

Life Group Leader Study Guide
Series: *Believe and Be Changed*
John 8: A Grace Story

Primary Text: John 8:2–11

Supporting Texts: Matthew 1:18–23; Deuteronomy 22:22; Romans 6:1–6; Galatians 4:4–5

Theme

Because Jesus was born without sin and lived a sinless life, He can both **forgive sinners completely** and **empower real transformation**. Grace is not law or license—it is new creation.

LEADER OVERVIEW

This is a **Christmas message**, but not a sentimental one. It contrasts two women:

- **The woman caught in adultery** – publicly exposed, guilty, condemned by religious leaders.
- **Mary** – a righteous young woman who humbly receives God’s grace and gives birth to the sinless Savior.

Both of these women's stories lead us to the same truth: **Only a sinless Savior can stand between sinners and condemnation.**

ICEBREAKER

Do you think people want justice or grace more? Why?

SCRIPTURE READING

Have someone read **John 8:2–11** aloud.

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS (What do we see?)

1. What stands out to you about how the woman is brought before Jesus?
2. What do the religious leaders seem more concerned about—justice, righteousness, or trapping Jesus?
3. What is surprising about Jesus’ response to both the woman *and* her accusers?

INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS (What does it mean?)

1. Why is it significant that **only the woman** is brought forward and not the man (see Deuteronomy 22:22)?
2. How are the religious leaders misusing the Law—even though the Law itself is good?
3. The leaders present Jesus with a false choice:
 - **Law** (condemn her)

- **License** (ignore her sin)
How does Jesus introduce a *third way*?
- 4. Why does Jesus have the authority to say, “*Neither do I condemn you*”?

CHRISTMAS CONNECTION: MARY & THE WOMAN

Read **Matthew 1:18–23**.

Discuss:

1. How does Mary’s story compare to the woman caught in adultery?
 - One is publicly shamed; one is quietly honored
 - One is guilty; one is righteous
2. Why is the **virgin birth** more than a miracle—why is it necessary for salvation?
3. How does Jesus’ sinless birth and life make forgiveness in John 8 possible?

Jesus can forgive the woman in John 8 *because He is the child born in Matthew 1*.
Grace flows from who He is.

GOSPEL CLARITY: LAW, LICENSE, AND GRACE

Talk about the following truths.

- **The Law:**
“You must change before you are accepted.”
Reveals sin, but gives no power to overcome it.
- **License:**
“You are accepted, so why change?”
Minimizes sin and leads to slavery, addiction, and death.
- **Grace (The Gospel):**
“Because you are accepted, you can change.”
Forgives sin *and* empowers transformation.

Discuss:

1. Which of the first two (Law, License) do people most commonly confuse with Christianity?
2. Why does real change only happen *after* acceptance?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS (Where does this meet my life?)

1. Which voice do you tend to hear more loudly in your life—the voice of condemnation or the voice of license?
2. How does Jesus’ statement “*Neither do I condemn you*” challenge how you view yourself?
3. How does “*Go, and from now on sin no more*” challenge the way you view grace?
4. What would it look like this Christmas season to live out your **new identity**—not as “just a sinner,” but as a saint being formed into Christ’s image?

IDENTITY & TRANSFORMATION

Read **Romans 6:1–2** and **Romans 6:5–6**.

Discuss:

- Why is it important to understand that sin is no longer our identity?
- How does the Holy Spirit give us power—not just forgiveness?

At Christmas, we celebrate that God came near.

At the cross, we see why He came.

End with everyone answering these two questions.

- Where do I need to receive grace?
- Where do I need grace to empower change?

Forgiveness flows from who Jesus is.

Obedience flows from what Jesus gives.

Read for next week

John 8:12-59 Jesus is The Light and The Truth

Light

- Genesis 1:1–5 – Light before sun; God’s self-revelation precedes order
- Exodus 13:21–22 – God’s presence as light guiding His people
- Psalm 27:1 – “The Lord is my light and my salvation”
- Isaiah 9:2 – Light dawning in darkness (Messianic promise)

Truth

- Psalm 119:45 – Walking in freedom through God’s truth
- Romans 6:16–23 – Slavery to sin vs. freedom in Christ
- Galatians 5:1 – Freedom as Christ’s purpose, not self-indulgence
- James 1:25 – The “law of liberty”
- 2 Corinthians 3:17 – Freedom where the Spirit of the Lord is

I AM

- Exodus 3:13–14 – The divine name: I AM
- Isaiah 41:4; 43:10–13; 46:4 – Yahweh’s eternal “I am” statements
- John 6:35; 8:12; 10:11; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1 – Jesus’ “I am” sayings
- Philippians 2:5–11 – Jesus’ divine identity and exaltation