Try to connect the events.)	
Just as being forgiven a tangible debt influences	
our everyday lives, so being forgiven for actions	
and words affects our spiritual lives, which leads	
us to the next question.	
How do as forgiveness influence our relationship	
How does forgiveness influence our relationship with God?	
with God:	
Read Luke 7:44–50. Jesus explains the woman's	
motivation to Simon, then tells her, "Your sins are	
forgiven." In what ways are the financial debts	
in the parable different from the woman's	
debt of sin? How are the debts similar?	
If money is owed, it can be given back. But if you	
have hurt someone, can that action be reversed	
or undone? Of course not. Likewise, the woman's	
sins happened and could not be blotted out. But,	
when Jesus told her, "Your sins are forgiven," he	
was releasing her from the guilt she carried for	
those sins. He was allowing her to depart from	
the punishment of what she'd earned through her	
actions. She no longer owed God any spiritual	
debts for her sins. <b>How can knowing you are</b>	

free from guilt propel you to a greater sense	
of peace with yourself and with God?	
The New Testament is full of references pointing	
to the forgiveness Christ offers those who trust him. A sampling:	
Romans 4:7 — "Blessed are those whose lawless	
acts are forgiven and whose sins are covered."  Colossians 1:14 — "In him we have redemption,	
the forgiveness of sins."  1 John 1:9 — "If we confess our sins, he is faithful	
and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."	
According to the quoted verses above, what is	
required to be forgiven?	
What changes for us after we receive God's forgiveness?	
What do we learn about God's character when he forgives us?	
Jesus offers us freedom from the guilt of our sin. He paid our debt on the cross, declared those	
who trust in him to be righteous, and intends us to live in freedom—from shame, guilt, fear—and	
in holiness. What freedom have you found	
since accepting Jesus's forgiveness?	
When God's forgiveness restores our relationship with him, he expects us to replicate that harmony	
with those around us.	
How should our forgiven status with God influence	
our relationships with others?	
Bianca closed the session with an astute	
observation: Often, we start out like the sinful	

woman, humble and grateful for God's grace, but	
we grow up to become more like Simon, judgmental and condemning of others, having	
forgotten our humble beginnings. <b>In what ways</b>	
have you seen Bianca's observation to be true	
in your life?	
Scripture tells us that the best way to show Jesus	
our gratitude for his grace is to extend grace to others.	
others.	
Ephesians 4:32 — "Be kind and compassionate to	
one another, forgiving each other, just as God	
forgave you in Christ." Colossians 3:13 — " bearing with one another	
and forgiving one another if anyone has a	
grievance against another. Just as the Lord has	
forgiven you, so you are also to forgive."	
Think of a time when someone extended grace to	
you. Maybe they forgave you for doing them	
wrong, or gifted you through service, or spoke well of you before others. <b>What could it look</b>	
like for you to respond to God's grace in your	
life in your behavior toward others? Whom do	
you need to forgive? What small kindness can	
you extend to a hurting friend?	
Fun fact: The word Jesus used for "forgive" in Luke 7:48–49 (and that Paul	
used in the verses above) comes from	
the Greek charizomai, which is related to	
charis, which is translated grace.	
Forgiveness and grace are two sides of the same coin.	

## **LAST WORD**

Our lives are filled with occasions in which we owe others. We may owe something tangible, but more often we tend to need forgiveness for emotional and spiritual debts. The church looks more like Jesus when we reflect his grace toward us in our relationships with each other. The more we recognize our sin, the more we love and thank God for forgiving us like the women with the alabaster jar. We wash others' feet and offer our very best to be a fragrance to the world as our way to love God. As 1 John 4:19 reminds us, "We love because he first loved us."

## **DEEPER WALK**

**Reflect:** Spend time thinking about the forgiveness you've received from God. Whatever your story, his love is greater than your sin. How have you responded to his grace? In what ways might you need to humble yourself to him again and confess your need for him?

**Host:** Prepare and host a small gathering, perhaps using the soup and sandwich recipe from today's session. As a small sign of grace, prepare a small gift to send home with everyone. Perhaps print a recipe card, or purchase a set of small decorative kitchen towels, or bake an extra loaf of bread for everyone. Nothing fancy—just a little something extra to say "thanks for coming."

**Serve:** Find an opportunity to serve tangible needs in your community. Spend time "washing the feet" of those in humbler circumstances.

**Pray:** Ask God to help you identify the ways in which he has forgiven you and specific ways you can reach out to forgive those who've hurt you or bless those who are hurting.

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