

# Encounters with Christ

Week 5 — **Jesus and the woman who was caught in adultery** — John 8:1-11

## Prepare...

*“Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and I will be healed.”  
(after Mt. 8:8)*

At this point in Jesus’ ministry, he has begun to ruffle some feathers. His revolutionary ways threatened the Pharisees, and they sought to arrest Him. Looking for a reason to accuse Him, they brought Him a woman caught in adultery...

**Begin...**by familiarizing yourself with the text. Read the passage two times.

Answer the questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

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Record in detail what you learn about the woman caught in adultery.

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Record any other questions or thoughts you have about the text. Are there parts you don’t understand? What spoke to you the most?

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## Memory Verse for the Week...

*“My eyes fail, looking for your salvation, looking for your righteous promise. Deal with your servant according to your love and teach me your decrees.” Ps. 119:123*

## Jesus our righteousness

"Guilty men brought a guilty woman before the One Person who knew the hearts of all: the One Person who had entered the world not to condemn sinners but to save them."

*Women of the Bible, Richards*

### John 1:17

"For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth come through Jesus Christ."

### Ps. 85:10+13

Love and faithfulness meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other. [...] Righteousness will go before him and prepares the way for his [the Lord] steps.

### Jer. 23:6

This is the name by which he [the Messiah] will be called: the Lord our Righteousness.

### Rom. 3:19-20

But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.

### Rom. 5:19

Through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

## A closer look...

1. Read John 7 to understand the context of this passage. What information is given regarding the real issue for the religious leaders bringing the adulteress to Jesus in John 8? (Note especially vv49 - 51.)

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2. This is not the first time the Pharisees tried to put Jesus in a political dilemma about obeying Roman law versus Jewish law. Hoping to find a way to accuse Jesus, they asked questions to test Him, to see whether or not He would uphold the Jewish law. (See also Mark 12:13-17) What would the Pharisees have said if Jesus had told them to let go of the woman?

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If He had told them to stone her?

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3. Since it takes two to commit adultery, why did the Pharisees not bring the man before Jesus?

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What does that tell you about their understanding of right and wrong?

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4. Rom. 5:19 The woman was caught "in the very act." Where would a person go to catch someone in the very act?

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How would the Pharisees, noted for their claim to holiness, have known where to go?

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5. Instead of responding to the accusation right away, Jesus just bends down and writes on the ground. Since we are not told what Jesus wrote, in your opinion what is the significance of this?

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6. Finally, Jesus stands up to say something. "If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." What does Jesus put forth as a measure for passing judgment on others with this statement?

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7. One by one the accusers slip away. Jesus addresses the woman for the first time only once they are alone. "Where are they? Has no one condemned you?" What feelings would best describe your emotions when answering in v 11: "No one, sir."?

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8. What does Jesus imply when he says: "Then neither do I condemn you. Go now and leave your life of sin"? Read the verses in the side bar to help you answer.

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How do you think this encounter with Jesus will actually motivate the woman to change?

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9. Look back at your response on page one. Are there questions you still have that are unanswered?

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10. Jesus accepts you as you are. You don't have to measure up to a certain standard. What helps you believe this?

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What makes it hard to believe?

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11. What can you learn from this story about helping a friend who is struggling with sin in an area of her life?

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### Discrediting Jesus

"While Mosaic Law prescribed stoning for adultery, this penalty was not imposed in the first century. Rabbinic courts rigorously avoided imposing the death penalty. A panel of rabbis, not an individual, would deal with such a case. Besides, the scribes and Pharisees did not recognize Jesus' authority.

These facts make it clear that the delegation was not seeking a legal opinion, nor were they concerned with punishing the woman. They wanted to discredit Jesus. "

—Women of the Bible, Richards

### Judging others

"If you judge people, you have no time to love them."

—Mother Teresa

"Never look down on anybody, unless you are going to help them up."

—Rev. Jesse Jackson

"A man ought to be like a dead man with his companion, for to die to one's friend is to cease to judge him in anything."

—Thomas Merton, The Wisdom of the Desert

### John 7:24

"Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment."

### Matthew 7:3

"And why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?"

### Personal Application