

LIFE GROUP LESSON

John the Life-Giving Gospel • Week of May 31

Introduction

Every morning light dawns, dispelling darkness. The sunrise is a creative expression of how Christ, the light of the world, invites each of us to turn our hearts toward him. John, chapter eight, opens with Jesus teaching at the Temple and a crowd gathering to listen. Soon Pharisees and teachers of religious law drag before Jesus, and the crowd, a woman caught in the act of adultery. They demand: “Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. The law of Moses says to stone her! What do you say?” (John 8:3-6) Jesus knows their real intent is to trap him into saying something they can use against him, so Jesus quietly stoops down to the ground and begins to write in the dirt.

Read John 8:1-11

Discussion:

Though we do not know what Jesus writes in the dust, we do see he is in control. As they keep demanding a response, Jesus stands and says, “All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone” (v7) and then, he stoops down and writes more in the dust (v8).

- Two times Jesus stoops down to the ground and may very well have been eye-level with the woman. Perhaps there has been a time when Jesus stooped down to get eye-level with you. What is special about Jesus being willing to meet you where you are – even in your dirt – and come to your defense?

Though Jesus does not condemn the woman when sin is exposed, he does not say, ... *that's fine. Just keep living how you want to live and try to stay out of trouble.* No, Jesus tells the woman: “Go and sin no more!” He sees the potential she has when she chooses to follow him and go a new direction.

- Has there been a time Jesus led you out of a place of sin and darkness? What would you share with a friend in need of hope, new direction, and desperate for a loving charge to stop sinning?

Read John 8:12-20

Once Jesus tells the woman ‘Go and sin no more’, he turns again to the crowd and declares: “I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won’t have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life” (v12).

- Jesus alone can lead us out of darkness. What would it look like – for you in your day-to-day life, to choose daily to follow Jesus? What does it mean to remain in the light of his presence?
- Jesus says his light leads to life. Remaining in darkness leads to death. What keeps many people (i.e. Pharisees and the religious of today) from accepting Jesus as true light from heaven?
- Jesus says, “You judge me by human standards, but I do not judge anyone” (v 15). What is dangerous about judging according to human standards?

For the Pharisees and teachers of the law, *religion* was their job 24/7... and yet, their unbelief kept them accepting God’s Son, who came into the world to reveal God to them. This shows us how one can know the law, be *in* the Temple or synagogue, even be a teacher of the law, and still not know God. It is possible today to know Scripture, be in church, even a teacher or leader and still not know the Lord personally.

- Why must we remain humble (teachable)?
- How must we guard our hearts and minds?
- What does complete surrender on a daily basis look like?
- What does refusing to humbly surrender look like?

May we be careful *not* to remain in a place of disobedience. For Jesus says:

“Not everyone who calls out to me, ‘Lord! Lord!’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter. On judgment day many will say to me, ‘Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.’ But I will reply, ‘I never knew you. Get away from me, you who break God’s laws’ (Matthew 7:21-23).

Read John 8:21-30

Jesus said, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man on the cross, then you will understand that I AM he. I do nothing on my own but say only what the Father taught me” (v28). Jesus spoke of his coming death on the cross. On another occasion, he spoke of his followers dying to self, taking up our cross, and following him (Mark 8:34). At one point, Jesus spoke of forgiving our brother and sister from the heart (Matthew 18:33-35). Another time, he said make sure the light *you think* you have is actually light (Matthew 6:22-23).

- Take some time, pray, and assess where you are with the Lord Jesus. Ask him to reveal to you any areas of disobedience in your life. Listen for his voice. Remember his is not a voice of condemnation, but a voice of truth, of coming to your defense, of a loving charge to *Go* and sin no more. He wants to set you free from a life of sin and shame.

Read John 8:31-59

Even as 'many who heard him' began to believe in him, Jesus says 'You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings.' The moment we slip back in-stream with culture, slide back into disobedience, or join in with mockers who spend their energies condemning others, we are choosing darkness over light. Whether we are new to faith or a seasoned 'Christian' may we make sure we are truly part of God's family by remaining (living into) our profession of faith in Jesus Christ, God's Son. May we emulate his ultimate sacrifice and be willing to lay down our life for his glory. Jesus' mercy is not a green light to continue in sin; but a commission to *go* and give his message to others, sharing with them how to be set free from sin.

In Closing

As this chapter concludes, not only have the Pharisees continued in their plot to kill Jesus, but the many new 'believers' in the crowd have become hostile to the point of accusing Jesus of being possessed by a Samaritan devil (v48). The light of truth exposes sin and darkness and can make us angry if our hearts are in a dark place. As the chapter began with threat of stoning the adulterous woman (v5), it ends with the religious leaders' real motive all along, stoning Jesus (v59).

The religious leaders never really had an interest in the woman caught in the act of adultery – or the man she was with – for the man and the woman were both to be stoned, according to Leviticus 20:20 and Deuteronomy 22:22. No, for all along the religious leaders wanted to silence Jesus, to snuff out his light, and stay in charge. Yet, the light of God's truth cannot be snuffed out. "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it" (John 1:5). The question is: will we choose the light that leads to life, or will we remain in darkness.

One Year Bible Reading

May 31: 2 Samuel 17:1-29, John 19:23-42, Psalm 119:129-152, Proverbs 16:12-13
June 1: 2 Samuel 18:1-19:10, John 20:1-31, Psalm 119:153-176, Proverbs 16:14-15
June 2: 2 Samuel 19:11-20:13, John 21:1-25, Psalm 120:1-7, Proverbs 16:16-17
June 3: 2 Samuel 20:14-21:22, Acts 1:1-26, Psalm 121:1-8, Proverbs 16:18
June 4: 2 Samuel 22:1-23:23, Acts 2:1-47, Psalm 122:1-9, Proverbs 16:19-20
June 5: 2 Samuel 23:24-24:25, Acts 3:1-26, Psalm 123:1-4, Proverbs 16:21-23
June 6: 1 Kings 1:1-53, Acts 4:1-37, Psalm 124:1-8, Proverbs 16:24



Text: John 8

PLAIN TRUTH:

Jesus is _____ incarnate, so if we
_____ to the _____ we will be
_____.

1. Jesus' presence _____ our sin and we can _____ it or _____ it.
2. Jesus reveals truth so we either _____ Him or the Father _____ Lies.

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