


Week # 4

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A WOMAN  
CAUGHT: THE  
HEART OF THE  
ATONEMENT

*“Jesus stood up and said to her, ‘Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?’*

*She said, ‘No one, Lord.’ And Jesus said, ‘Neither do I condemn you; go and from now on, sin no more.’”*

*– John 8:10–11*



WEEK FOUR  
A WOMAN CAUGHT:  
THE HEART OF THE ATONEMENT  
JOHN 8

MEMORY VERSES:

*“Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life.’”  
–John 8:12*

*Extra Credit – “Jesus stood up and said to her, ‘Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?’ She said, ‘No one, Lord.’*

*And Jesus said, ‘Neither do I condemn you; go and from now on, sin no more.’” – John 8:10–11*

This passage of scripture is the most controversial story of Jesus’ life in the gospels. Many early manuscripts do not contain this passage of scripture and therefore, many commentators and pastors do not comment or preach on this passage. There are reasons for this—the language does not seem particularly Johannine, the earliest manuscripts do not include it, and some believe it fits awkwardly into the text at this point. All commentators that I read believe this is a true story of Jesus; however, there are some reasons that it may not have been included in some of the manuscripts.

I am including it because I believe, based on my own study of scripture and the witness of a few others (St. Jerome and Augustine included) that there are textual and theological reasons to believe it is a story that fits at this point in the gospel. This story is placed strategically in the temple following Jesus’ great statement in the temple in John 7:37. Jesus makes three other very direct statements about Himself after this story. Her story, situated here, illustrates all four in a powerful way.

## DAY 1

Read John 7:37–51.

*“On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, ‘If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’ Now this he said about the Spirit...”*

This statement from Jesus is reminiscent of that in John 4 to the woman at the well. How do these two passages compare?

Read the other passages in John that refer to the Holy Spirit.

1. John 1:32–34
2. John 3:5–8
3. John 4:23–24
4. John 14:17
5. John 15:26
6. John 16:14

What is the role of the Holy Spirit in these passages?

How do these passages shed light on Jesus’ statement in John 7:37?

## DAY 2

Read John 7:40–52.

After Jesus makes this great statement, there is much confusion about who He really is. In passages that remind us of Mark 8, the people are trying to decide who this man is. In verses 40–44, four different options are given. What are they?

1.

2.

3.

4.

Then the officers, who had been sent to arrest Jesus, come to the chief priests and Pharisees empty-handed. They state those famous words, “No one ever spoke like this man!” The Pharisees ask two questions.

1.

2.

Like the officers, Nicodemus does not seem to know what to do with Jesus. What does he say in Jesus’ defense?

When Jesus makes Himself known in our own lives and in our culture, are we quick to believe He is who He says He is? Do we question? Do we doubt? Are we missing the witnesses given all around us?

Are we trying to figure out who Jesus is like the crowd?

Are we awestruck and unsure like the officers?

Are we sarcastic and arrogant like the Pharisees?

Are we hesitantly believing like Nicodemus?

## DAY 3

Read 7:53–8:11.

Describe this scene in as much detail as you can. If you are an artist, try to sketch it out in color. If a writer, try to write out the details—including the emotions involved in all who are here. Use these questions to help you re-create this scene.

What time of day does this occur?

Where does this occur? What is the significance of this humiliation happening in the temple court?

What does it mean to catch a woman in the act of adultery (and where is the man?) Was this a trap for the woman? Was this a trap for Jesus?

Why does Jesus kneel twice?

Why does He address the Pharisees and not the woman?

What about Jesus' words convicts the hearts of the Pharisees—the oldest first?

Does He break the law of Moses?

When Jesus is alone with the woman, what does He say?

What does she say?

What is His final word to the woman?

## DAY 4 – JESUS’ DESCRIPTION OF HIMSELF CONSIDERING THE WOMAN

Immediately after this story, Jesus says three amazing statements about Himself. Explain each of these in view of the woman’s sin and the Pharisees’ sin against her.

1. John 8:12

2. John 8:31

3. John 8:58

Go back and read the context around each of these statements. What does Jesus say about His relationship with His Father in each one? His Father is a major character in John 8. Eleven times the Father is mentioned in verses 12–58. List the statements He makes about His relationship to the Father. What does the Father’s witness to the Son mean for the woman caught in adultery?

a.

b.

c.

d.

e.

f.

g.

h.

i.

j.

k.

## DAY 5 – THE PHARISEES STRUGGLE AGAINST JESUS

In chapter 8, you see the Pharisees desperately scrabbling to explain this Jesus and to trap Him in His words. As they try to harm the woman, they are also trying to harm Jesus. Here are some of the accusations they make against Him.

- You are bearing witness about yourself; your testimony is not true. (8:13)
- Will He kill Himself since He says, “Where I am going you cannot come?” (8:22)
- Who are you? (8:25)
- We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How can you say, “You will become free?” (8:33)
- Abraham is our father. (John 8:39)
- We were not born of sexual immorality. We have one Father even God. (John 8:41)
- Are we not right in saying you are a Samaritan and have a demon? (John 8:48)
- Now we know that you have a demon! Abraham died...Are you greater than our father Abraham?...Who do you make yourself out to be? (8:52–53)
- You are not yet 50 years old, and have you seen Abraham? (8:57)

In this chapter, the Pharisees want to stone both the woman and Jesus. Jesus does not allow either one of those things to happen.

John 8:59 – *“They picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.”*

John 8:7,9 – *“Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.... When they heard it, they went away one by one.”*

Why does it matter that Jesus faced the same hostility as she did?

