

# **The Woman Caught in Adultery – "Grace for a New Start"**

**John 8:1-11 (CSB)**

**1 But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. 2 At dawn he went to the temple again, and all the people were coming to him. He sat down and began to teach them. 3 Then the scribes and Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery, making her stand in the center. 4 "Teacher," they said to him, "this woman was caught in the act of committing adultery. 5 In the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" 6 They asked this to trap him, in order that they might have evidence to accuse him. Jesus stooped down and started writing on the ground with his finger. 7 When they persisted in questioning him, he stood up and said to them, "The one without sin among you should be the first to throw a stone at her." 8 Then he stooped down again and continued writing on the ground. 9 When they heard this, they dropped their stones and went out one by one, beginning with the older ones, and he was left alone with the woman in the center. 10 When Jesus stood up, he said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" 11 "No one, Lord," she answered. "Neither do I condemn you," said Jesus. "Go, and from now on do not sin anymore."**

## **Key Background:**

- **The Law of Moses:** Adultery was punishable by death according to Jewish law (Leviticus 20:10), but notably, both the man and woman were supposed to be executed - yet only the woman was brought to Jesus.
- **Scribes and Pharisees:** Religious experts who interpreted and enforced Jewish law. They often challenged Jesus publicly to discredit His teaching and authority.
- **The Temple Courts:** The outer courtyard of Jerusalem's temple where teachers gathered crowds. This was a very public, humiliating setting for the woman.
- **The Trap:** If Jesus said "stone her," He'd contradict His message of mercy. If He said "don't stone her," they could accuse Him of opposing Moses' law.
- **Writing on the Ground:** We don't know what Jesus wrote, but this gave Him time to respond wisely and may have shown His calm authority in the crisis.

## **Questions from the Story:**

- **What do you notice about the timing and location where this confrontation happened (vv. 1-2)? Why might the religious leaders have chosen this public moment to challenge Jesus?**
- **How was this woman being treated by the religious leaders (v. 3)? What does their focus on her (rather than the man equally guilty) reveal about their true motives?**
- **What were the Pharisees really trying to accomplish (vv. 4-6)? How does this show the difference between seeking justice and seeking to destroy someone?**
- **Why do you think Jesus bent down and wrote on the ground instead of answering immediately (v. 6)? What does this teach us about responding to pressure or accusations?**
- **When Jesus said "The one without sin among you should be the first to throw a stone" (v. 7), what was He revealing about the accusers? How does this apply to how we judge others?**
- **Why did the older men leave first, then the younger ones (v. 9)? What does this suggest about wisdom, experience, and self-awareness of our own need for mercy?**
- **Why is it significant that Jesus was the only one left with the woman (v. 9)? What does this tell us about who has the right to condemn us?**
- **When Jesus said "Neither do I condemn you" (v. 11), what was He offering her? How does this demonstrate the heart of the gospel message?**
- **Why did Jesus add the instruction "Go and sin no more" (v. 11)? What does this teach us about the relationship between God's forgiveness and our response to it?**
- **How did this encounter completely change the woman's future? What does this story teach us about God's ability to give anyone a fresh beginning, no matter their past?**