

# Bible Stories for Adults

## Jesus Forgives an Adulterous Woman

John 7:1 - 8:11

### Opening

- Gathering: Name some present day examples of people using others to advance their own positions.
- Today's Focus: Jesus' continued revelation of His mission and ministry caused the Jewish leaders to step up their efforts to silence Him.
- Key Verses: *Many in the crowd put their faith in Him. They said, "When the Christ comes, will He do more miraculous signs than this man?"* John 7:30  
*"Neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."* John 8:11

Opening Prayer

### Lesson

Jesus' Epiphany = Epiphany means *shining forth* - reveal

How did Jesus reveal Himself to His hometown at the beginning of His ministry?

Luke 4:16-21 = He claimed to be the promised Messiah foretold by Isaiah

How did His friends and neighbors respond to His Epiphany that day?

Luke 4:28-29 = Tried to kill Him by throwing Him from a cliff, but He walked away

How did Jesus reveal Himself to Peter, James and John before they were committed to Him?

Luke 5:4-7 = Gave them a huge catch of fish after a fruitless night

How did these fishers respond to His Epiphany that day?

Luke 5:8-11 = Peter repented, they *left everything and followed Him*

How did Jesus reveal Himself to the masses?

Luke 4:31-35, 40-41 = Taught and healed them, Stopped demons from identifying Him

How did the masses respond to His Epiphany?

Luke 4:36-37, 42-43 = They spread the word, tried to keep Him with them

How did John the Baptist make one last effort to reveal Jesus before he was killed?

Luke 7:18-19, 22 = He sent his disciples to find that Jesus was the promised Messiah

How did those who heard this Epiphany respond to it?

Luke 7:29-30 = The people, including tax collectors, believed; Pharisees didn't

How did Jesus reveal that He came to save sinners?

Luke 5:27-29 = He called Matthew, a tax collector, and ate with him and other sinners

How did the leaders of the Jews respond to this Epiphany?

Luke 5:30-32 = They complained that He fellowshiped with sinners

How did Jesus reveal that the Jewish traditions were not in line with God's intent?

Luke 6:1-2, 5, 9-10 = Picked grain and healed on Sabbath - Sabbath is for man, not vice-versa

How did the experts in Jewish tradition respond to this Epiphany?

Luke 6:2, 7, 11 = They were furious and began talking about how to get rid of Jesus

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### Two Years Later (*John 7:1-10*)

How did people respond as Jesus made even deeper revelations later in His ministry?

John 6:60, 66 = Many had trouble accepting His words and left Him

If disciples were leaving Him at this time, how had His relationship with Jewish leaders grown?

John 7:1 = They wanted to kill Him

Did this keep Jesus from going to Jerusalem to celebrate the major Jewish feasts?

John 7:2-3, 6, 8-10, 14 (2-10) = No, but He waited until midway thru the Feast of Tabernacles

Were the Jewish leaders able to catch Jesus at this time?

John 7:30 = No, *His time had not yet come* - They would catch Him later in Jerusalem

### Jesus Still Being Revealed (*John 7:11-29*)

Did Jesus take the normal Jewish route around Samaria to get to Jerusalem

Luke 9:51-56 = No. He went through Samaria and was rejected there

With people opposing Him everywhere, did Jesus try ways to attract people as His brothers suggested?

Luke 9:57-62 = No. He instead pointed out the costs of following Him

Did Jesus' delay to Jerusalem have any affect on the regular Jews who had not yet seen Him?

John 7:11-13 = They were curious, but very quiet about it

How did they respond when they finally saw His Epiphany?

John 7:15, 25-26, 40-43 (15-29) = They were amazed and wondered if He was the Messiah

### The Experts (*John 7:31-52*)

How did the Jewish leaders respond when they heard that the masses were attracted to Him?

John 7:31-32 = They sent the temple guards to arrest Him

What happened when the guards saw Jesus revealing Himself to the people in the temple?

John 7:45-46 (33-46) = They returned empty-handed because they accepted His Epiphany

Did the Jewish leaders take this as a sign that Jesus might really be the Messiah?

John 7:47-49 = No, they felt that everyone else was too ignorant to see the truth

What was the result of this attitude?

Matthew 23:13 = They closed the door of heaven to themselves and others

What happened when one of the leaders suggested that they open the door enough to listen?

John 7:50-52 = They blasted him for being open to such a thing

### Feast of Tabernacles (*John 7:53-8:2*)

At what point during the 7-day Feast of Tabernacles did all of this take place?

John 7:37a = On the last day

Where would people stay while they visited Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles?

Leviticus 23:34, 42-43 = In tents (tabernacles) to remind them of wilderness tents

Did everyone go home now that the Feast was over?

John 7:53-8:1 = Yes, including Jesus

What do I mean by saying that even Jesus went home?

Luke 21:37-38 = Jesus spent nights on the Mount of Olives when He was in Jerusalem

What did He do there?

Luke 22:39-41 = He talked with His Father - also arrested and ascended there

Did Jesus go to the temple early in the morning as usual, even though the Feast was over?

John 8:2 = Yes, He was there by dawn

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### Setting a Trap (*John 8:3-6a*)

Where in the temple did Jesus usually teach?

John 8:20a = In the court of the women by the offerings - everyone would and could go

Who was especially ready for Jesus to show up in this prominent place?

John 8:3-5 = The Jewish leaders, they had a problem for Him to solve

It was common to take difficult questions to a rabbi for decisions. Was this the Jews' intent?

John 8:6a = No, they were trying to catch Him in a trap

### Adultery (*Exodus 20:14*)

What was the penalty for an adulterous affair?

Leviticus 20:10 = Both were to be killed - *Mishnah* prescribed strangulation

What type of adultery was involved if only the woman was accused and the penalty was stoning?

Deuteronomy 22:13-14, 20-21 = New bride found not to be a virgin

How serious of a sin is adultery in God's eyes?

Exodus 20:14 = It is forbidden specifically in the sixth commandment

Why is adultery so serious? = If unfaithful with your closest friend, how can you be faithful to God?

1 Corinthians 6:18-20 = Because it is a sin against God's temple, the place He bought

Did God forbid just the act itself?

Exodus 20:17a = No, even the thought of it - coveting your neighbor's wife

How did Jesus explain this?

Matthew 5:27-28 = Coveting or lusting is committing adultery in your heart

Wasn't this stretching the definition?

Matthew 15:19-20 = No, it is the heart that makes you clean or unclean

What can happen if we allow ourselves to be tempted by coveting or lusting?

James 1:13-15 = We get caught up in it and can be led easily into sin and death

How can we resist temptation?

Matthew 26:41 = Only with God's help through prayer, the body is too weak on its own

What prayer did David write when Nathan reprimanded him for adultery with Bathsheba?

Psalms 51:10-12 = *Create in me a clean heart, O God* - Used in worship liturgies

### The Trap

What problem did the Pharisees know Jesus would have with upholding this Law of God?

John 18:31 = The Romans didn't allow the Jews to execute anyone

How would Jesus be seen as contradicting Himself if He were to uphold God's Law?

Matthew 9:12-13 = He preached God's mercy and forgiveness to sinners

But didn't Jesus come to abolish the old law?

Matthew 5:17-20 = No, He came to fulfill the Law so we'd receive His righteousness

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Jesus' Answer (*John 8:6b-7*)

How did Jesus make sure everyone understood what the Pharisees were trying to do?  
John 8:6b = He didn't say anything for a while, wrote in the dirt with His finger  
Although we don't know what He wrote, how could this point to the unchanging Law of God?  
Exodus 31:18 = The Ten Commandments were written in stone *by the finger of God*  
Why would some scholars say Jesus was writing the names of the accusers in the dust?  
Jeremiah 17:13 = *Those who turn away from you will be written in the dust*  
How did Jesus finally respond? = Word for *without sin* could mean *without sinful desire*  
John 8:7 = Said that the first stone should be thrown by someone fully innocent  
How would this response have been accepted by the Jewish leaders?  
Deuteronomy 17:7 = God's Law called for innocent witnesses to cast the first stones

Who Will Throw the First Stone? (*John 8:8-11*)

Did Jesus look into the accusers' eyes to see who would claim to be without sin?  
John 8:8 = No, He leaned back over and wrote again - Let them examine their own hearts  
How do we see that Jesus was letting them condemn themselves?  
John 8:9 = They all walked away, the older and wiser ones first  
Besides seeing their own guilt, what else may have stopped someone from taking the first stone?  
Deuteronomy 19:18-19 = False witnesses were to receive the penalty intended for the accused  
After all had left, did Jesus tell the woman that everything was alright?  
John 8:10-11 = No, He called her into repentance - Go and sin no more  
How could Jesus have just let the woman go without condemning her for this great sin?  
John 3:17 = *God did not send His Son into the world to condemn ... but to save*

Closing Prayer

**Response** - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. What have I done to reveal Jesus to others?  
(*Luke 1:13-17; 2:17-20, 28-38; 5:27-29; 7:16-23, 29, 36-38; 8:38-39; 9:1-6; John 1:29-45; 3:28-30, 39-42; Acts 2:14, 22-24, 38-41; 8:30-31, 35-38; 11:19-21*)
2. When have I adamantly rejected something as false only to learn later that it was true?  
(*John 7:40-52; Matthew 26:31-35; Mark 16:9-14; Acts 5:33-40; Romans 10*)
3. When and how have I put someone in a no-win situation?  
(*John 8:3-6; Psalm 57:6; Proverbs 26:27; 28:10; Matthew 12:9-10; 22:15-18; Luke 11:53-54; 14:1-4; 20:20-26*)
4. When have I committed adultery in my heart?  
(*Exodus 20:14, 17; Proverbs 6:23-29; Ezekiel 20:30; Matthew 5:27-30; Colossians 3:5-6; 1 Peter 4:1-7; 2 Peter 2:14; 1 John 2:16*)
5. When have I accused someone of something when I have been guilty of an even greater wrong?  
(*John 8:7-9; 2 Samuel 12:1-13; Matthew 7:1-5; 23:1-4, 29-36; Romans 14:10-13; James 4:11-12*)