

the gospel of

JOHN

he is the one

This Winter, our hope is to see Jesus in chapters 5-10 of John's Gospel. John shows us that He is the One. As God, He is the One with the right to judge, the power to provide soul food, who gives eternal life, and who can save and keep until the end. He is the One with real authority, who can give the Spirit and grant mercy. He is the One with the truth, sent from the Father who can truly see and grant sight. And He is the One who is the good shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep. For everything we need, He is the One. For everything we want, He is the One. Jesus is the One sent from the Father to be for us all that we have ever hoped and longed for.

PART 7: THE ONE WHO GIVES MERCY

Read the text: John 7:53–8:11

They went each to his own house, but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him, and he sat down and taught them. The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst they said to him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now in the Law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground. But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus stood up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one

condemned you?” She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.”

As Jesus teaches again in the Temple, the Pharisees interrupt and bring a woman caught in adultery into the midst of the crowd, seeking to catch Jesus in a trap. If He agrees with them and condemns the woman, they can report Him to the Romans who had banned capital punishment by the Jews. But, if He disagrees, they can claim He is contradicting the Law. But Jesus isn't caught up in their drama and, after writing in the dirt to draw attention away from the shamed woman, He responds calmly and clearly, exposing the evil motives of the Pharisees. In the moment, everyone's sin is exposed. Instead of repenting, the Pharisees run away and hide. The only ones left are the shamed woman and Jesus. And although He would have been just to condemn her as well, Jesus instead offers her mercy.

When our sin is exposed, we're often tempted to run and hide in shame. Yet, Jesus invites us to stay. He won't abandon us! And instead of condemnation, He longs to show us mercy.

Discussion Questions:

These questions are written for DNA groups, but you can use them in any setting, including missional communities. Because they were written for the intimacy of DNA friendships, you may need to adjust for larger groups.

1. When you feel shame, do you tend to find ways to “run and hide?” Why do you think that is?
2. How were you taught to handle your shame growing up? How did people, especially those closest to you, respond to your weakness, need, and sin?

3. What's the difference between feeling your shame and moving away from Jesus vs. feeling your shame and moving towards Jesus? What does that look like in your life?
4. How do you avoid being truly honest with this group of people about where you struggle? Some of us send out "decoys" of confessing smaller things to avoid actually talking about the real issue. Some of us withdraw. What does "hiding" look like for you?
5. Is this group one where you can be truly honest with each other about where you're struggling and where you need mercy from Jesus? Are you committed to making this a safe group for honesty about your sin? Are you also committed to helping each other "go and sin no more" as Jesus tells the woman after giving her mercy? If not, why do you think that is?