



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

January 7, 2010

Hi, Friends!

Cheryl and I are back in Virginia this week, celebrating a late Christmas with our daughter, Rebecca, and her husband, Aaron Schnabel. We hope you had a wonderful holiday season and are enthusiastically looking forward to a New Year full of opportunities to know and serve Christ better. This coming week offers such an opportunity for you and your life group.

If you've read ahead, you know that this week's passage is Luke 7:36-50 and that our discussion questions will focus on a woman that everyone had given up on...everyone but Jesus, that is. Aren't you glad He didn't give up on you? It also exposes a religious lie—that those who look good on the surface are better sinners than those who fall into self-destructive behavior patterns. The woman in our study was known as the town harlot, a label no one but Jesus was willing to remove and replace with the new identify that comes from knowing Him.

To help you prepare for your discussion, I'm including a message by Jack Hughes, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Burbank, California. He brings to light several important facts about the culture and background of this story. I'm also including an icebreaker ("Throwing Stones") that may be helpful in getting the discussion started, as well as an article on how to minister to EGR (Extra Grace Required) people who come to your church or small group. I hope you'll take time to read the article and share the thoughts with your life group.

Thanks as always for your faithful leadership! We appreciate you and are praying for God to use you not only this coming week, but as you serve Him throughout the New Year.

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Gary and Cheryl