



WEEKLY STUDY

Week 6

This week after a horrific shooting in an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas where 19 children and 2 adults were killed, we find ourselves asking a lot of questions. We wonder “Why?” and “What can we do?“. If we’re not careful, we can fall into despair because the story of the day sounds all too familiar. Haven’t we lived this story before? The woman caught in adultery in John 8 was in the cycle of a bad story. Maybe you feel that way too. What we can be sure of is that Jesus is the Great Re-story Teller. He is tired of the bad stories of violence and sin just like you and I—and He offers a whole new ending. Read and pray with us this week as we look for Jesus’ redemption of this broken world.

Peace of Christ,
Pastor Mark

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional question at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected to a Providence Small Group visit prov.church/smallgroups.

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture, follow the daily prayer prompt, and then pray this prayer from Pete Grieg and the 24/7 Lectio 365 App or your own prayer.

May this day bring Sabbath rest to my heart and my home. May God’s image in me be restored, and my imagination in God be re-storied. May the gravity of material things be lightened, and the relativity of time slow down. May I know grace to embrace my own finite smallness in the arms of God’s infinite greatness. May God’s Word feed me and His Spirit lead me into the week and life to come.

Amen.
(Pete Grieg)

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: JOHN 8.1-6a

Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

² At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. 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.

- This is the setup for one of Jesus’ most profound displays of grace. Jesus knew the law, but He also knew the hearts of the accusers. They had set Him up for failure. By bringing a woman to stand before the group, the teacher of the law and the Pharisees thought they had cornered Jesus. Either He would disobey the law or order the woman’s death. Who do we bring “before the group”?
- *God forgive me for the times when I am more concerned about the rules than the people You have called me to love.*

TUESDAY: JOHN 8.6b-11

But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger.⁷ When they kept on questioning him, 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.”

- Adultery is typically a two-person sin. In the case of the woman in Mark 8, 100% of the blame for a two-person sin seems to be placed on the shoulders of a powerless woman. Jesus empowered her to live a different life. Jesus also showed the crowd a new way to see the woman—as someone like themselves—guilty of sin. Our world is full of examples of sin. Jesus forgives sin and calls us to a changed life.
- *Jesus, thank you for Your forgiveness. Empower me for a life where sin is left behind.*

WEDNESDAY: 2 CORINTHIANS 5.1-4, 17

For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands.² Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling,³ because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked.⁴ For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

- Paul describes the groaning of discomfort and struggle that we experience in this life. That groaning is because—at our core—we are designed to long for God. Once we experience even a taste of a new creation, we want more of it. For those who are in Christ, a certain discomfort with the status quo remains an undercurrent and drives us towards what is true and beautiful. The woman caught in adultery experienced the “the old is gone, the new is here” moment, have you?
- *God, you have designed me for more. Let me see glimpses of Your new creation today.*

THURSDAY: LUKE 19.5-8

When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.”⁶ So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

⁷ All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.”

⁸ But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount."

- Like the woman in John 8, Zacchaeus was a common public enemy. Jesus saw him, spoke to him, and stayed with him. The people observing this couldn't fathom that a religious teacher would associate with sinners. Zacchaeus' life was changed by this encounter with Jesus...his story was rewritten. If Jesus were to see you, speak to you, and stay at your house today, would others be surprised? What might change in your life if Jesus came over for dinner?
- *Jesus, I know You see me and my curiosity about You. I hear Your invitation for me to sit with You. Transform me in Your presence today.*

FRIDAY: 2 CORINTHIANS 3.15-18

Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. ¹⁶ But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. ¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸ And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

- Transformation in Christ is a life-long journey. When the veil that covers our hearts is lifted we begin to see the ever-increasing glory of God. Have you experienced the freedom of knowing that Jesus has torn the veil that would otherwise separate us from God?
- *Jesus, thank You for the gift of increasing clarity before the face of God. I want to see You. I want to be transformed into Your image.*

SATURDAY: 2 PETER 3.13-15a

...in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

¹⁴ So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. ¹⁵ Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation...

- The woman in John 8 was told to "Go and sin no more." That command was to set her in motion toward the new creation that Jesus announced. In Him she could become spotless, blameless, and at peace. God has been patient with us and God's patience makes way for our salvation. What does it look like for you to "make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace" with God?
- *God, I long for the new heaven and the new earth You have promised. Prepare me for it today!*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Pastor Mark said,

What's about to follow was not in the earlier manuscript of your life. It was added later. It was changed, edited, and revised by a Savior whose sole purpose in coming to earth was to redeem you out of your brokenness and to restore your life.

- If you were to see your life as a manuscript, what parts would you want to rewrite if you could?
- What parts of your story has Jesus already rewritten?