

“Jesus: The Sympathetic Savior”

The Vine Series... John 15:5

SCRIPTURE

John 8: 1-11 (NIV)

¹ but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. ² At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. ³ The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group ⁴ and said to Jesus, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. ⁵ In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?” ⁶ They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him.

But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. ⁷ When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, “Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” ⁸ Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground. ⁹ At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there.

¹⁰ Jesus straightened up and asked her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” ¹¹ “No one, sir,” she said. “Then neither do I condemn you,” Jesus declared. “Go now and leave your life of sin.”

Subject Question: According to John’s gospel account, what three lessons does Jesus teach concerning the nature of our Sin.

Compliment answer: Sin is Undeniable, Sin is Recordable, and Sin is Delete-able.

Big Idea: According to John’s gospel account, the three lessons Jesus teaches concerning the nature of our sin are: Sin is Undeniable, Sin is Recordable, and Sin is Delete-able.

Homiletical Idea: “God is Freeing”

Purpose: I want the congregation to consider the grace given to us in dealing with our sins in this life and more, to extent that grace to others.

Introduction: This is the sixth in a series that we will be exploring concerning the passage in john’s gospel where Jesus states, *I am the vine, you are the branches, He who abides in me and I in them, He it is who bears much fruit, for*

apart from me you can do nothing. We will be looking at what it means to be “abide-ers” in this series. John has shown us Jesus’ roles as Son of God in Chapter one, Son of man in Chapter two, Divine teacher in Chapter three, Soul winner in chapter four, Great Physician in Chapter five, Bread of Life in Chapter six, and Source of Living water in Chapter seven. Now, in Chapter eight we begin to explore some of Christ’s characteristics that we are called and privileged to emulate. This first issue is Christ’s attitude towards not only sin but sinners. And by extension how we view ourselves and others...

- A. **Sin is Undeniable** (Vs. 2-6a). *²At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. ³The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group ⁴and said to Jesus, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. ⁵In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?” ⁶They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him.*
- B. Tragic story here. The woman was undoubtedly guilty...wrong... caught in an unspeakable and unconscionable act. There are really no excuses for her sin. No justification. Jesus had every right to condemn here. It’s what she deserved! And yet...? Why didn’t He? Was He condoning her actions? Was he just winking at her sin? Was He just saying, “well everyone’s doing it... so it can’t be that bad?”
- C. Or did He have another purpose? Obviously He did. Jesus was able to see the situation for what it truly was: A guilty sinful person... unholy and quite aware of her guilt. But also a guilty sinful group of leaders trying to scheme and tattle. The only difference between the two was one knew she was wrong and the other group had no idea. There was no sympathy on their part, no mercy, no acknowledgment that every one of them was not only capable of committing the same sin, but hid behind their self-righteousness pointing one finger in accusation while unknowingly having four fingers pointing back on themselves.
- D. So what is Jesus teaching us today?
 - 1. **Sinners act like sinners.** As Christians we should not be surprised at the depths of depravity that people can descend to in their unregenerate state. Paul reminds of this when he said in Ephesians 2 *All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.*

2. **Jesus came to save sinners.** Let's not forget that our righteousness and our holiness are gifts from God and he desires to do the same in others people's lives. He came to seek and to save that which was **lost**... the only difference between a sinful and sin-filled person and us is that we have experienced God's grace, we are living testaments of His mercy. We are hardly in the position to condemn... only plead that God will change a person's heart— If all of heaven rejoices when a sinner repents should we not be at least supportive and understanding and happy when a person's fins themselves at the foot of the cross and understands that Jesus died for them?
3. **People can and do change.** In a strange way, the Pharisees although their intentions were wrong actually did the very thing that needed to be done—they brought her to Jesus. Which is a great lesson in itself. Maybe instead of churning up the rumor mill and destroying a person's reputation when they stumble or fall, we should first bring them before the Lord and pray for them. Jesus was sympathetic and we too are called upon to be the same.

(The Love of Christ changes people)

- A. **Sin is Recordable** (vs.6b-9) *But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. ⁷ When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." ⁸ Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground. ⁹ At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there.*
- B. So what was Jesus wring on the ground? We can only speculate. Perhaps it was words like stealing, hatred, maybe names of people that they each recognized as people they had mistreated in some way. Whatever the case, the words had a convicting and convincing power. One by one they started leaving. The irony and the heartbreak of the story her for the Pharisees is that not one of them stayed. Not one of them after THEIR deeds had been pointed out came along side of the adulterous woman and acknowledged that they too were guilty and needed to come to Jesus.
- C. Here I believe we find the answer to the obvious question of what happens to people who are neck deep in their sins, acting life sinners if you will and who don't come to Christ?

D. We almost miss the lesson being played out in front of us. If Jesus was willing to be sympathetic and yes, he was. It doesn't mean that Jesus was bending his moral standard or lowering his expectation of righteousness. For those who come, forgiveness and sympathy. For those who walk away, every single sin is not only recorded, written down and remembered, but will be called into account someday when a person comes face to face with a Holy and Righteous God. Lessons:

1. As Christians we are destined to stand before the Judgement seat of Christ to receive rewards. Our sins are no longer in the system.
 - i. The Judgment Seat of Christ, is reserved for the judgment of Christians only. Born again believers in Christ Jesus. If a person is unsaved and dies in sin, he will be judged at the great white throne judgment, following Christ's millennial reign on earth. As already mentioned, **2 Corinthians 5:10** tell us "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in his body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad." In addition, **Romans 14:10-12** reads, "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. In the context of both Scriptures, it is clear that those judged at the Bema seat are Christians, not unbelievers. The Judgment Seat of Christ, therefore, involves believers giving an account of their lives to Christ.
2. Unbelievers or those who have rejected God's offer of Salvation in Christ will stand before great White Throne Judgment seat. Every sin here is accountable:
 - I. And I saw a **great white throne**, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is [the book] of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever

was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire".
Revelation 20:11-15 ESV .

3. As Christians we can assure ourselves that someday God will make all things right. That people will be held accountable. "Vengeance is mine sayeth the Lord." Our task is to be sympathetic and forgiving; rejoicing when God saves a person and heartbroken for those who reject His offer of mercy.
 - A. **Sin is Delete-able** (Vs.10-11) ¹⁰ *Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"* ¹¹ *"No one, sir," she said. "Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."*
 - B. How the words must have rocked our guilty friends mind and heart. Totally guilty, yet completely forgiven. So, though she had been caught in the act, though she had been publically ridiculed and her life further ruined, she had found new sense of hope and purpose.
 - C. Later she would probably hear about how they had taken this good man, and crucified Him... .
 - D. But she would also hear of a group of people who were now meeting claiming that this man had been raised from the dead. O yes, she would go. O yes, she would travel once more to that place where God had found her, this place where the sympathetic savoir had saved her from the wrath of others and in some strange way, saved her from the wrath of God and more, herself.