

Caught

John 8:2-11

December 1, 2019

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Guest Speakers

Reflect

Outline: Recap

Realize

Points to Ponder

Respond

Questions to draw out understanding.

REFLECT

We all walk through life dealing with different kinds of brokenness, and it's easy to fall into one of two responses: condemning ourselves for what we've experienced, or believing that our brokenness defines us and we can never change. But Jesus doesn't respond to us according to either extreme. In today's message, experience God's compassion through the love Jesus shows one woman caught in sin.

[LINK to SMALL GROUP VIDEO MATERIALS](#)

REALIZE

1. Jesus is not condemning.

- **John 3:17**
- **Leader Notes**
 - Like the woman in this story, we periodically find ourselves in one of two places with our own sin: either we're caught in the act of doing something wrong, or we haven't been caught...but we are definitely caught up in a way of life that will ultimately cause us harm.
 - In John 8, we see a single interaction Jesus navigates that represents his entire ministry. When he meets people caught in sin, he is not condemning. Culturally, this flies in the face of how we ourselves respond to failure (usually). Whether we're faced with our own failures or someone else's, our default response is to cast blame and condemnation because it's less vulnerable than demonstrating grace to others or ourselves.
- **Do you expect God to be condemning or gracious in his response to your failures? How does what you believe about God's response to you affect your view of yourself? If you're condemning yourself for any of your failures, how can you accept Jesus' grace and extend it to yourself?**

2. Jesus is not compromising.

- **Leader Notes**
 - Even though Jesus is not condemning of the woman caught in adultery, neither is he compromising. He tells her in verse 11 to leave her life of sin. God's grace and forgiveness is not a pass to continue in sin, but to live out our new identities in Jesus Christ.
 - In our groups, let's be honest with one another about areas of compromise in our lives. It might not be something that feels as "big" as the adultery mentioned in this story, but compromise usually begins with small choices that can lead to bigger things.
- **Right now, is there anything you're practicing in life that you are caught up in, or that you would hate to be caught while doing? Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you areas of compromise in your own**

life. What would it look like to repent of those things and live an uncompromised life following Jesus?

3. Jesus is compassionate.

- **Matthew 9:36, Hebrews 4**
- **Leader Notes**
 - Jesus' compassion comes out toward both parties in this story - he doesn't condemn the men who brought the woman before him, and he doesn't condemn her either. He's compassionate to all of them, giving space for his grace to have the final say of this situation.
 - As we seek to demonstrate Jesus' compassion to others in our lives, it's important to remember, if people have hurt us, compassion doesn't necessarily mean we are close friends with them again. We can be compassionate while maintaining healthy boundaries within relationships. Also, compassion is specific - meaning, it's easy to say, "I'm going to be compassionate to the homeless," generalizing our behavior to a nameless group of people. (Not that we shouldn't care for the homeless - we should)! But compassion becomes much more difficult when we put a name to it. When we look at our lives and see specific people that are difficult for us to show compassion to, those are generally the very people God is placing on our hearts to intentionally empathize with and love.
- **Describe one relationship you're currently navigating where it's a challenge to demonstrate compassion. How is God inviting you to show compassion to that person, even if they don't deserve it?**

Optional Follow-up Questions:

- What makes you say that?
- How do you feel about that?
- How would you explain your answer to a non-Christian friend or neighbor?
- Why did God design it to work that way? Why not just do (whatever else) instead?
- What would you say to someone who disagrees with that?
- Why do we really have to do it like that? Why can't we just go (some other route) instead?