

NewSpring Church Groups Study Guide

Beautiful — Week 5 — The Condemned Woman

2 Corinthians 5:17 says, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” Abuse, pain, neglect, divorce, rape, sin, murder, lust, greed, jealousy, gossip, promiscuousness, adultery, things we did to ourselves, things that were done to us...all those things have been washed away. Jesus said, “Behold, I make all things new.” It’s his work, his forgiveness, his promise that breaks the power of condemnation in our lives. Through him we can live free from condemnation.

Read John 8:1-11

- What stands out to you most in this story?
- The woman was caught in the act. Why didn’t Jesus give her what she deserved? Is Jesus soft on sin?
- How should we respond to God’s mercy? (Read Romans 12:1-2) What practical things can we do?
- Romans 8:1-2 says, “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.” How does this verse apply to your life?
- For many people, Christianity is all about following rules. What is Christianity all about?
- What would you tell someone struggling with feelings of condemnation and guilt over past sin? Do you struggle with forgiving yourself?

John 3:17-18 says, “For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.”

Jesus, thank you for saving us. Thank you for freeing us from condemnation. Help us to live in that freedom so that others might see the change in our lives. We pray for those who have not yet believed. May they soon experience true freedom that comes through a relationship with you.

MONDAY

John 4:28-29 says, “Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, ‘Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?’” John 4:39 says, “Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, ‘He told me everything I ever did.’” Are you ashamed of your past and do you feel like those days and years were wasted? Perhaps God wants to use your past to point others to the grace and mercy offered through Christ. In seven words

the Samaritan woman summed up her existence before and after an encounter with Jesus. Have you thought about what He saved you from and what he has saved you for? Are you telling people about Him?

TUESDAY

Ephesians 4:29 says, "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen." When you speak do you build others up according to their needs or are your words filled with gossip and condemnation? In view of how God has forgiven us, do we have the right to condemn others?

WEDNESDAY

Confession is powerful. James 5:16 says, "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed." Whatever that thing is that has been holding you back, confess it out loud. Say it out loud to someone who loves you and has your best interest in mind. Clean the wound through confession and allow healing to begin. Don't struggle alone. Those around you will be blessed and helped when they see God's faithfulness to you in your restoration.

THURSDAY

Can you imagine being buried alive? Many of us are suffocated by the weight of our past. We must realize that through Christ the penalty of our sin has been lifted. We no longer have to carry that weight. Breathe free. Understand that God takes your sin seriously but he's not intimidated by the size or weight of your past. Through Christ Jesus, your past has been buried and you've been made alive. Are you relying on Jesus to do the heavy lifting in your life or are you trying to do everything yourself? Do you give yourself the grace and understanding that you extend to others?

FRIDAY

There are five women included in the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew chapter 1. It was unusual to mention women in records back then but even more surprising is that each of these women are unlikely candidates to be in the family tree of the unique Son of God. Tamar had posed as a prostitute so that her father-in-law would have sex with her. Rahab was a prostitute. Ruth was a foreigner and a widow. Bathsheba was an adulteress and an accomplice to the murder of her husband. Mary was an unwed, pregnant teenager. God chose to confound the mighty when he fulfilled his purposes through each of these women. They became part of his story. Each of us has been invited into the family as well. We are adopted sons and daughters who have been grafted in to the family tree. Thanks to God for making people with questionable pasts part of his story.

SATURDAY

Luke 7:41-43 says, “Two men owed money to a certain money lender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he canceled the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?’ Simon replied, ‘I suppose the one who had the bigger debt canceled.’ ‘You have judged correctly,’ Jesus said.” How often do we let our mood effect how we worship and serve Jesus? Shouldn’t our worship and service flow from the thankfulness we feel because he has cancelled our sin-debt?

SUNDAY

Of all the people that have ever lived, the two that probably have the most reason to feel condemned were Adam and Eve. They knew what perfection was like. They walked with God in the garden. They knew life before sin. And then it happened. The worst possible scenario was realized. They disobeyed God. From that moment on, creation was imperfect and every man sinful. From that day forward pain, toil, shame, guilt, brokenness, worry, fear, loneliness, doubt, and so much more would mark the human condition. And yet despite their monumental sin, God came looking for them. He called out, “Where are you?” Despite their disobedience he covered their sin. If He did that for them, why do we sometimes think that we are unforgiveable and unlovable? Jeremiah 31:3 says, “I have loved you, with an everlasting love. With unfailing love I have drawn you to myself.”