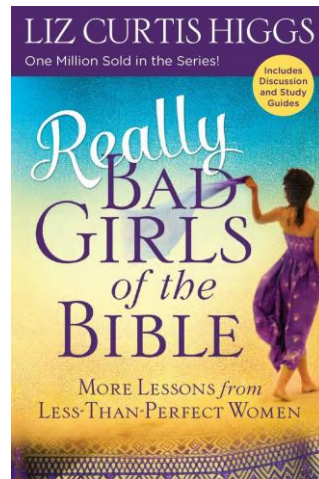


*Word by Word with Liz Curtis Higgs on the Faith Radio Network*

**Bible Study Guide for February 3-4, 2018 | The Adulteress**

from *Really Bad Girls of the Bible* by Liz Curtis Higgs



1. Read the start of our biblical story in John 8:2-4, then read Leviticus 20:10. If the Pharisees legitimately caught this unnamed woman in the act, what should have been done to the man? Why didn't that happen, do you suppose? Do you think Jesus would have been merciful to the man as well? Now read John 8:5-7. How did Jesus extend grace to this woman, even before he formally released her from condemnation? Since we're called to follow Christ's example, what does Galatians 6:1-2 instruct us to do when someone is caught in sin?
2. Since the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees were supposed to be Good Guys, upholding the tenets of the faith, let's find out where they went wrong. Note any characteristics of the Pharisees you find in the following verses: Matthew 23:27-28, Luke 12:1, Luke 16:14. Now read Matthew 10:16. How does Jesus tell us we are to behave among Pharisees? If we aren't careful, we could fall into the same judgmental trap that ensnared them. What does Romans 2:1-3 teach us about judging others?
3. The words Jesus spoke were, in effect, an invitation: "You may throw the first stone *if...*" Read John 8:8. It seems he was giving them time to respond to his invitation by writing again. Some scholars believe he was doing nothing more than doodling in the sand to give the Pharisees time to think things over and to kindly avert his eyes from the exposed woman and avoid adding to her shame. What do *you* think? Whatever he was doing—or writing—it had an effect on the Pharisees. Read John 8:9. How did they respond to his invitation? How might Romans 3:19-20 fit this scene in the temple courts that morning? Can you think of a similar instance in your own life when something written left you feeling undeniably convicted of your sin? What was it? And what was the outcome?

4. In biblical times, adultery was so serious a crime that it required execution. Why do you think adultery isn't taken more seriously—even by Christians—today? If you knew a Christian friend was committing adultery, would you feel compelled to approach him or her about their sin? Why or why not? If so, what biblical advice would you give? How might Matthew 5:27-30 direct your conversation? One of the dangers of experiencing victory in some sinful area of our lives is that we turn around and judge others for the very sin we just left behind. What do the following verses teach us: Colossians 3:12, Colossians 3:13, Luke 6:37?
5. When we've lived in open rebellion in the past, sometimes the hardest thing about our new life in Christ is to avoid being drawn back into that sinful lifestyle. What does Romans 6:12-13 tell us we need to do? In order for this woman to move forward and "leave her life of sin," think of all the relationships that would need mending, the trust that would need to be rebuilt. If you were in her sandals, how might you go about seeking the forgiveness of others? And how might the following verses encourage all of us, no matter what our past: Ephesians 1:7-8, Ephesians 2:3-5, Isaiah 43:18-19?
6. What's the most important lesson you learned from this nameless, faceless, yet grace-covered adulteress?