



## IHL Devotionals 2024-25: Game 13

### **Bible story: Throw the first stone**

By Zach Wise

God has more for us than the life we live.

#### **What happens in this story?**

In the book of John we read about a story where a woman was brought to Jesus by the Pharisees as he was teaching in the Temple courts. We'll immediately jump into the scripture here in John 8:3-11:

3 The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group 4 and said to Jesus, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. 5 In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say? 6 They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him. But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. 7 When they kept on questioning him [Jesus], he straightened up and said to them, **"Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her."**

8 Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground. 9 At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. 10 Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" 11 "No one, sir," she said. "Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."

In this scripture Jesus is confronted with a tough situation. If Jesus says here, "Go ahead and stone her," then he loses his spot of being a merciful, graceful God. However, if Jesus says "Don't do it, it's OK," he is breaking the Law of Moses and essentially condoning adultery.

But we see Jesus move where he gets down and starts to write in the sand. Many scholars believe based off the original Greek saying "*kata Grafon*" which means to write against, Jesus bent down and started writing the names of the Pharisees and their sins they have been committing. Jesus stands and says "You without sin." But the original Greek states "He who doesn't even want to sin...." In this moment Jesus looks at the woman and DECLARES "Go and live a life free of sin."

When we take a step back and look at the life of the woman, she was probably just a normal person who fell into the trap of temptations and sin. Something that felt right in the moment that continued her down a dark path to eventually be in an absolutely embarrassing moment at the

feet of Jesus. But Jesus showed her love, mercy, and grace and told her to move on from the life of sin she was chasing and live a new reborn life.

**Key thought:** Why do we all fall into temptation of sin?

**Answer:** Because Sin promises satisfaction at the cost of disobedience to God and eventual Pain to you.

It would be arrogant to say that sin doesn't "sound" fun. If it didn't sound fun we wouldn't want to do it. But every moment of temptation is a moment where we can instead be vulnerable and depend on God.

No matter the struggle you face – addiction, laziness, gluttony, no matter your struggle – God has a MUCH bigger plan for you in this world. God looks at you with love, and grace and wants you to live a free, sinless life.

If you take a fish out of the water, it will eventually die because it was not designed to live out of the water. Similarly, you are not destined or designed for this world; if you chase things of the Earth you will never have enough, and never find true happiness. True happiness is found in Christ: when we are made new and live a life for him, that is where we find real joy and peace.

### **Reflection (1 Corinthians 10:13)**

... God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

No matter your situation in life - God is ALWAYS the way out.

### **Questions**

1. What am I currently struggling with? What can I do to avoid falling into temptation of sin?
2. What things in my life am I trying to control instead of taking that and offering it to God?
3. Does anyone have an example they'd like to share about a way they have been able to overcome temptation? Or a boundary they've set for themselves to stay on the straight and narrow?

### **Closing prayer & prayer requests**

God, thank you for offering us new life. Thank you for offering us a way out of this sin-filled world. God, we want to live for you, and only for you. Though we have our desires, Lord, let us not fall into temptations. Be the center of our prayer, our worship, and our lives, Lord. We thank you for your grace, love and mercy. Amen.