

TONIGHT'S READING



THE NEED OF THE SINFUL (3)

Scripture Reading:

John 8:6-11 ⁶But they said this to tempt Him, so that they might have reason to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote with His finger on the ground. ⁷But when they persisted in questioning Him, He stood up and said to them, He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her. ⁸And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. ⁹And when they heard that, they went out one by one, beginning with the older ones. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman stood where she was, in the midst. ¹⁰And Jesus stood up and said to her, Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you? ¹¹And she said, No one, Lord. And Jesus said, Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.

John 8:36 If therefore the Son sets you free, you shall be free indeed.

John 3:17 For God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

John 12:47b ... for I have not come to judge the world, but to save the world.

Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all respects like us, yet without sin.

ONLY THE LORD JESUS BEING SINLESS YET NOT CONDEMNING MAN

Only the Lord Jesus is sinless and qualified to condemn man, yet He did not condemn the woman. The Lord Jesus asked the crowd who opposed Him, "Which of you convicts Me of sin?" (v. 46). Here we see

a contrast. A large crowd surrounded the Lord Jesus to ensnare Him. When He countered their question by asking who is without sin, they could not stand. They sensed their sinfulness and fled. Eventually, the Lord Jesus stood before the crowd and asked, "Which of you convicts Me of sin?" When the Lord Jesus confronted His opposers and faultfinders, no one could testify of any sin in Him. This proves that in the universe He alone is sinless. In the universe only the Lord Jesus is without sin; therefore, only He is qualified to condemn us. Even though the Lord is qualified to condemn us, He said to the woman, "Neither do I condemn you" (v. 11). God did not send Him into the world to condemn the world but "that the world might be saved through Him" (3:17).

The scribes and Pharisees left one by one because their conscience was convicted. Only the sinful woman and the Lord Jesus were left. She probably thought, "I escaped the condemnation of one group of people, but I may not escape the condemnation of Jesus." She might still have been in fear and trembling, waiting for judgment. In that quiet and tense atmosphere the Lord Jesus stood up and asked, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" (8:10). The Lord Jesus seemed to say, "These people caught you in order to condemn you, but where are they now? Have they all gone away because of my question to them? No one remains to condemn you." In response to the Lord's question, "Has no one condemned you?" the woman answered, "No one, Lord" (v. 11). Her reply was short, but it is very meaningful. She did not call the Lord Jesus "Teacher," like the scribes and the Pharisees (v. 4). She called the Lord Jesus "Lord." She must have called Him Lord because she had observed that He was extraordinary. She saw that the scribes and the Pharisees, who were respected by all, could not stand up to just one question from Jesus. She saw how they came with a haughty and imposing air to question the Lord Jesus and sentence her to death. But they all left when He questioned them. She saw that the crowd wanted to deal with Him, but instead, they were dealt with by Him and lost their footing. Therefore, she must have thought that Jesus was an extraordinary man with authority over people. Hence, she called Him "Lord." When she called Him "Lord," she acknowledged that He is the Lord.

She might have thought that although those people did not condemn her, the Lord would. She must have been quite fearful, waiting for the Lord's condemnation. To her surprise, however, the Lord Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you." Please pay attention to the word *neither*. The Lord Jesus seemed to be saying, "None of them condemned you, and neither do I condemn you. They did not condemn you, because they are sinful. They sinned and are sinful; therefore, they cannot condemn you. I am without sin, and I have never sinned. I could condemn you, but neither will I condemn you." This must have given such comfort and release to that sinful woman who was in fear and trembling. It was the gospel, a tidings of great joy, to her.

What sweet words: "Neither do I condemn you"! What a loving voice! This is truly the gospel. No one in the human race is qualified to condemn man but the Lord Jesus. However, neither does He condemn

us. This is the gospel! Although He is able to condemn, He does not condemn. Do you sense that you are sinful? Are you grieved and sorrowful over your sins? Does your conscience convict you? Please listen to the words of the Lord Jesus: "Neither do I condemn you."

ONLY THE LORD JESUS BEING ABLE TO FORGIVE SINS AND TO SAVE MAN FROM SIN AND DEATH

The Lord Jesus' not condemning man's sins is His forgiving of man's sins. He is the righteous God, who can condemn man's sins according to His righteousness, but He bore man's sins on the cross, suffered the penalty of death on man's behalf, and satisfied the requirement of God's righteousness. Therefore, He, and He alone, can forgive man's sins.

John 8 also reveals that only the Lord Jesus can deliver man from sin. The Lord Jesus could have condemned the adulterous woman, but He did not condemn her. This was His forgiving her of her sins. The Lord not only forgave her sins, but He also said, "From now on sin no more" (v. 11). The Lord's word meant that He would deliver her from sin so that she would sin no more. The Lord Jesus can set man free so that man is free indeed. He can save, release, and deliver man from sin so that he is no longer a slave of sin under the authority of sin and no longer bound by sin.