

ENCOUNTERS

Woman Caught in Adultery

Growth Group Opener:

Have you ever had an experience when someone chose to extend mercy toward you when they could have chosen judgment?

Read John 8:1-11

Who holds power in this story, and who is vulnerable?
How do we see each used here?

What does this story reveal about the hearts of the religious leaders?

Read: Leviticus 20:10; Deuteronomy 22:22

What is missing from this scenario, according to the Law?

Have you ever seen or experienced a selective application of truth or Scripture, where it is used to condemn some and protect others?

Jesus does not deny this woman's sin, nor does he contradict the Law.
What is the difference between excusing sin and refusing to let it be used as a weapon?

Where might you need to release a stone you have been holding?
(It might be a stone aimed at others, or perhaps aimed at yourself.)

Notice the order of those leaving in v9...why do you think it was this way?

What comes first in v11...mercy or repentance? Why does this matter?

What would be different if the opposite were required?

Have you ever tried to reform your life before receiving God's grace, thinking you had to clean up first? What does Jesus' order here say about how transformation works?

What can we learn about God from this story?

Is there anything you sense the Holy Spirit inviting you to look at more closely?

Prayer:

Father, thank you for being a God of both holiness and mercy. Thank you for giving your grace first and then inviting us to turn from our sin. Lord, forgive us for the times we've been guilty of sin like the woman, as well as for the times we've been guilty of selective judgment like the crowd around her. In the words of Psalm 51, create in us clean hearts, O God, and renew right spirits within each of us. In the name of Jesus, amen.