



**Lesson:**

This week, we started talking about judging others, being judged by others and judging ourselves. We started by looking at the story of Jesus and the adulterous woman in **John 8:3-11**. The religious people were, at first, eager to judge and condemn the woman for her sin but then reluctantly backed down and left her alone when confronted by Jesus of their own sins.

We learned that it wasn't what Jesus told the people that was so important but instead what he told the woman in **verse 11**. Jesus told the woman that he did not condemn her and to go and leave her life of sin. We said this is important because the woman did not need to stop sinning first in order to be forgiven. She also did not need to do anything to earn God's grace. Jesus basically told her that she was forgiven for her sin, now move on with her life, with no condemnation, and don't do it again.

We talked about why we are so hard on ourselves when we mess up and do something wrong. Instead of being forgiven then going on to "sin no more", we continue to beat ourselves up over whatever it was we did wrong. We said that maybe we don't trust that God has really forgiven us or maybe we feel that we don't deserve to be forgiven or maybe what we did was so bad that even God cannot possibly forgive us. Jesus tells us to **BE** forgiven, go forward with our life and don't do it again, no matter what we did.

**We asked, "will we do it again?" and the honest answer was, "maybe".  
We then asked, "will God forgive us?" and the answer was, "Always!"**

We said that we may judge and condemn ourselves because we feel that we don't deserve to be forgiven or that we're "not good enough". We think that we need to "earn" God's forgiveness by doing things like attending Church every week, reading the Bible everyday or cleaning up our lives before we can be forgiven. We looked at **Ephesians 2:8-9** to see that we are saved by God's grace through our faith and NOT by what we do but as a gift from God. We talked about the meanings of grace, faith and gifts and how this verse applies to our feeling that we're "not good enough" to be forgiven.

We also talked about how sometimes we may feel that we are "beyond hope" because whatever we did was so bad that there is no way that God can still love us or forgive us. We looked at **Mark 2:15-17** to give us hope. We read that Jesus came not for the righteous but for the sinners (and we are ALL sinners). Jesus came to save even the lowest most horrible sinners such as the Tax Collectors. We said that this shows that no matter how undeserving we may feel or how beyond hope we feel we have become, Jesus came to give us hope of salvation.

So, no matter how hard we are on ourselves for whatever we have done wrong, Jesus still loves us, we are NOT condemned, we ARE forgiven and he will never forsake us no matter what we do. This also does not give us a license to just do whatever we want because once we are saved and receive God's grace, the Holy Spirit will guide us and we will choose not to do sinful things.

We also started discussing how we judge and condemn others as well like when we decide what kind of person somebody is simply based on their appearance, how they're dressed or what kind of music they listen to. We will continue our discussion about judging others as well as talking about us being judged by others next week.

Have a blessed week, receive God's grace, **BE** forgiven, go forward, and sin no more.