

Lenten Small
Group Study Guide
Midtown

The Questions Jesus Asked

WHERE ARE YOUR ACCUSERS?



CONNECT (15 MIN)

WEEK 3: MAR 12 - MAR 18

WELCOME

- Spend the first few minutes visiting and catching up.
- Take attendance. Who's missing?

PRAY

The Welcoming Prayer

Sit comfortably with your feet flat on the floor, hands in your laps, and close your eyes. Take a moment to sink into your body. (Pause) Now, check in with your body. Take your time. Notice pain or tension, pressure or tightness.

Begin with your head, your jaw. (Pause) Your neck, shoulders, arms. (Pause) Your torso, hips, and thighs. (Pause) Now to your legs and feet and toes. (Pause)

Linger where you felt tension. Focus on it. (Pause) Try to name it. Is it anxiety? Nervousness? Worry? Apprehension? Burden? Sorrow? (Pause)

Welcome the Divine to sit with you, feeling what you feel. Then welcome what you feel, whether it's fear or sorrow, anger or tension. Welcome it. (Pause) Now in the presence of the Divine, let go by saying:

- I let go of my desire for safety and security. (Pause)
- I let go of my desire for approval and affection. (Pause)
- I let go of my desire for control and influence. (Pause)
- I let go of my desire to change any situation, person, or even myself. (Pause)
- I open myself to the love and presence of God and God's actions within.

Amen.

CULTIVATE (35 MIN)

READ THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

John 8:1-11

John 8:1-11 (CEB)

Jesus returned to the Mount of Olives, but early the next morning he was back again at the Temple. A crowd soon gathered, and he sat down and taught them. As he was speaking, the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery. They put her in front of the crowd.

Teacher," they said to Jesus, "this woman was caught in the act of adultery. The law of Moses says to stone her. What do you say?"

They were trying to trap him into saying something they could use against him, but Jesus stooped down and wrote in the dust with his finger. They kept demanding an answer, so he stood up again and said, "All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!" Then he stooped down again and wrote in the dust.

When the accusers heard this, they slipped away one by one, beginning with the oldest, until only Jesus was left in the middle of the crowd with the woman. Then Jesus stood up again and said to the woman, "Where are your accusers? Didn't even one of them condemn you?"

"No, Lord," she said.

And Jesus said, "Neither do I. Go and sin no more."

GROUP VALUES: It's important that you agree on the values you want to have in your group, such as openness, authenticity, and confidentiality. Honoring these values together creates a safe and healthy group environment.

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DISCUSS

- What was an element of this week's Scripture that stood out to you? Do you resonate most with the woman, the Pharisees, or Jesus' role in the story?
- Pastor Mindie shared a list of common "accusations" that people sometimes face (liar, lazy, outside of God's will, etc). What would you add to this list?
- How do you tell the difference between critics and prophets in your life? Share about a time when a prophet has spoken helpful truth to you.
- If "accusation is never the stopping point with God," how does that impact the ways we relate to both God and each other?
- Think about the way that Jesus interrupts the accusations against this woman. What role do you think that the Church, or people who follow Jesus, are called to play in interrupting accusations today? How could you live into this in your own life?

CHANGE THE WORLD (5 MIN)

Freedom School (Impact = Equitable Education)

CDF Freedom School© is a 6-week summer program designed to increase literacy, self-esteem, socio-emotional skills, and a love of learning for children in elementary school. Freedom School helps children discover their potential and greatness, utilizing books and curricula that celebrate the cultures and contributions of people of color. 81% of scholars who participate in Freedom School avoid summer learning loss.

Sign up to volunteer or donate at <https://stlukesumc.com/freedomschool>

CLOSE 5 MIN

- Ask for any prayer requests
- Prayer idea: Dear God, Thank you for this group of friends as we share Lent together. May we draw close to each other and close to you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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