



# Woman Taken in Adultery

## Lesson Overview

### 1. Watch a Video

Watch John 8:1-11 at [bit.ly/GCEDGospelOfJohn](http://bit.ly/GCEDGospelOfJohn) from **1hr 5min 14sec to 1hr 8min 30sec** (3min 12sec).

### 2. Discuss

Choose questions for discussion.

### New Church Concept Sin No More

So far as a person shuns evils as sins, so far that person does good not from himself, but from the Lord. Evils prevent the Lord's entrance into a person. For evil is hell, and the Lord is heaven, and hell and heaven are opposites; so far therefore as a person is in one, so far that person cannot be in the others; for one acts against and destroys the other.... From these considerations it is clearly manifest that so far as a person shuns evils, so far as he is with the Lord and in the Lord; and so far as a person is in the Lord, so far the person does good, not from oneself but from the Lord. Hence results this general law: so far as a person shuns evils, so far that person does good. *Life* 18,21

FaithBuilder 3 | Lesson 18 | Gospel of John

## Watch a Video

Watch John 8:1-11, the story of the woman taken in adultery from *The Life of Jesus. English. Official Full HD Movie*, at [bit.ly/GCEDGospelOfJohn](http://bit.ly/GCEDGospelOfJohn). (Enter link in the web browser bar at the top of your screen.) **Start video at 1hr 5min 14sec. Watch until 1hr 8min 26sec; 3min 12sec.**

## Discuss

Choose questions for discussion.

1. Who were the Jewish rulers trying to condemn? The woman taken in adultery? Or Jesus? (See *could a Jew Condemn a Person to Death?* overleaf.)
2. "Adultery" means mixing something pure with something impure. It is most often used when talking about marriage. Adultery violates marriage—tainting it with unclean loves from hell. Polluted water is sometimes called "adulterated" water. What might "adulterating" the Word be? Think of how a person might mix pure truths from the Word with impure loves or ideas.
3. Today's culture gives the strong message, "Don't judge me! I do what I believe; you do what you believe!" This seems to align with the Lord's teaching, "Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you." (Matthew 7:1-2) How does this apply to your life? Are we never to judge the actions of others? Or are there circumstances or ways in which we *should* make judgments?
4. The Writings explain that we are not allowed to make spiritual judgments, but that we do need to make moral or "value" judgments. What would happen if we did not make moral judgments about others? (See *Conjugal Love* 523, below.)

Who does not see that were it not lawful for a person to judge as to the moral life of his or her fellow inhabitants in the world, society would fall! What would society be if there were no public judgments: or if one did not form his or her own judgment concerning another? What is not lawful, is judgment of the quality of the interior mind or soul within a person, thus as to what his or her spiritual state is and hence his or her lot after death. *Conjugal Love* 523

5. What kinds of judgments are useful for us to make about the character of others? Why is this important?

### New Church Concept Truth Judges

The Lord does not judge anyone by Divine truth; but the Divine truth judges the person who does not receive it but rejects it, as is evident from the Lord's words: Jesus said, If anyone hear My words and yet believe not, I judge him not, for I have not come to judge the world but to save the world. He that rejects Me and does not receive My words has one which judges him—the Word which I have spoken, the same will judge him in the last day (John 12:47, 48; also John 3:17).

“The Word” means the Divine truth, for this is in the Word, and is the Word. That this, regarded in itself, will judge a person, and not the Lord Himself by it, is clearly evident, for the Lord says, “I judge him not, for I have not come to judge the world but to save the world.” *Apocalypse Explained* 907.3

#### Adultery

Marriages on earth are the seedbed of heaven, for heaven is from the human race. For this reason the Lord's divine nature flows especially into this love. Correspondingly, adultery, as the opposite of marriage love, is seen by angels as unholy; for as angels see in marriages a marriage of the good and the true, which is heaven, so in adultery they see a marriage of the false and the evil, which is hell. See *Heaven and Hell* 384

Everything in the Word contains a marriage of good and truth. Because of this, to commit sexual immorality means, symbolically, to adulterate the goods of the Word and falsify its truths. See *Apocalypse Revealed* 134

6. What measure does the Lord use to judge people?

The Word will judge every one, the Lord moderating that all things may be done according to justice. *Apocalypse Revealed* 233

7. What judgments can we never make of others—or even of ourselves?

8. As was the Jewish custom, the woman's accusers were armed with stones. When do we arm ourselves with “stones?” (True ideas with the intention of judging others.)

9. Jesus said, “I have not come to judge the world but to save the world.” How can this apply to our own attitudes and behaviors towards others?

10. What are the consequences of a person being judged *before* as opposed to *after* death?

11. Jesus did not condemn the woman, but said, “Go, and sin no more.” How does the Lord look at bad choices we make? What positive steps can we take to get back on track after making a bad choice? (See *Sin No More*, p.1.)

12. Why do we sometimes judge others harshly? (See *Arcana Coelestia* 1079.2, below.)

13. Explain the following in your own words:

Where charity does not exist self-love is present and so hatred towards all who do not show favor to self. As a result they see in the neighbor nothing except his evil. Or if they do see anything good they either perceive it as nothing or else place a bad interpretation on it. It is altogether otherwise with those with whom charity is present. And from such presence or absence of charity these two kinds of people are distinguished from each other. Especially when they enter the next life, with those who have no charity, a feeling of hatred is manifest in every single thing; they wish to try everyone and indeed to pass judgement on them. Their one desire is to discover what is evil in them, all the time having it in mind to condemn, punish, and torment. But those who have charity hardly notice the evil in another person, but instead notice all the goods and truths that are his; and on his evils and falsities they place a good interpretation. Of such a nature are all angels, it being something they have from the Lord, who bends everything evil into good. *Arcana Coelestia* 1079.2

#### Could a Jew Condemn a Person to Death?

The scribes and Pharisees were laying a trap to publicly discredit Jesus by asking Him to say whether the woman should be stoned to death, as ordered by the law of Moses. Their trap was carefully designed. But to understand their strategy we need to understand the political context within which this scheme is carried out. Over many years, the Jewish people had lost political control of their country. The Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Persians, the Greeks, and finally the Romans had, in succession, conquered Judah and taken control of the Jewish government. The situation, therefore, is one in which the people of Judea were required to pay taxes to “Caesar”—in other words, to Rome. Additionally there were strict limits on their autonomy in certain areas. One of those was capital punishment. For over fifty years the power to make decisions regarding the life and death of an individual had been taken out of their hands. That was a matter that could be decided only by the Roman government.

See *The Gospel of John*, Rev. Dr. Ray Silverman, p. 73. Unpublished manuscript.