

He Who Has Been Forgiven Much Loves Much! **A True Story of a Young Woman's Search for Acceptance** **(Discipleship Lesson)**

..... Read the entire lesson and then answer the questions that follow.

I remember at about the age of two, we were living in Cortez where my parents owned a leather and candle shop. I could see that contentions were high between my parents, but as a child, you just go about your daily business. During that time, my daddy sat down with my sister and me and we made belts. I got to put in the carved detail and paint it, and then my dad picked out a nice brass belt buckle. (My son still wears the belt thirty-one years later.) In my two year old thinking, it seemed like that was one day, and the next, my parents were divorced. I didn't have the vocabulary to express my feelings, but I do remember wondering where daddy was, and why wasn't he living with us anymore.

We moved several times between the ages of two and four and ended up in Basalt, living in the basement apartment of the people my mom worked for. They had an older son about the age of ten, whom I befriended and spent time with as much as possible. He took advantage of the friendship and sexually violated me on several occasions. I didn't know what was happening, or that it was wrong, but my mom was furious when she found out. We soon moved again to a quieter neighborhood without other children and went on with our lives.

At the age of six, my mom remarried and we moved east. Even though I liked my new dad, I still had trouble understanding why mom and my daddy couldn't work it out. I praise God for my stepdad, who hung in there with me even though it probably hurt him. Always being small in stature, and a girl, and already feeling rejected by my daddy, I began having some social problems in school. They weren't bad, but enough to notice. I was tough and wanted everyone to know it. I made up my mind that I wasn't going to be hurt again if I could help it.

The years flew by and we moved again when I was in the sixth grade. This was a difficult move for me, going to a new school and having to start all over again. I decided that I would have to be extra-tough at this new school in order to survive. I also decided that the kids weren't going to like me unless I was good at something. Schoolwork wasn't my greatest interest, especially with degrading teachers who made fun of my Michigan accent. So, I turned to sports. As I look back, nobody really cared that I was good at track; they ridiculed me all the same.

We changed schools again the fall of my freshman year. My parents sacrificed a lot to send us to a Catholic high school, hoping for a better education for my sister and me. Although that was true, the flip side was that the drugs were better, and the boys all had their own cars. I was thirteen entering the ninth grade; it was such an intimidating time. The girls were vicious and the boys were, well, cute. I assessed the situation and decided that to survive, I would befriend the guys. The wolf pack was too much for me to handle.

At fourteen I had a boyfriend who was two years older than me. Of course, sex came up, since that was all they were interested in anyway. He asked if I had any experience in this category, and I flashed back to when I was four. I told him as much, and he informed me that since I was already defiled, there was no going back. In my distorted thinking, I thought he was right. I did consider the rule about not having sex before marriage. I thought it was all about what color dress you could wear on your wedding day—cream color vs. white. I

decided I didn't care what color my dress was, and from that moment on, I entered into years of sexual promiscuity and blinding heartaches.

I entered college at seventeen. Educationally, I was able to keep up, but maturity-wise, I was definitely lacking. Finally out of the house and free to do what I wanted, booze and boys were at my disposal. The summer after my first year of college, I was a stripper. I justified that it was okay since I had to pay for college myself. What I was really doing was taking one step closer to the pit of depravity and sugar-coating it. My parents knew of my career-choice and were thoroughly disappointed but didn't say much since I was on my own. It was now sink or swim.

The next year at school, I bragged about my summer job to several friends, and later discovered that word had gotten out. The snowball was getting bigger and was just about to crash down upon me. A man who was the National Champion several years running in wrestling asked me out on a date. We went out several times, and things seemed fine. Then one night he came over and was all coked out. He invited me back to his place where he proceeded to rape me repeatedly all night. I tried to talk him down and leave several times, but he would stand by the door and punch holes in the wall. The shame and guilt were unbearable, and I despised myself because I thought I was to blame.

I tried to put the past behind me and continued to search for that someone who would fill that sense of longing and loneliness in my heart. I rejected God, and blasphemed His name, not knowing that He alone could heal all my wounds. I tried church several times and always felt good after coming home, but nobody ever talked about Jesus, the repairer of the breach. It was just religion with no real life application.

I went from one boyfriend to another, broke off my engagement to a man who had cheated on me, and moved west with another man. I was never without someone at my side and a longing in my heart for something more. I would do whatever a man asked, thinking that by doing so, I was gaining approval and acceptance and wouldn't be rejected. I couldn't understand why it backfired on me every time. The man I moved west with turned out to be extremely manipulative and abusive. His jealousy flared at every turn, so he decided to give me an "incurable STD" so that no other man would want to have me. He thought that by doing so, I would never leave him, and he said as much. I left, of course, and moved in with another man. At first it was a roommate situation, but it didn't take long for me to work myself into a better position.

I was pregnant within two months and completely freaked out. As the good Catholic girl that I was, I had decided to have the baby. I thought he would be excited about it or at least warm-up to the idea. I knew abortions were wrong and had never considered having one myself, but codependency knows no bounds. When I told him that I was pregnant, he was extremely upset. It was "all my fault," of course, and so I was going to have to "take care of it." He gave me the ultimate ultimatum, "It's either me or the baby, but if you have the baby, I will have nothing to do with either of you—ever!" I was crushed and made the wrong decision once again. I stayed with him for another two years after that, enduring the tyrannical behavior of a jealous man and devastating verbal abuse. I began drinking with a vengeance and had talked myself into thinking I could handle it. The very thing I despised my daddy for, I was now doing myself. My parents saw the change in me and were very concerned, but didn't know what they could do to help. I was depressed all the time, crying without reason and hiding behind the mask of "party girl." I was becoming someone I hated, and I knew I was in trouble.

I left that relationship, promising myself for the first time in my life, I was not going to get involved with another man for a very long time. I lasted about two weeks, maybe less,

and got involved in a casual sexual relationship. Once the man found out I had the STD, he derided me to the point of saying that all my children would turn out retarded. Crushed yet again, I went out on a hill and prayed one night. I cried out to God, "What are you trying to tell me?"

At this same time I was spending time with the man who would soon become my husband. I gave him every excuse why he didn't want me, nor I him—he was ten years older; I needed to be independent for the first time in my life; I had to prove to myself that I could make it on my own; blah, blah, blah. I shared with him all of my past, thinking that this might scare him away, but it didn't. Three months later we entered into holy matrimony. Of all my mistakes in the past, I knew that I had finally made one right decision.

Right away my husband and I decided to stop drinking. We slowed down quite a bit, and then one day we stopped altogether. We wanted to have children, and I didn't want to struggle with alcohol while being pregnant. He also encouraged me to read the Bible, but although I had come back from the pit a little, I was not ready to enter into dead religion again.

Two years later I surrendered my life to Jesus Christ. Although I seemed to "have it all," I still had feelings of unworthiness from the past return to haunt and torment me, my biggest failure being the abortion. I now had a child of my own and one on the way, and that made it hurt all the more. One night at the church I was attending, Dennis Jernigan gave a concert. He asked that we would all look inward and find the thing that we thought God couldn't forgive us for. I knew right away what it was for me. He then suggested that we ask God to give

us His perspective of the situation. The Lord gave me a beautiful vision of how He took my child up to heaven with Him and my little one was now safe. He then showed me the magnitude of His forgiveness and love and acceptance of me. No, He did not approve of my actions, for which I had to repent, but He did approve of me. There is a big difference between the two. I wept for days as I began to understand for the first time what I had been searching for my entire life, the unconditional love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ. I have since been healed, by the grace of Jesus of the "incurable STD." Jesus' love knows no bounds.

You see it wasn't about a dress color or about being popular; it was about unconditional love from Someone who would never take it away from me because of a lack of performance on my part, or reject me because of past, present, or future sins. The Lord has shown me the difference between godly submission and perverted compliance. He has shown me the better way through His Son, Jesus Christ.

I am no longer a man pleaser, but a bondservant to the Most High God. I have been freed from sin and death, performance, and man pleasing, so that I can serve and love the Lord with all my heart, mind, soul, and strength. The debt that I owed could never be repaid; how do you repay the life of a child? But Jesus Christ has forgiven all that I have done, and sinned against Him and Him alone. Oh yes, beloved, I have been forgiven much, and that is why I love much.

Luke 7:47

**"Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many,
are forgiven, for she loved much.
But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little."
He Who Has Been Forgiven Much Loves Much!**

He Who Has Been Forgiven Much Loves Much
A True Story of a Young Woman's Search for Acceptance
(Discipleship Questions)

..... Answer the following by reading the corresponding discipleship lesson
and using your Bible.

1. Read John 12:42-43. "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: [43] For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." Did many of the rulers believe in Jesus? _____.
2. Why did they not "confess Him?" _____.
3. Who were the rulers more interested in pleasing? Man or God?
4. Have you ever believed one thing and done exactly the opposite in order to gain approval from someone else? _____.
5. Read Galatians 1:9-10. "As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. [10] For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." If you still seek to please man, who are you not a bondservant of? _____.
6. Read Ephesians 6:5-9. "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; [6] Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; [7] With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: [8] Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. [9] And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him." How is a bondservant described in Ephesians 6:6?
_____.
7. If we do our service as to the Lord and not to man, who will we receive our reward from? (verse 8) _____.
8. Read Colossians 3:17. "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." Whose name are we to speak and act according to? _____.
9. Read John 8:28-29. "Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. [29] And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him." Did Christ do anything of Himself? _____.

10. Whose authority was Christ under? _____.
11. What did Christ speak? _____.
12. What did Jesus say that He always did? _____.
13. Since Jesus is our example on how to live our lives, what should we always do?
_____.
14. Read 2 Corinthians 5:9-10. "Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. [10] For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." What was Paul's aim? _____.
15. Read Hebrews 11:6. "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Who is God a rewarder of? _____.
16. Read Acts 4:16-20. "Saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it. [17] But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. [18] And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. [19] But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. [20] For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." Why did the rulers command Peter and John not to speak in the name of Jesus? _____.
17. What was their response? _____.
18. Did they trust in the Lord and do as Christ had instructed them, or did they try to appease the rulers so as to look good in the eyes of man? _____.
19. Have you ever been in a situation where the right thing to do was opposite of what the crowd was doing? _____. What did you do?_____.
20. Read Romans 3:19-20. "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. [20] Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." What does the law make the world in the sight of God? _____.
21. Will anyone be justified (made righteous) by the deeds of the law? _____.
22. Have only some really wicked people sinned and fallen short of the glory of God? _____.
23. How have we been justified (made righteous) freely? _____.

24. Read Romans 8:1-3. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. [2] For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. [3] For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." If you have received Jesus as your Lord and Savior, are you to harbor guilt, shame, or condemnation regardless of your past? _____.
25. What has the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made you? _____.
26. Since the law wasn't able to save you, what did God do instead? (verse 3)
_____.
27. Read Ephesians 2:8-9. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: [9] Not of works, lest any man should boast." Were you able to save yourself through your works? _____.
28. Your salvation is a _____ from God.
29. Since you were not able to save yourself through your works, where is your boasting then? _____.
30. Read Proverbs 1:10. "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." What are you to do if sinners entice you? _____.
31. Do you have a choice in this matter? _____.
32. Read 2 Timothy 2:22. "Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." What are you to flee?
_____.
33. What are you to pursue? _____.
34. Who are you to pursue these things with? _____.
35. Are the people you have surrounded yourself with—friends, family, loved ones—calling on the Lord with a pure heart? _____.
36. Are they encouraging you to pursue a path of righteousness with the Lord? _____.
37. If you answered no to the last two questions, isn't it time you considered cultivating new relationships? _____.
38. Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, [10] Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. [11] And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in

the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." List the eleven kinds of people who will not inherit the kingdom of God. _____

If you have participated in any of these immoral acts and have not yet turned to God through Jesus Christ and repented of your sin, it is not too late. Read Romans 2:4. *"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"* and be encouraged!

39. "And such were some of you, BUT," What three things are you now if you have received Jesus as your Lord and Savior (1 Corinthians 6:11)? _____

40. Read Titus 2:11-15. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, [12] Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; [13] Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; [14] Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. [15] These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee." What brings salvation to all men?

41. What does the grace of God teach us to deny? _____.

42. How should we live instead? _____.

43. What are we to be looking for? _____.

44. What did the Lord redeem us from? _____.

45. Read 1 Corinthians 6:13. "Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body." Who is your body for? _____.

46. Read Isaiah 55:6-7. "Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: [7] Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." What should the wicked and unrighteous man do?

47. If he returns to the Lord, what will the Lord do for him?

48. Do we need to fear coming back to the Lord no matter how badly we think we have sinned? _____.

49. Read John 8:10-12. "When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? [11] She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more. [12] Then spake Jesus again unto them, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." Did Christ condemn the woman who was caught in the act of adultery? _____.
50. What did He command this woman to do? _____.
51. If we follow Jesus, will we walk in darkness? _____.
52. Read 1 John 1:7-9. "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. [8] If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. [9] If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." What is God faithful to do if we confess our sins?
_____.
53. Read 1 John 4:19. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." Why is it that we can love the Lord? _____.
54. If He loved us first, did we have to perform or work for His love? _____.
55. Read Psalm 103:2-12. "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: [3] Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; [4] Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; [5] Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's. [6] The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed. [7] He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel. [8] The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. [9] He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever. [10] He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. [11] For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. [12] As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." What has the Lord forgiven? (verse 3)
_____.
56. In verse 10, has the Lord dealt with us according to our sins? _____.
57. How far has the Lord removed our sins from us? (verse 12) _____.
58. **Evaluation of Discipleship Evangelism Bible Study Lessons (Volume 1)–Please take time to write us and let us know how these lessons have changed your life. Let us know if you have used these lessons to disciple others. Write to: Discipleship Evangelism, P.O. Box 17007, Colorado Springs, Colorado U.S.A. 80935-7007
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He Who Has Been Forgiven Much Loves Much!
A True Story of a Young Woman's Search for Acceptance
(Discipleship Answer Key)

Do not look at the answer key until you have completed the questions.
Compare your answers with the following answers.

1. Read John 12:42-43. Did many of the rulers believe in Jesus?
Yes
2. Why did they not "confess Him"?
Because they would get put out of the temple.
3. Who were the rulers more interested in pleasing?
Man or God?
4. Have you ever believed one thing and done exactly the opposite in order to gain approval from someone else? _____.
5. Read Galatians 1:9-10. If you still seek to please man, who are you not a bondservant of? **Jesus Christ.**
6. Read Ephesians 6:5-9. How is a bondservant described in Ephesians 6:6?
As doing the will of God from the heart.
7. If we do our service as to the Lord and not to man, who will we receive our reward from? (verse 8)
The Lord.
8. Read Colossians 3:17. Whose name are we to speak and act according to?
Christ's.
9. Read John 8:28-29. Did Christ do anything of Himself?
No.
10. Whose authority was Christ under?
God's.
11. What did Christ speak?
Those things the Father taught.
12. What did Jesus say that He always did?
Those things that please God.
13. Since Jesus is our example on how to live our lives, what should we always do?
The same as Jesus, those things that please God.

14. Read 2 Corinthians 5:9-10. What was Paul's aim?
To please God.
15. Read Hebrews 11:6. Who is God a rewarder of?
Those who diligently seek Him.
16. Read Acts 4:16-20. Why did the rulers command Peter and John not to speak in the name of Jesus?
So His teaching wouldn't spread any further among the people.
17. What was their response?
"What is right, listening to you or to God?"
18. Did they trust in the Lord and do as Christ had instructed them, or did they try to appease the rulers so as to look good in the eyes of man?
They trusted in the Lord.
19. Have you ever been in a situation where the right thing to do was opposite of what the crowd was doing? _____ What did you do? _____
20. Read Romans 3:19-20. What does the law make the world in the sight of God?
Guilty.
21. Will anyone be justified (made righteous) by the deeds of the law?
No.
22. Have only some really wicked people sinned and fallen short of the glory of God?
No.
23. How have we been justified (made righteous) freely?
Through grace.
24. Read Romans 8:1-3. If you have received Jesus as your Lord and Savior, are you to harbor guilt, shame, or condemnation regardless of your past?
No.
25. What has the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made you?
Free from the law of sin and death.
26. Since the law wasn't able to save you, what did God do instead? (verse 3)
Sent Jesus to be the propitiation (sacrifice) for our sins.
27. Read Ephesians 2:8-9. Were you able to save yourself through your works?
No.
28. Your salvation is a
gift from God.

29. Since you were not able to save yourself through your works, where is your boasting then?
I cannot boast because I have done nothing to save myself.
30. Read Proverbs 1:10. What are you to do if sinners entice you?
Do not consent.
31. Do you have a choice in this matter?
Yes.
32. Read 2 Timothy 2:22. What are you to flee?
Youthful lusts.
33. What are you to pursue?
Righteousness, faith, love, peace.
34. Who are you to pursue these things with?
Those who call upon the Lord with a pure heart.
35. Are the people you have surrounded yourself with—friends, family, loved ones—calling on the Lord with a pure heart? _____.
36. Are they encouraging you to pursue a path of righteousness with the Lord? _____.
37. If you answered no to the last two questions, isn't it time you considered cultivating new relationships?
Yes.
38. Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. List the eleven kinds of people who will not inherit the kingdom of God.
Unrighteous, fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, homosexuals, sodomites, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners.
39. "And such were some of you, BUT," What three things are you now if you have received Jesus as your Lord and Savior (1 Corinthians 6:11)?
Washed, sanctified (set apart to God), justified (made righteous before God).
40. Read Titus 2:11-15. What brings salvation to all men?
The grace of God (His kindness and favor).
41. What does the grace of God teach us to deny?
Ungodliness and worldly lusts.
42. How should we live instead?
Soberly and righteously.
43. What are we to be looking for?
The blessed hope and glorious appearing of Jesus.

44. What did the Lord redeem us from?
Every lawless deed.
45. Read 1 Corinthians 6:13. Who is your body for?
The Lord (it belongs to Him).
46. Read Isaiah 55:6-7. What should the wicked and unrighteous man do?
Forsake his ways.
47. If he returns to the Lord, what will the Lord do for him?
Have mercy on him and pardon him abundantly.
48. Do we need to fear coming back to the Lord no matter how badly we think we have sinned?
No.
49. Read John 8:10-12. Did Christ condemn the woman who was caught in the act of adultery?
No.
50. What did He command this woman to do?
Go, and sin no more.
51. If we follow Jesus, will we walk in darkness?
No.
52. Read 1 John 1:7-9. What is God faithful to do if we confess our sins?
Forgive and cleanse us.
53. Read 1 John 4:19. Why is it that we can love the Lord?
Because he first loved us.
54. If He loved us first, did we have to perform or work for His love?
No.
55. Read Psalm 103:2-12. What has the Lord forgiven? (verse 3)
All my iniquities.
56. In verse 10, has the Lord dealt with us according to our sins?
No.
57. How far has the Lord removed our sins from us? (verse 12)
As far as the east is from the west.
58. **Evaluation of Discipleship Evangelism Bible Study Lessons (Volume 1)–Please take time to write us and let us know how these lessons have changed your life. Let us know if you have used these lessons to disciple others. Write to: Discipleship Evangelism, P.O. Box 17007, Colorado Springs, Colorado U.S.A. 80935-7007
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