

**Isaiah is a prophet of God** who spoke the literal words of God to God’s people Israel and the kings of Israel. By all accounts of everything we know about him – he was a good man, from a good family – who served the Lord for many years, yet ... he finds himself exposed before Holy God. The eyes of Holy God had seen Isaiah and Isaiah responds by saying - **I** - now see the utter holiness of God and I am so sinful that I am undone and doomed. Without God saying a word Isaiah believes He will be judged and die by the hands of God ... then something amazing happens –

5 And I said: “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, ... 6 Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. 7 And he touched my mouth and said: “Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for.”

Isaiah: who’s deep and sinful soul was exposed by God should have died before God. Yet amazingly – he was rescued from death by God & what was unclean, was forgiven and what was impure was healed – by God.

**We don’t know who the woman is** but we know what she has done. She has been caught right in the middle of adultery. Standing half naked & literally exposed before God and everyone ... she believes she is about to die - when something amazing happens –

7 And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, “Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.” 8 And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground. 9 But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones. pause and Jesus repeat was left alone with the woman standing before him.

Don’t miss this. Holy God – Jesus – is kneeling before this woman alone. Can you imagine this scene with me? Your deepest ... darkest ... secret sin, really that you are full of sin has just been exposed before everyone and now you are alone with God. What will he say? What will he do? Ever wondered - watch, this is awesome!

10 Jesus stood up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” 11 She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.”

**This is one of the most powerful and beautiful evidences of God’s love – His scandalous love in all of God’s Word.** Notice the order of two phrases in this sentence. In the right order – this is the Gospel: You are forgiven and accepted – now go and obey in my love.

*In the wrong order – it is the most ugly, impotent, and perverted statement of God’s love. The wrong order says, “go and sin no more – and I will not condemn you – and I will love you.”*

Not the Gospel: Obey – and you will be forgiven and accepted.

This seems like how God should love us. If we obey – He will love us and bless us and make us His own.

If we do not obey – we are out. This sounds logical and it is the love many of us know – from our family, from our relationships, and sadly from the church. THIS is a false gospel. It is a perversion of the truth Jesus taught and lived as seen right here with this lady.

The right order says, “I forgive you, you are completely acceptable – now in this forgiveness and acceptance – go and obey.” **This is not just love – this is scandalous love! Why? Let me ask you a question first...**

- Have you ever experienced the love of God in a life changing way? Have you ever tasted deeply the love of God in such a way that it is changing you? 1) Some of you would say yes – and its not because life is good; rather, your taste has come as you have experienced great loss and pain. Psalms 63:3 (part of a passage we are memorizing together), has become true in your life: your steadfast love is better than life. 2) Others of you would say **YES** I have but it was so long ago and I’m so thirsty. Psalms 63:1 Needs to become your prayer. O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you. My soul thirst for you, my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. 3) And, some, if you were honest would say: No, I have never tasted the love of God. **Pray!**
- The end of the story – is not that God extends His scandalous love to us, but what it does to us.
  - We see the rest of the story in Isaiah: 6:8E(SV) And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Then I said, “Here I am! Send me.” *Before this Isaiah is hiding in shame and resolved that he will be killed by holy God for his sinful soul that has been seen as has seen God. Now look at him – he is jumping up and down like the kid in class who knows the answer and won’t stop till the teacher picks him. Why? The rest of Psalms 63:3 tells us. Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you. When we deeply taste,*

*really experience the love of God as steadfast – scandalous beyond our belief – our lips will praise Him and tell others. Isaiah deeply tasted - experienced God's scandalous love – and it changed him.*

- The scandalous love of God that this woman experienced – changed her too. 1) She lived. 2) ... Look at what comes out of her mouth when Jesus asks **"where are they, has no one condemned you?"** John 8:11 (ESV) She said, **"No one, Lord."** 3 words – which tells us what has happened in this woman's heart and what will move her going forward. 1) **"NO"** – maybe. In one sense there were no condemners. Or, 2) No **"ONE"**. All it would have taken is "one" to stone her. But that is not really true – because there was still "one" – Jesus. The word that reveals the change in her heart is **"LORD"**. She didn't know Jesus as God or Master or LORD before this. By all we know – she has never met him. Yet as He rescues her from certain death, He rescues her soul and not just her body. Something amazing, scandalous happens – this woman whose deepest sin and sinFULL heart has been fully exposed – calls Jesus MASTER, LORD. ***She came into this moment an adulterer condemned to death and she leaves this moment a servant of Holy God and king who has been freed to live in His love. Amazing – maybe even scandalous.***

Ps 63:3 says, **"Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you."** Said another way ... **When we deeply taste the scandalous love of God – we will speak of Jesus.**

We could end this sermon here and it would be really good, but I believe God's desire today is not that we leave with a good word or even a good word that stirs our heart and soul. I believe that God wants you and I to taste deeply the scandalous love of God in this place here and now – that we would experience God in such a way it would change us and cause us to speak praise of Jesus to God and to others.

*In order for this to happen – I believe we need to deeply taste God's love as scandalous. When we do it will begin to capture us, change us, and move us to speak of Jesus. We began at the end of the story – and we are going to work our way back through the story like a movie or book that has begun at the end. And in so doing – I pray we deeply taste the scandalous love of God – and it changes us in such a way that we begin to speak of Jesus. Here we go ...*

## **01. The woman – she is privileged and terrified to be in front of Holy God.**

John 8:3-5 (ESV) 3 The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst 4 they said to him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. 5 Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?"

- **She is privileged because – she is in front of Jesus – holy God in the flesh** – even though she may not have known at the beginning this was God.
- **She is terrified because – she is guilty.**  
She may not have known Jesus was God at first – but she knew she was standing with her soul and body naked before God and her whole village. Her fear-filled logical conclusion after being revealed as sin-full before man and God – was that she would die.

## **02. Isaiah – he is privileged and terrified to see Holy God.**

1 In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. 2 Above him stood the seraphim. ... 3 And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!" 4 And the foundations of the thresholds shook ... 5 And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!"

- **He is privileged because - He saw God.** He saw the overwhelming beauty of God in all his holiness as High King. ***Wouldn't that be incredible - stunning. Can you imagine? Can you?***
- **He is terrified because – He saw God.** He saw the overwhelming power of God in all his holiness as The High and Holy King who is utterly beyond everything – Holy, Holy, Holy. ***That would be terrifying.***

**In seeing God for who He truly is – Isaiah also saw himself up against Holy God and knew God had seen him – for who he truly is. (vs. 5)**

I think his statement – *Woe is me – for I have seen God came because He knew God had seen him. He had been exposed as full of sin. He had realized all the good things he did outwardly for God didn't change or cover the sin or evil – that lived on the inside.* ***When we see the utterly holiness of God – we also see our utter sinfulness. Both deserved to die – but God intervenes in a scandalous way.***

### 03. Why is God's love toward us scandalous?

What is scandalous? Causing general or public outrage by a perceived offense against morality or law.  
It is scandalous when someone we trust does something morally outrageous, heinous to our senses.

For example: 1) Bill Cosby 2) Jerry Sandusky (30 yrs at Penn St 3) Priest sex abuse scandal of the early 2000's / All were people we trust in some way who did something so heinous / outrageous that it rose to the level of scandal in our heart and in the country. Everyone agrees – this is scandalous behavior.

**In one great way – Jesus' love is not like these scandals and in one way it is. 1) How it was not like these scandals:**  
His scandal was more like Edward VIII – who laid down his crown for his love – Wallis Simpson. That was a huge scandal in England bc she was not a noble, and she was a divorcee. It was morally and socially scandalous to the upper class. But it also lead many to lift him up as a hero because it went against moral and social laws they saw as wrong. God's scandalous love is like this because he too laid down his crown in order for us to deeply taste and know His great love. The king who filled the whole temple with his robe that Isaiah saw – came and knelt before His accusers (they just sought to entrap him really) and an adulterer and said neither do I condemn you. He could say this because he knew He would be condemned in her place very soon. Her forgiveness and acceptance came at the cost of the king being mocked and condemned in her place. Scandalous!

**2) In another sense, God's love in Jesus was as offensive and scandalous as what Cosby, Sandusky, and the priests did.**  
What do I mean? What makes God's love in Jesus scandalous beyond our grasp – is that His love offers forgiveness and acceptance ... to Bill Cosby, Jerry Sandusky, and these priests. Many – maybe even you finds this offensive and morally wrong. Many of us think - these men should die, these men should not taste God's love – how could God forgive them.

To this day, This is the great scandal of God's love.:

- That the King of kings – would bend his knee to serve rebels – and be condemned for rebels like us.
- That in Jesus' condemnation – God would offer forgiveness to all.

*There is a gigantic tension here for us – we want God's love – but we are not sure everyone deserves it. We want God's mercy but we are not sure God's love can really change us – or at least change “them”. In the midst of this tension ...*

### 04. How do we drink deeply from the love of God?

John 8:7-9 (ESV) 7 And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, “Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.” 8 And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground. 9 But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones.

- **A arrogant view of your sin will cause you to miss the scandalous love of God.** The accusers were undone – exposed by God but missed his scandalous love because they didn't see themselves as sin-FULL as this woman. **Most of us – don't see our selves as sin-FULL as Sandusky or Cosby or the priests. Why?**  
Our view of God's holiness is small, beyond small, microscopic - and bc of that our view of our sin is tiny.

**“Let me never forget that the heinousness of sin lies not so much in the nature of the sin committed, as in the greatness of the Person sinned against.” Valley of Vision**

*We must see God as holy, holy, holy – and know that holy God sees into your heart and sees all of your sin-FULLness. Today – right now he sees? He know? The question is – do you see Him as holy, holy, holy.*

How do we drink deeply of God's scandalous love? Humility.

**We must see God as Holy, holy, holy & our sin as it truly is – then God's love becomes huge, scandalous.**

John 8:9-11 (ESV) 9 ... and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. 10 ... Has no one condemned you?” 11 She said, “No one, Lord.”

- **A humble view of God and your sin allows us to drink deeply and often of God's scandalous love.** She could have left when the accusers did, but she stayed and bent her knee to Jesus – **LORD!**

*She tasted deeply of the scandalous love of God because she knew how sinFULL she was and how desperate she was in need of a savior – for her life and her soul.*

Listen even the “good man” Isaiah – saw himself like Cosby and Sandusky and this woman before holy God.

Is 6:5 (ESV) 5 And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; ... for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!"

*I confess my love for those who don't know Jesus has been little to non-existent. Because of this – I stopped engaging in relationship. But what God showed me – has cut me to the core to see. It wasn't my lack of love for those far from God that was the issue, or even my lack of love for God. The core of the issue is I didn't believe that God's love to me and to others was that great. Oh – I am beginning to taste and see it is amazing and scandalous. I am begging God to change my heart bc of His love – his scandalous love. Will you go with me on this journey?*

**It begins by seeing the journey our Holy King went on to extend his scandalous love to us.**

\* High holy God – whose robe fills his whole temple – left heaven and wrapped his eternity in skin.

\* High holy God – bent his knee to adulterers and the religious and even those who would accuse him – holy God.

\* All were sin-FULL rebels – yet he bent his knee all the way to the cross where he was condemned for them – for you, I.

**Do you see his scandalous love.**

\* Now – are holy High King who has exposed your sin and revealed his holiness to you today – offers you not condemnation but acceptance and forgiveness because he was condemned for you. "Neither do I condemn you – no go in my love." **What do you do? How can you taste deeply of this love if you never have?**

**Fall on Jesus' mercy and receive His life and rescue by faith in the truth that Jesus was condemned for you? PRAY**

**If you have received his mercy – you have tasted his scandalous love. Want more – pray for humility.**

- To see God as more holy, holy, holy and your sin as more heinous.
- To see the cross and Jesus love as greater and more scandalous than ever.

Psalms 63:3 tells us. Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you.

**When we deeply taste the scandalous love of God – we will speak of Jesus.**

## **BLESSING**

Psalms 63:2-4 (ESV) 2 So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory. 3 Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you. 4 So I will bless you as long as I live; in your name I will lift up my hands.