

John 8:1-11... ¹*Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.* ²*At dawn He went to the temple complex again, and all the people were coming to Him. He sat down and began to teach them.* ³*Then the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery, making her stand in the center.* ⁴*“Teacher,” they said to Him, “this woman was caught in the act of committing adultery.* ⁵*In the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. So, what do You say?”* ⁶*They asked this to trap Him, in order that they might have evidence to accuse Him. Jesus stooped down and started writing on the ground with His finger.* ⁷*When they persisted in questioning Him, He stood up and said to them, “**The one without sin among you should be the first to throw a stone at her.**”* ⁸*Then He stooped down again and continued writing on the ground.* ⁹*When they heard this, they left one by one, starting with the older men. Only He was left, with the woman in the center.* ¹⁰*When Jesus stood up, He said to her, “**Dear woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?**”* ¹¹*“No one, Lord,” she answered. “**Neither do I condemn you,**” said Jesus. “**Go, and sin no more.**”*

Setting of the Story:

... ¹*Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.* ²*At dawn He went to the temple complex again, and all the people were coming to Him. He sat down and began to teach them.*

- We should begin each day by focusing on God, and ...(*again*) it should be an ongoing discipline. “We need grace and strength for the day, and God is the only One Who can supply it.” (*W. Herschel Ford, Simple Sermons from John. P. 184*)
- We should be intentional about seeking Jesus, with the right motive ... (the *people were coming to Him. He sat down and began to teach them*)

1. A Woman Caught

... ³*Then the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery, making her stand in the center.* ⁴*“Teacher,” they said to Him, “this woman was caught in the act of committing adultery.*

While Jesus was teaching in the temple complex a group of religious and political leaders came to Jesus with a woman caught in adultery. Now you could look at this in at least two different ways. (1) The Jewish leaders were in need of some spiritual guidance on a very thorny issue. (NOT, this is 100% not their reasoning. Or (2) The Jewish leaders brought this situation to Jesus to trap Him and set Him up for an arrest.

The central issue here was really about authority. Jesus had been making some very bold claims & actions (i.e. I am the Bread of Life, I am the Living Water, His healing of the man on the Sabbath, etc.). This had angered and I believe deeply scared the leaders. They were trying to get Jesus to blaspheme, break one of the Old Testament laws, or if He consented with the stoning, He would mar His image of mercy, loving and forgiving. It looked like a no-win situation.

But, as we have seen time and time again in the Bible, as well as in our current times, that you should never count Jesus out (just remember the resurrection).

Throughout John's Gospel, he has consistently reinforced the Authority of Jesus over all things, heaven and on earth. This encounter is another example of the clash of “authority”, Either Jesus is Who He said He is, or else He is a madman or deceiver. The answer of course is that He is the Son of God, the Messiah, who has all authority in heaven and on earth.

You may remember two weeks ago I mentioned that Jesus never wrote any poetry, no music, never painted but He was the inspiration for all these categories. Well today's passage we find Jesus writing the only time in the New Testament. Though He wrote only this one instance (2 times in this story) “more has been written about Him than any other person who has ever walked on the face of the earth” (*Ford. P. 188*)

2. A Trap Laid

⁵ *In the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. So, what do You say?"* ⁶ *They asked this to trap Him, in order that they might have evidence to accuse Him. Jesus stooped down and started writing on the ground with His finger.*

It is true that the Old Testament places a death penalty on adultery, as well as many other sins, but the practice at the time of Jesus had diminished and only on certain occasions was this enforced.

This situation put Jesus in a dilemma

- If He agreed with them on the death penalty...

... "First, He could lose the name He had gained for Himself for love and mercy and never again be called the friend of sinners.....

... Second, He would come into collision with Roman law, in which the Jews had no power to pass or carry out the death penalty". (Barclay. *Gospel of John Vol. 2. P. 2*)

- If He disagreed with the stoning, then they would accuse Him of abandoning and disobeying the Law of Moses. It seemed like a classic 'Catch 22' situation.

Just as a sidebar, have you ever wondered where the man is that committed adultery with? Seems like a double standard, as the OT law has the same death penalty for both man and woman. But it just shows the hypocrisy of the Jewish leaders, and their blind rage to get Jesus.

3. A Challenge Made

*... Jesus stooped down and started writing on the ground with His finger.⁷ When they persisted in questioning Him, He stood up and said to them, "**The one without sin among you should be the first to throw a stone at her.**"* ⁸ *Then He stooped down again and continued writing on the ground. ⁹ When they heard this, they left one by one, starting with the older men. Only He was left, with the woman in the center.*

Like the old saying 'Know when to speak and when to not speak'. Jesus didn't say a word at this point, He just bent down and wrote something in the sand. This is the first of two accounts of Jesus writing something (both in this one passage).

Well, the Jewish leaders were persistent and kept badgering Jesus for an answer to trap Him. Then He made a one sentence statement that still echoes through time "**The one without sin among you should be the first to throw a stone at her.**" What a powerful, smart and ingenious answer. It is the only thing that Jesus could have said that stumped the Jewish leaders in their double jeopardy question of Jesus.

It is amazing that time after time Jesus always says the right thing at the right time to settle the issue.

4. A Pardon is Given: Grace

.... ¹⁰ *When Jesus stood up, He said to her, "**Dear woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?**"*

¹¹ *"No one, Lord," she answered. "**Neither do I condemn you,**" said Jesus. "**Go, and sin no more.**"*

Well, it is apparent that the Jewish leaders got the point and slithered away like the snakes they were. Then we find Jesus interacting with the woman for the first time. He didn't condemn her, or speak harshly to her, He simply asked '**Where are those who condemned you**'. Then "**Neither do I condemn you,**" said Jesus. "**Go, and sin no more.**"

“Here is how our Lord treated this sinful woman:

- 1) He faced her— “He stood up”.
- 2) He questioned her—“Woman, where are they?”
- 3) He forgave her—“Neither do I condemn you.”
- 4) He challenged her—“Go now and sin no more.”

He treated her with dignity and compassion.

He treated her sin with total honesty.

He imparted grace and hope.

He forgave her sin and sent her out to start a brand-new life”.

<https://www.keepebelieving.com/sermon/the-woman-caught-in-the-act-christ-speaks-to-the-problem-of-a-judgmental-spirit/>

John 3:17 comes to mind “*God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save it through Him*”

One word I think summarizes this encounter: GRACE

Her disgrace was covered by His grace

Your disgrace can be covered by His grace as well...If you turn to Him in faith.

Ephesians 1:7 In Christ we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace.

Read these words of this song by “Unspoken”

“Call It Grace”

Written by Chad Mattson, Jonathan Lowry, Michael, Farren, and Seth Mosley
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CCLI # 5232617

It's the light that pierces through you to the darkest hidden place It knows your deepest secrets. But it never looks away It's the gentle hand that pulls you from the judgement of the crowd When you stand before them guilty and you got no way out

Some may call it foolish and impossible but for every heart it rescues, it's a miracle. It's nothing less than marvelous This love that took our place. Just call it what it is, call it grace, call it grace.

It's the breath that's breathing new life into what we thought was dead. It's the favor that takes orphans Placing crowns upon their heads. It's the hope for our tomorrows the rock on which we stand. It's a strong and mighty fortress even Hell can't stand against

Amazing, unshaking This is grace, this is grace. Unchanging, unfailing This is grace, this is grace

It's time for you to allow the Grace of God through Jesus cover you and make you whole!