

JESUS DOES NOT CONDEMN YOU!

Ignatian Meditation Guides by Bill Gaultiere

Introduction to Ignatian Meditation

In Ignatius' 16th century approach to Scripture instead of analyzing a text, you use your senses to imagine yourself as a character in the story. Then you have a short, personal conversation with the Lord. Each reading is guided by a focus question below. In a group context follow the leader's instructions on what to share and be sure to protect people's confidentiality.

Background to the Text

This Gospel reading in *The Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius is in Week One and focuses on God's love. Jesus has claimed to be the Bread of Life come down from heaven that gives eternal life to all who trust in him and his Father. The religious leaders want to kill him for blasphemy. They cook up the perfect plot to trap him into disagreeing with God's law. But Jesus outsmarts them! In the process he shows us how incredibly far God goes to extend mercy and grace to all people, no matter what their shortcomings and sins are.

Ask For the Grace

O Christ who was crucified for me, I desire the grace to feel increased sorrow and confusion over my sins so that I will earnestly cry out for your mercy.

Imagine Scripture: John 8

1-2 Jesus went across to Mount Olives, but he was soon back in the Temple again. Swarms of people came to him. He sat down and taught them.

3-6 The religion scholars and Pharisees led in a woman who had been caught in an act of adultery. They stood her in plain sight of everyone and said, "Teacher, this woman was caught red-handed in the act of adultery. Moses, in the Law, gives orders to stone such persons. What do you say?" They were trying to trap him into saying something incriminating so they could bring charges against him.

6-8 Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger in the dirt. They kept at him, badgering him. He straightened up and said, "The sinless one among you, go first: Throw the stone." Bending down again, he wrote some more in the dirt.

9-10 Hearing that, they walked away, one after another, beginning with the oldest. The woman was left alone. Jesus stood up and spoke to her. "Woman, where are they? Does no one condemn you?"

11 "No one, Master."

"Neither do I," said Jesus. "Go on your way. From now on, don't sin" (MSG).

Prayer / Journaling / Soul Talk Prompts

1. Visualize yourself in the Gospel. Don't seek intellectual insights—stay with the imagery. Use your senses to see, touch, feel, and hear. What part of the story are you drawn to? Which character do you identify with or are you a bystander?
2. Experience the story in the role of the character God led you to. Then talk with the Lord. What do you feel? How does this relate to something in your life today? What is God saying to you?