

FACE TO FACE

DIVINE ENCOUNTERS

The Adulteress' Story

Focus Jesus is neither condemning nor compromising. Jesus is compassionate.

Open When was the last time you laughed so hard you could hardly breathe? Who were you with and what made you laugh?

Read The adulteress in John 8 had a face-to-face encounter with Jesus. She came into this encounter with shame and a death sentence, because she was caught in her sin. Jesus not only saved her life, but He also showed how He relates to us.

Jesus isn't condemning. He isn't shocked when sinners sin, because He doesn't expect sinners to be holy. Jesus did not come to earth to condemn us but to save us (John 3:17). At the cross, all of our guilt was placed on Him and He was condemned for us. As believers, sometimes we have trouble understanding that there is *no* condemnation from God (Romans 8:1).

Jesus isn't compromising. He didn't ignore the adulteress' sin—He told her to “go and sin no more.” Jesus was a friend of sinners (Matthew 11:19) and they loved hanging out with Him. But He was also separate from sinners and did not excuse or participate in their sin. God hates sin because it hurts people.

Jesus is compassionate (Matthew 9:36). The only emotion Jesus showed toward the adulteress was compassion. He saw that she was caught in her sin. Jesus feels compassion for us when we are caught in the pain of our sin.

Talk

1. What do you think Jesus wrote on the ground with His finger?
2. Read John 3:16–17 and Romans 8:1. Why do you think we still struggle with feeling condemned even after we are saved?
3. Do you have a tendency to be either condemning or compromising toward other people? Which way do you lean?
4. Who are the “sinners” (unbelievers) that you work or hang out with? What are you learning in being their friend?
5. Read Matthew 9:36. Jesus is compassionate. What are some ways that He showed compassion when He lived on the earth? Name as many as you can think of.
6. What experiences in your life have taught you compassion? Which trials have caused you to be less condemning? Which have strengthened your resolve not to compromise?

Live

Do you know someone who is caught in the pain of their sin and needs Jesus' compassion? Ask God to show you how to love and serve them. Ask a friend to pray with you for that person.

Pray

Thank You, Jesus, that You don't condemn us and that You don't ignore our sin. We praise You because You were the perfect sacrifice for our sin. Thank You for Your compassion, Lord. Teach us how to be compassionate toward others just as You are.