

Scripture: **John 8:7-11**

But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground.

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. Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"

"No one, sir" she said. "Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."

Insight

Jesus was probably the greatest counselor in conflict resolution. In this situation, he didn't try to explain the irrationality of people's behavior. He didn't ask people to explore their childhood and understand how it might be influencing their current actions. Nor did he ask each side to explain their points of view to come to a consensus.

He simply made a statement. However, his statement shot straight at the heart of everyone involved. It humbled both the accusers and the accused.

Ironically, based on Christ's statement, he was the only one without sin and able to throw a stone to condemn the woman, but he chose not to condemn her. He realized that it was more important to demonstrate mercy and compassion and encourage the woman to overcome the sin in her life.

Have you ever been a member of the crowd ready to throw a stone? Have you handled your spouse's struggles through condemnation instead of mercy? The next time your spouse offends you, remember Christ's statement and show mercy.

Sharing

During the week, talk about how you handle conflict and discuss the following:

- In what areas do we tend to have the most conflict?
- How do you both contribute to the issue?
- What are some ways you could pray for each other in this area?