



# The Kingdom Perspective

## Grace and Truth...in Bed Together

Hello! This is Pastor Don of Christ Redeemer Church. Welcome to The Kingdom Perspective!

Though ancient Christians practiced the strictest sexual ethic of their day, they were anything but judgmental towards those ravaged by the effects of sexual sin. The followers of Jesus were distinguished by the grace they extended to those exploited by the sexual confusion and callousness of Roman culture. The church was seen as a place of healing. Not a trophy case for saints, but a hospital for sinners!

Now, why was this the case? Well, classical Christianity teaches us that sin is not just bad things we do. Rather, it is a deep dysfunction that causes destruction in both soul and society. When we participate in sexual sin, it tears at the very fabric of human nature. When someone commits sin against us, it's as if they are pulling on a thread in our soul's fabric, causing us to unravel. Anyone who has been the victim of such sin can testify to its lasting negative impact.

Now, arguably, the ancient world was not much different than our own, rife with both perpetrators and victims of sexual sin—people whose lives were unraveling. Into that world came the radically restorative message of Jesus. Jesus's main mission was not to condemn, but to mend and heal that which sin had destroyed—to make us whole.

It is for this reason that the church became a place of healing. This was true not only because of the healthy sexual ethic it practiced (truth), but also because it so welcomed the victims of a bad sexual ethic (grace). It didn't require wholeness; it created it. The church was a hospital and like its Chief Physician (the Lord Jesus), it was full of both grace and truth.

Something to think about from The Kingdom Perspective.

...but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him, and he sat down and taught them. The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst they said to him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now in the Law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. 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." And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground. But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus stood up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more."

~ **John 8:1-11 (ESV)**

Some sources to consider:

*The Rise of Christianity: A Sociologist Reconsiders History* by Rodney Stark (Princeton University Press 2020).

*The Patient Ferment of the Early Church: The Improbably Rise of Christianity in the Roman Empire* by Alan Kreider (Baker Academic 2016).

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