



I WISH THE
CHURCH
WAS

CHRISTIAN

S E R M O N G U I D E

I Wish The Church Was Christian

John 8:1-11

INTRODUCTION

According to one study almost 70% of people who came up in church leave it by the time they are young adults. 32% said it's because the church is too judgmental, 29% said it's because they didn't feel connected with the people in the church, and 25% said it's because the church's political and social views on matters such as sexuality, gender identity, justice and poverty were not in keeping their values, beliefs, and understanding of God. But whatever the reason, more and more people find their love for the church eclipsed not by the Savior for whom the church stands, but by the people who occupy the pews. In this message, I want us to take a look at an example in Scripture of how hypocrisy can impact those who need Jesus, and how Jesus modeled so well what it looked like to be the Church.

KEY POINTS

1. If the Church was Christian, it wouldn't use the Bible to put God in a box.

Sadly, one of the most common mistakes Christians make is taking a verse in Scripture out of context to fit a certain situation or circumstance. When we do this, we put God in a box, thinking that there could only be one meaning, one interpretation of the verse we're looking at, and somehow our own interpretation is always correct. However, we must be careful to avoid the pitfall of not only putting God in a box, but also of twisting the Bible's words to fit our own agenda.

As the church, we have to learn be careful that we've taken the time to read and study God's Word in order to gain a clearer understanding of the context of Scripture. Let's not just take one verse out of context so it will fit the point we are trying to make. Instead, let us ask for discernment and wisdom as we not only grow in our own understanding of the Word of God, but also as we communicate what we've learned to others, so as not to cause them to stumble.

2. If the Church was Christian, it would value more than just compliance.

In contradiction to Jesus' approach, those who sought to stone her seemed bent upon imposing a kind of religious orthodoxy that demanded doctrinal conforming over being sensitive to the woman's humanity.

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However, we see by Jesus' response that He is more interested in affirming the humanity and personhood of the woman rather than protecting some notion of doctrinal purity.

In reality, none of us are good enough to meet any standard the Lord has given us. We all fall short of the glory of God. But because of Jesus and His unconditional grace, mercy, and love, we still have hope, and that's the message we should be communicating to others. We should be more focused on point people to Jesus than point out rules to the people. Only Jesus has the power to save us. Let's not forgot that as we minister to and share our faith with those around us.

3. If the Church was Christian, it would avoid hypocrisy.

Jesus is saying that those of you who want to stone the woman for adultery can do so if you're not guilty of adultery yourself. You who is without sin in this particular matter may be my guest and cast the first stone. The reason the men walked away is because they were trying to judge this woman of something they had done themselves. This is the definition of hypocrisy.

Scripture makes it very clear that we should focus on our own sins and shortcomings first before we go to point out those of the people around us. Matthew 7:5 says, "You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye." With this in mind, let's not be so quick to condemn others for sins we've also committed, but instead be more concerned with our sins and our own heart attitudes before we point the finger at other people.

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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Is there a verse or passage in Scripture that you've used to put God in a box as you've read/interpreted it?
2. Does your church value its people more than its rules?
3. When was a time you condemned someone for something you were guilty of doing as well? Or when was a time someone condemned you for something they were guilty of doing? What did you learn from those experiences?
