

3/16/25

He Who Is Without Sin
Jn. 7:53-8:11

Jesus has been dealing with the intense opposition from the Jewish leader, his brothers, the Sanhedrin and the topic has centered around His deity and His righteous judgment as opposed to their human unrighteous judgment.

1. Jesus had healed the paralytic at the Pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath day, so they sought to kill Him. Jn. 5:16
2. Jesus declared that God was His Father. Jn. 5:18
3. Jesus declared that He was the bread of life come down from heaven at the synagogue of Capernaum and the Jews murmured and the people were divided over who He was. Jn. 6:41
4. Jesus then went up to Jerusalem to the Feast of Tabernacles and taught in the Temple and told the people that their judgment of the paralytic man was unrighteous for they judged according to appearance. Jn. 7:20, 24

Now a woman is brought to Jesus as He is teaching again in the temple, **in the treasury**. Jn. 8:20

There is great debate about the genuineness of the story among the scholars.

1. There are those who reject the story of the woman caught in adultery for the following reasons.

- a. They say that the manuscripts that are considered to be the oldest omit the story. (Aleph, A, B, L, N. W.) The Vaticanus (Codex B) of 4th century and Sinaiticus (Codex-Aleph), but these are Alexandrian texts from Egypt that was the center of false teachers of the Gnostic heresy that corrupted the Scriptures. Westcott and Hort Text is based on these text, the Revised Standard Version also.
 - * In 200 A.D. Clement of Alexandria, the pupil of Tatian's pupil Clement founded a school in Alexandria, marring pagan philosophy and Gnosticism also Arianism.
 - b. They say that the first manuscript we have where it appears is the Codex Bezae of the 6th century and later uncials, so called Koine text, and cursives based on the uncials.
 - * The interesting thing is, while these verses are omitted in a number of these ancient manuscripts there is a blank space on the page, showing evidently the scribe meant to indicate that in some other manuscripts something came in between verse 52 of chapter 7 and verse 12 of chapter 8.
 - c. They say that there are words within the story that are not found anywhere else in John.
 - * To all these arguments Arno C. Gaebelein states, in his commentary, "All these arguments have been proven invalid."
2. The reasons for excepting the story of the woman caught in adultery are the following.

- a. The story fits well in context for the subject and theme of this entire section is the righteous judgment of Jesus who is deity in human form.
 * Remember that Jesus came on the fourth day of the Feast of Tabernacles and proclaimed the invitation to drink on the eighth day, chapter 8 is the following day, the ninth day.
- 1) The Jews were judging according to appearance. Jn. 7:24
 - 2) Their judgment as to who Jesus was ended up in a division. Jn. 7:40-43
 - 3) They were accusing the woman of adultery, yet they were guilty of hate and murderer in their hearts. Jn. 8:1-12
 - 4) They judged according to the flesh. Jn. 8:15-16
 - 5) The Lord had many things to judge concerning them. Jn. 8:26
 - 6) The Lord asks them who was able to convict Him of sin for He was sinless and they could not see the heart only the actions. Jn. 8:46
 - 7) The Lord makes an absolute judgment to clear the parents and child of any personal sin for the birth defect because He is the light of the world. Jn. 9:3-5
 - 8) The leaders judged that Jesus was not from God because He healed the blind man on the Sabbath. Jn. 9:16-17
 - 9) The leaders judged the blind man healed by Jesus was born of sin and unable to instruct them. Jn. 9:34

- 10) The Lord made dogmatic judgments, that people are thieves and robbers if they do not come by and through Him to the Father. Jn. 10:1, 14, 16
- b. The witness of early church fathers is important.
- 1) Papias, a disciple of John the beloved knew the story and expounded it, says Eusebius.
 * Whenever the church fathers are used against this section, it is misrepresented, they say nothing against the section, they simply are silent for the most part.
 - 2) Augustine believed the story was removed because the early church fathers feared that women would appeal to the story as an excuse for the infidelity. 400 A.D.
 - a) The ascetic life style that followed the apostolic age would support this explanation.
 - b) Others that except the story as genuine are Augustine, Ambros, Calvin, Hendrickson, Beacons Comt., Bengel, Zwingle, Burgon and R. C. Ryle.
 - 3) I believe the story of the woman caught in Adultery is not only authentic, but crucial to the context of the Lord's righteous judgment discourse and the greatest example of forgiveness of the most treacherous and selfish sin to one who has committed adultery against their mate in marriage!

The story of the woman caught in adultery has three movements, which reveals the righteous judgment of Jesus in contrast to the unrighteous judgment of the Scribes and Pharisees. Jn. 7:53-8:11

- I. The setting chosen for the woman/s judgment. Jn. 7:53-8:2
- II. The setting up of Jesus for judgment. Jn. 8:3-6a-b
- III. The setting forth of Jesus' righteous judgment. Jn. 8:6c-11

I. The setting chosen for the woman's judgment. Jn. 7:53-8:2

- A. The day before, on the eight day of the Feast, the Sanhedrin had failed to arrest Jesus in the temple area and at the end of the day, "And everyone went to their own house." Jn. 7:53
 * The last verse of chapter 7 is a better division, making it the first verse of chapter 8.
 - 1. Jesus had declared that Israel still needed to depend on God to quench their spiritual thirst. Jn. 7:37-39
 - 2. Jesus had caused a division among the people, as to who He was. Jn. 7:4-43
 - 3. Jesus had impressed the temple police regarding His words, which kept them from arresting Him. Jn. 7:45-46

- B. The same day Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. Jn. 8:1

* "But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives."

- 1. The word "bu" "de" indicating a sharp contrast between the people and Jesus.
 - a. The people all had homes to go to.
 - b. Jesus had only the Mount of Olives, yet He was the Creator of the world.
 - 1) At no time do we ever read that Jesus spent a night in the city of Jerusalem, but He always left the city.
 - 2) Jesus said to His disciple when they asked Him where He lodged, He said, "The foxes have holes, the birds have nest, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." Lk. 9:58
- 2. The Mount of Olives is an interesting place.
 - a. Solomon built for his pagan wives on the Mount of Olives shrines and high places for their false gods. 1Kings 11:7; 2Kings 23:13
 - b. The Mount of Olives was the last vantage point from where David saw Jerusalem as he ran for his life from his son Absalom. 2Sam. 16:1
 - c. The Mount of Olives was the place from where Jesus would ascend up to heaven fifty days after the resurrection and His disciples looked on as the angels rebuked them for staring up to the sky and promised that He would return in like manner. Acts 1:9-11

- d. The Lord Jesus will return to the earth at His Second Coming to the Mount of Olives and as His foot touches it, the Mount will cleave in half. Zech. 14:4

C. The next day, the ninth day, Jesus came back to the temple. vs. 2

* “Now early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him; and He sat down and taught them.”

- 1. The priority of Jesus, “Now early in the morning He came again into the temple.” vs. 2a

- a. The word “now” is the same as in verse 1 “de” translated “but”, so once again putting Jesus in sharp contrast to the religious rulers who went to their houses. vs. 2a

- b. The religious rulers did not return early to the Temple, the day after the Feast of Tabernacles, because to them it was mere ritual and ceremony.

- c. Jesus was there early because He cared and loved the people.

- 2. The practice of Jesus, “and all the people came to Him; and He sat down and taught them.” vs. 2b-c

- a. The people would be drawn and gathered around Him.

- b. Jesus assumed the position of sitting, as the practice of teachers.

- c. The position of a herald was to stand, as we have noted Jesus did on the eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles.

- d. The concern of Jesus was to teach the people the word of God.

- 1) The tense is imperfect, He was teaching!

- 2) The specific area was in the treasury. Jn. 8:20

This is the setting for the woman’s judgment!

II. The setting up of Jesus for judgment. Jn. 8:3-6a-b

A. The condemnation of the woman by the Pharisees and Scribes. vs. 3-5

- 1. The horrible situation is described, “Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst.” vs. 3

- a. The Scribes “grammateus” were the lawyer of the law, the learned men who were the interpreters and teacher of the Mosaic Law.

- * This is the only time John mentions the scribes in his gospel.

- b. The Pharisee “Pharisaioi” came to be after the Babylonian captivity and were the traditionalist that recognized the oral tradition as the standard of belief and

life, they were the religious hypocrites caring only to be heard and seen by man to receive praises from man.

- c. The word adultery “moicheia” means the woman was married, Jesus used the same word for allowing divorce. Matt. 5:32

1) The only Scriptural allowance to be released from a marriage and to remarry according to Jesus, but it is not a command to do so, forgiveness and reconciliation is always the best if there is genuine repentance!

2) The law in Deuteronomy was not a law of divorce, but an orderly manner by which a woman was freed from an unreasonable husband who had a hardened heart, for if she committed adultery, she would have been stoned, divorce would not even be the issue. Deut. 24:1-4

- d. The Scribes and Pharisees put the woman before Jesus and the crowd in the treasury. Jn. 8:20

* The word treasury is used to describe the apartments constructed in the courts of the temple, in which not only the sacred offerings and the things needful for the service were kept, but in which the priest dwelt: Neh. 13:7 of the sacred treasury in which not only treasure but also public records were stored, and the

property of widows and orphans was deposited. Josephus speaks of treasuries in the women’s court of Herod’s temple. In the New Testament near the treasury seems to be used of that receptacle mentioned by the rabbis to which were fitted thirteen chests or boxes, i.e. trumpets, so called from their shape, and into which were put the voluntary contributions or paid yearly by the Jews for the service of the temple and the support of the poor.

- 2. The horrific accusation, “They said to Him, “Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act.” vs. 4
 - a. The fact that they caught her in the very act exposed their respect of persons and evil intent by not bringing the man also.
 - b. The phrase the very act “epautophoro” is an interesting word in the Greek that is made up of three words.
 - 1) The word “epi”, which means upon.
 - 2) The second word “autos” means self.
 - 3) The third word “phor” means a thief.
 - 4) The phrase means to be caught in the act of theft.
 - a) The privilege and satisfaction of sexual inter-course is that it is only with the person you are married to, this is God’s design. Gen. 2:24-25

- b)** The person who is married or single and has sexual intercourse with another man's wife or husband is a thief, the married person commits adultery, the single person commits fornication with a married person.
 - c)** The act of sexual intercourse by or with a single person who is a virgin, male or female, is theft also, robbing them of their sexual purity.
 - d)** The only person, who has a right to touch you and enjoy you sexually is the person you marry and becomes your husband or wife.
 - e)** Your body is not for fornication, being single, but for the Lord, being the temple of the Holy Spirit not for sexual immorality, it is the only sin against your own body. 1Cor. 6:13-20
- 3.** The religious rulers declared that the law of Moses commanded stoning, "Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?" vs. 5a-b
 - a.** The seventh commandment declared, "You shall not commit adultery. Ex. 20:14
 - b.** The man who commits adultery with another man's wife, both shall be put to death. Lev. 20:10

- c.** The woman who deceived her husband of being a virgin on her honeymoon night was stoned. Deut. 22:20
 - 1)** The law seemed to place a greater emphasis on the woman's sexual purity more than the man's, in that it goes out of the way to specify in detail what takes place when she has sex before marriage.
 - 2)** Certainly it does not imply or teach that God sees sexual sin in a man any less than sin, and neither am I implying or saying that, yet certain things are never said of the man, only of the woman and more than once!
 - 3)** The Bible says a woman who has sex before marriage is defiled and humbled by the man, played a harlot while in her father's house, given her honor to another, if she lied to her husband to be about her virginity she was a deceiver and stoned!
 - 4)** The man is moved by what he see basically and as the rule in life, therefore initiates while the woman is moved by what she feels and responds to the man!
 - 5)** Every woman is the sentinel of her own purity, the man in his fallen state will always press the boundaries and she is the one who will decide how far she allows the man to go, the woman is

always in control of the relationship,
until she gives in sexually!

- d. They have caught this woman in the very act and they asked Jesus, “What do you say?” vs. 5c

B. The commentary on their motives is given by John. vs. 6a-c

1. The religious rulers were setting Jesus up, “This they said, testing Him.” vs. 6a-b
 - a. They thought they had trapped Jesus.
 - b. The word testing “peirontes” mean to put to the test in order to prove.
 - a. The word testing in a positive context is used to verify and authenticate the genuineness and trustworthiness of a person or object.
 - b. The word testing in this context is in the negative, a bad sense, to maliciously test one, craftily to put to the proof his feelings or judgments.
2. The apostle John also provides the explanation, “that they might have something of which to accuse Him.” vs. 6c
 - a. If Jesus said stone her, He would lose favor and influence with the people, He was known as a “friend of sinners” also they could accuse Him before Rome for passing judgment of capital punishment which the Jews did not have any longer as they confessed to Pilot. Jn. 18:31

- b. If He said release her, He would be guilty of violating the law of Moses, which was the law of God, the very Father He was claiming to be serving.
- c. Remember they brought her in the midst of the crowd before Jesus. vs. 3b
 - 1) To publicly discredit Jesus.
 - 2) To publically pressure Jesus.

This was the setting up of Jesus for judgment!

III. The setting forth of Jesus’ righteous judgment. vs. 8:6d-12

A. Jesus remained silent at their accusation. Jn. 8:6d-e

1. The sharp contrast between the motives of the religious rulers and the Lord’s is indicated by word “but” a contrasting conjunction, Jesus never looks at the woman till her accusers are all gone. vs. 6d
2. The actions of Jesus are described, “Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger.” vs. 6d
 - a. The word wrote “grapho”, means to write, referring to the form of the letters, to delineate or form letters on a tablet, parchment, paper, or other material.
 - b. The word is used for the Old Testament writings and the New Testament books.

- c. There are only a few times recorded in the Bible that God wrote.
 - 1) God wrote on the two tables of stone with His finger for Israel to judge themselves. Ex. 8:19
 - 2) God wrote with the finger of a man's hand opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall on the King's palace..."MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN", to judge Belshazzar. Dan. 5:5, 25
 - 3) God, in the person of Jesus wrote on the ground with His finger here to judge the evil hearts of these self-righteous religious men. vs. 6, 8
- 3. The Lord did not even give them much importance by stooping down to the ground, "as though He did not hear." vs. 6e
 - a) Sometimes silence is louder than words.
 - b) It certainly was a loud cry to their evil deed against this woman and Himself without saying a word!
- B. Jesus responded to their insistent accusation. vs. 7-9
 - 1. Jesus at this time lifted Himself up and looked straight into their faces knowing what their judgment was regarding the woman and Himself, "So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them." vs. 7a-b; Jn. 2:25

- 2. Jesus looked into their faces and pronounced judgment on them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first." vs. 7c-d
 - a. The phrase without sin "anamartetos" means never has sinned, never will sin nor desire to sin.
 - b. The law commanded the first person to witness the offense to stone the person, then the others. Deut. 17:7
 - c. You see the only One who could cast a stone was Jesus, and He did not!
- C. Jesus reminded them of their own sinfulness. vs. 8-9
 - 1. Jesus wrote once more, "And again He stooped down again and wrote on the ground." vs. 8
 - 2. Those who gave ear and understood the question, being convicted of their own conscience departed one by one, "Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last." vs. 9a-d
 - a. What did Jesus write is not known and any suggestion is mere guess work, but allow me to suggest that we have put the focus and emphasis on the wrong place!
 - b. The text says that they were convicted at what they heard, not what He wrote, but because of what He said, that the one

who had never sinned, could never sin or desired to sin was to be the first to throw the first stone.

- c. The very silence of Jesus and the awareness of their own sin before God in the person of Jesus convicted and silenced them.

* There is an interesting Scripture in Jeremiah, “O Lord, the hope of Israel, all that forsake You shall be ashamed, and they that depart from me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the LORD, the fountain of living waters.” Jer. 17:13

- 3. Jesus found Himself alone with the woman, “And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.” vs. 9e-f
 - a. She stood in the midst alone, for the circle of her hypocritical accusers had been run off by their conscience.
 - b. What a beautiful picture of every person who will be judged by Jesus one day, one on one.
 - c. No one will be there to defend, justify or excuse us.
 - d. Jesus is not interested in exposing sin, but in covering sin by forgiving it, “for God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.” Jn. 3:17

D. Jesus released the woman of her guilt and sin.
vs. 10-11

- 1. Jesus now looks to the woman, seeing none of the men, “When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman.” vs. 10a
- 2. Jesus addressed the woman, “He said to her, “Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?” vs. 10b-e
 - a. Jesus addressed her with respect, “woman” the same word used for His own mother at Cana. Jn. 2:4b
 - b. Jesus asked her where her accuser were and if any man had condemned her?
- 4. The response of the woman is stated, She said, “No one, Lord.” vs. 11a-b
 - a. All her accusers were gone.
 - b. Only Jesus is before her.
- 5. Jesus gave the reason why, “And Jesus said to her, “Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.” vs. 11c-f
 - a. Jesus said, neither do I condemn you, which implies her repentance and the forgiveness of her sins.
 - b. Jesus said, go and sin no more, which implies not only that she was not to commit adultery any more, but any other sin that would grieve God by the enabling of the new birth and her fellowship with Him.

- 1) Jesus alone knows and see the heart of man at the moment and man sees the evidence of it through time! Jn. 2:24-25
- 2) This occasion is much like the prostitute who entered Simon's house and washed the feet to Jesus with her tears and dried them with her hair, while Simon looked down on Jesus and her in his heart. Lk. 7:36-50
 * The wicked servant who would not forgive having been forgiven all. Matt. 18:21-35

This is the setting forth of Jesus' righteous judgment!

IV. The setting forth of basic principles from the story.

- A. There will always be imperfect judgments by man in this life.
 1. Malicious judgments as this one.
 2. Self-righteous judgments forgetting the amount of sin they were forgiven and that they are as capable of any sin given the right circumstances.
 3. Critical judgment that is hypocritical and never ending. Matt. 7:1-5
- B. There must always be judgment of sin in a Biblical way.

1. Sin needs to be confessed, repented of before God and abandoned. Acts 2:38-39
 2. Sin needs to be confronted when it involves others in the body of Christ, according to Scripture. Matt. 18:15-20; Gal 6:1-3; Ja. 5:19-20; 1Pet. 4:8
- C. There are always consequences that we live with even though our sins have been judged on the cross, confessed and forgiven and as we are saved.
1. There is never a question about your forgiveness or any other person, that is absolute when there is genuine repentance.
 * A person is n new creature. 2Cor. 5:21
 2. There must never be a confusion between forgiveness and restoration as a believer.
 - a. Forgiveness is unquestionable and absolute the minute we repent.
 - b. Restoration depends on the offense and the position one held at the time of the sin and how this will affect the church body and the life of others
 * The law came through Moses, but grace and truth by Jesus Christ! Jn. 1:17

Conclusion

These three movements of the woman caught in adultery revealing the righteous judgment of Jesus.

- I. The setting chosen for the woman's judgment!

- II.** The setting up of Jesus for judgment!
- III.** The setting forth of Jesus' righteous judgment!