

AGAPE HOUSE OF WORSHIP
Wednesday Bible Study • April 29, 2026
THAT YOU MAY BELIEVE: A Journey Through the Gospel of John

Part 13: Mercy, Conviction, and the Light of the World - Grace and Truth in Action

This passage is not just a story about a woman caught in sin. It is a mirror. In thirty verses you will encounter how Jesus handles sin, how religious people misuse truth, and how we often respond the same way. The goal is not simply to understand the text - it is to locate yourself in it.

PART 1 - Mercy and Selective Justice | John 8:1–11

The Pharisees drag in a woman caught in adultery and invoke Moses. The laws they cite are real and require judgment on both parties:

Leviticus 20:10 • Deuteronomy 22:22

But only the woman stands there. The first issue is not her sin - it is selective justice. The trap was designed to pin Jesus between Roman law (which forbade Jewish executions) and Mosaic law:

John 18:31 • Deuteronomy 17:7

Jesus does not dismiss judgment - He demands honest judgment. One by one the accusers leave. Then it is just Jesus and the woman. He removes condemnation and affirms the sin. Not "it's okay." Not "you're finished." - "you are not condemned, but change direction."

John 3:17 • Romans 2:1 • Galatians 6:1 • James 2:13

Mercy is not pretending nothing happened. Mercy is giving someone space to change.

Discussion

1. Be honest - is there someone in your life you hold to a higher standard than you hold yourself? What does that look like?
2. Have you ever been in a situation where someone showed you mercy when you expected judgment? How did that feel, and did it change you?
3. If "go and sin no more" landed in your lap this week, what specific thing would God be pointing at?

PART 2 - The Light That Reveals and Guides | John 8:12–20

Right after the woman leaves, Jesus declares: "I am the light of the world." The setting is the Feast of Tabernacles - the night before, massive menorahs had lit the Court of the Women so brilliantly they illuminated courtyards across Jerusalem. Jesus stands in the shadow of those just-extinguished lamps and says - what you danced under last night, I am in reality.

John 7:2 • John 1:4–5 • Isaiah 9:2

Light reveals and guides - but you cannot receive the guidance while refusing what it reveals. The Pharisees challenge His testimony legally (Deuteronomy 19:15). Jesus responds from identity, not argument. Walking in the light means stopping the management of your image and dealing honestly with reality.

1 John 1:6–7 • Ephesians 5:8 • Psalm 119:105

Light is not just information. It is exposure that demands a response.

Discussion

4. We all want God to *guide* us - but guidance means He also gets to see everything. Is there a part of your life you'd rather He just guide without looking too closely at?
5. Think about your public life vs. your private life. Is there a gap? What does that gap cost you?
6. What's something you *know* is right that you haven't actually been *doing*?

PART 3 - Belief, Surrender, and the Question That Changes Everything | John 8:21–30

Jesus moves from exposure to consequence: "If you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." This is not cruelty - it is a diagnosis. Sin is a condition of separation, not just a behavior.

Romans 6:23

The crowd asks: "Who are You?" - the hinge of the entire passage. Jesus describes two orientations: from below vs. from above. Two ways of living. Many believed - but not all belief leads to transformation. Belief without surrender is agreement, not change.

You can hear truth, agree with truth, even teach truth - and remain unchanged. Transformation happens at the point of obedience, not merely understanding.

Discussion

7. You can follow someone on social media, agree with everything they post, and never actually live like them. How is that similar to how some of us relate to Jesus?
8. What's something Jesus has said that you've nodded along to for years but haven't really acted on?
9. What would *one* concrete step of surrender look like for you this week — not a big spiritual overhaul, just one real thing?

Closing Reflection

Three things this passage holds together that we often pull apart: mercy does not cancel truth - truth without mercy becomes a weapon - and light always exposes before it leads.

At any point in this text you can find yourself in one of three places: holding a stone, hiding in shame, or stepping into the light. The question is not “do I understand this passage?” It is - where am I standing in it?

Personal Reflection

- Where in this passage do you most see yourself - holding a stone, hiding in shame, or stepping into the light?
- Is there an area where you have been using truth as a weapon or grace as an excuse?
- What would it look like to walk honestly in the light this week?