

# SEEING CLEARLY

---

**Guest Preacher: Rev. Keith Grant**

**Context:** Last week, we were encouraged to live each day in God's presence. Romans 5 taught us that this is possible through the Holy Spirit, given to us through Jesus Christ. Even though God invites us to receive new life in him every day, it's hard to pay attention to his Spirit. Being human isn't easy. The dog needs to be walked, the kids need another ride to another place, major deadlines are waiting at school or work, chronic health issues provoke fear, bills are piling up, your relationship with your partner is suffering... our worries are endless. So how are we to respond to all of life's complex unknowns? Today's text from Luke reminds us that the One who knows us by name also has a special name of his own: Emmanuel, "God with us." When we let God into our pain and overwhelm, the results can be extraordinarily liberating. Just ask the woman in Luke 7.

**Reflect:** Describe your current relationship with God in one word. Why did you choose this word?

## **Read Luke 7:36–50**

1. Identify the different people in this passage. Based on their words or actions, how would you describe their character? What about their understanding of God's forgiveness and love?
2. Which character relates most to the word you chose to describe your own relationship with God?
3. What do you make of the woman's presence in Simon's home? Why does she make us uncomfortable?
4. Do you believe that "godly" and "sinner" are in completely separate categories? Why/why not?
5. Do you trust in God's love for you with the same intensity as the woman? Why/why not?

**Practice:** What is one action you can take this week to let God into your pain and overwhelm?

**Closing thought:** Reflecting on Luke 7, Professor Mary Luti observes that "God's lines are blurry; sin and repentance connect us more tightly to God than moral uprightness; and it can be really bad to be too good." Can we see ourselves as clearly as the woman sees herself—in need of forgiveness, hope, and a new life? "The best thing any church could hope for is to be filled with weeping sinners—people whose lives are marked by the humility that comes from knowing the judgment they deserved, but did not receive," writes Luti. "It is the actions of the forgiven in the church and the world that are characterized by the most merciful tenderness and the most amazed thanksgiving for the graciousness available to all in Christ." **Pray we can be a church filled with people like the weeping woman.**