**Judgement – a guided reflection based on a story about throwing stones.**

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**Teacher Notes**

A PDF of the image opposite accompanies

this reflection, which may be projected for the

children to look at. This is an image by an artist called

Chris Higham, illustrating the story from John’s

Gospel which is traditionally known as ‘The Woman

Taken In Adultery’. This is a powerful story about Jesus

And Christian values but schools are sometimes reluctant

to tell it to children because of the potentially

awkward introduction of the word ‘adultery’. The words, ‘had not stayed loyal to her husband’, have been used in place of the word ‘adultery’ in the retelling of the story below and schools can judge whether this feels appropriate.

**Explain to the children:** We are going to hear a story of something that happened to Jesus and reflect on what it might mean for us. The picture on our board is an artist’s impression of how he imagined the scene in the story, you may find it helpful to look at the picture carefully while I tell the story.

**The Story**

One day while Jesus was teaching outside the temple, a group of religious leaders came dragging a woman and made her stand in front of him. They asked Jesus: "Teacher, this woman has not been loyal to her husband. In the Law, Moses commanded us to throw stones at women who are not loyal to their husbands. Now, what do you say we should do?"

They did this on purpose to put Jesus in a tricky situation in front of the crowd of people who had been listening to him. They wanted to try to show that Jesus didn’t really believe in the law so that they could condemn him.

The men were fuming with anger and the crowd were all picking up stones ready to throw them, while the woman cowered in fright. The situation was growing very tense….but all Jesus did was bent down and began writing on the ground with his finger. After a little while he stood up again and said, "Let any of you who has never done anything wrong be the first to throw a stone at her."



Then he began to write on the ground again. One by one, from oldest to youngest, the angry crowd sulkily dropped their stones and walked away until Jesus and the woman were left alone.

Straightening up again, Jesus asked, "Where are they all? Has no one condemned you?"

She replied, "No one, sir."

"Then neither do I condemn you," stated Jesus. "Go now and try to be a loyal person."

**Reflection**

I’d like you to close your eyes now and try hold that picture and the story in your mind.

Try to imagine that you are actually in the crowd of people who had been listening to Jesus.

I wonder how it would have felt when everyone was shouting and wanting to throw stones at the woman.….

I wonder why people get caught up in situations like this and forget to be kind….

I wonder why Jesus wrote on the ground and what he was writing.….

Sometimes it’s easy to go along with unkindness and judging others.

When we criticise others, it takes our mind off our own mistakes.

Are there times in your life when you criticised someone to make yourself feel better?

Instead of condemning people, Jesus helps them to make a new start. Is there anything that you would like to make a new start with?

**Closing prayer**

I am going to finish with a prayer now and if you would like to make it your own prayer, you can say Amen at the end.

Dear God,

Please remind me that it is more important to

put right the things that I’ve done wrong than

to judge other people.

Help me to follow Jesus example

by showing kindness to others

instead of following the crowd.

Amen

