

The Forgiving Christ

Sermon by Pastor Byron Chesney January 06, 2016 Wed P.M. Service

[†]John 8:2-11

² And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them.

³ And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,

⁴ They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

⁵ Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

⁶ This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with *his* finger wrote on the ground, *as though he heard them not*.

⁷ So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

⁸ And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

⁹ And they which heard *it*, being convicted by *their own* conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, *even* unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

¹⁰ When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

¹¹ She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

² And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them.

Notice that our Savior gets up early to go about his business. He doesn't lay around in bed all day and slumber away. He knows that his time is short and he needs to be about his Father's business. My friends, our time on earth is short too and we need to be about the Father's business. Let's not slumber our time away. Our time here on this earth is very short and it is very precious. It is this time that we have today that we prepare for the time we will be spending in eternity. How sad to think that we frivolously wasted away our time here on earth without preparing for our eternal time.

So, Jesus, just as his manner was, he came to the temple to teach.

³ And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, ⁴ They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

How rude of these Pharisees to burst into the room while Jesus is teaching. What a disruption this must have been. It's just like these Pharisees too. They were always trying to pin Jesus down on something in front of everyone so they could discredit him. **Notice they didn't bring the man that was involved** in this adulterous relationship, only the woman. Did they put the man up to it just to have this chance to throw her in front of Jesus? It seems there is a double standard going on here.

They yank this woman right out of the middle of this adulterous relationship and throw her in front of Jesus and everyone that was there in the Temple. I can only imagine all of the necks craning, eyes staining, ears tingling to see what is going on. What an embarrassment for this lady.

⁵ Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

They think they really have Jesus trapped now. Because, after all, Scripture says in **Leviticus 20:10**: And the man that committeth adultery with *another* man's wife, *even he* that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

Notice that they didn't keep all of the law, only part of it. The man was supposed to be there too. John MacArthur says this: ¹*The Mishnah, which is the codification of Jewish law, even said this is such a serious sin that, when you catch the man, he is to be enclosed in manure up to his knees and a soft towel inside a rough towel tied around his neck and two people on each side pull until he strangles; and the soft towel on the inside was so the rough towel left no marks, so his execution would be symbolically accomplished by God Himself. There would be no human mark on him.*

Nevertheless, they bring this woman in front of Jesus.

⁶ This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with *his* finger wrote on the ground, *as though he heard them not*.

These self-righteous jerks didn't care anything about the woman. They didn't care anything about the law she had broken. All they cared about was trying to find a way to accuse Jesus so they could discredit him or do away with him.

Jesus already has their number. Notice that last part of verse 6, "**Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.**" My friend, you want to get under someone's skin, just ignore them. When somebody feels ignored it makes them feel inferior. These Pharisees felt that they deserved everyone's undivided attention. They were after all the religious leaders!

But, Jesus just ignores them and starts writing on the ground. How embarrassed do you think the disciples are about this time? Do you think maybe Peter, James, and John were standing nearby looking around at each other wondering why Jesus was ignoring these men? And here is the Master stooped down drawing on the ground!

By now these Pharisees are probably beside themselves with anger. They already hate Jesus and this is just inflaming their hatred. Perhaps the people standing by were laughing at them by now? They demand to know what Jesus has to say about this.

If he says, no, don't stone her then he would be going against the very law in which he said he had not come to destroy the law but to fulfill the law. He would be going against the Law of Moses and the law of God. They would say, he is not of God if he had gone against God. If he had said, yes, go ahead and stone her then he would no longer be a friend to sinners (something he was frequently accused and found guilty of being.) So, it looks like he's between a rock and a hard place (no pun intended).

But, Jesus has the perfect answer and it not what they were expecting to hear.

¹ John MacArthur – Jesus, the Friend of Sinners

7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

“They continue asking him.” They were relentless and not very happy that Jesus was ignoring them. They demand that he answer the question. Friend, you could have heard a pin drop when Jesus uttered these words: “**he that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.**” There was not a person in that temple that day (except for Jesus) that could honestly say that they were without sin and everybody knew that. Jesus had just been teaching earlier that if a man look upon a woman with lust then he had already committed adultery with her in his heart. That would have most likely made every man there guilty and it did.

How easy it is for us to become self-righteous. We hear something that someone else has done and just because we may have not done what they have done we get all high and mighty and say things like, “well, I would never do something like that.” We hear about a young lady having a baby out of wedlock, and it’s wrong, I’m not saying it’s right, but instead of trying to help we want to condemn and make it even harder on her. Please do not misunderstand what I am trying say here. I am not making light of sin. Jesus never made light of sin. But Jesus did realize that after sin had been committed there was no taking that sin back. Once it’s done, it’s done. There are no do overs. All of the screaming, yelling, preaching, condemning, and shaming is not going to do a bit of good once the sin has been committed. So, before we get on our high horse when we hear someone has sinned, let’s ask ourselves first; how clean is our heart?

8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

While everyone in that temple was contemplating on what Jesus had just said and going over in their minds the list of sins that they were guilty of, he stoops down and starts writing more. What was Jesus writing on the ground these two times? Ever wonder? I’ve heard many different theories of what he was writing and that’s all they are, theories. The fact is none of us know what he was writing. It could have been anything, although; *Jeremiah 17:13 says: O LORD, the hope of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, and they that depart from me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the LORD, the fountain of living waters.*

So, perhaps the Lord was writing down the sins that these people had committed? Maybe he was writing the name of a woman that one of these Pharisees had committed adultery with? Whatever it was, they couldn’t stand it. Their conscience wouldn’t allow them to stay. Friends that is conviction. You know what should follow conviction don’t you??? REPENTANCE.

9 And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

Suddenly, it seems that these men had somewhere else to be. My but how anxious they were for a public stoning while ago. How determined they were to see “justice” done. Now they don’t have time to hang around. Notice the Bible says that they all departed from the eldest to the last. Why did the older ones leave first? Did they have many more sins weighing heavily on them or had they been around long enough to understand when they have been caught with their pants down?

So, one by one they file out of the temple. Do you think they took their stones out with them or did they drop them on the ground on their way out?

Notice that everybody turned and ran away from Jesus except for the woman. Why didn’t she get up and scuttle out with them? You see, that’s the difference in a repentant and a non-repentant heart. The others when found guilty in their sins, ran from the very one with the power to forgive them, but this lady, convicted of her sins, stays there to be healed by the master healer.

Oh friend, do your sins cause you to run from Jesus? Don’t do that. The Bible says in **John 3:17**, “*God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.*” It goes on to say in 17-21: ¹⁸ *He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.* ¹⁹ *And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.* ²⁰ *For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.* ²¹ *But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.”*

10 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? **11** She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

Now, before we go and try to paint this woman as a helpless victim, bear in mind that she is no saint. She was caught in the act of adultery. She is guilty as charged. But, we notice what a loving, kind, and merciful Father we serve. He did not deny that this woman was a sinner, he told her to **go and sin no more**. Jesus said in **Luke 5:32** *I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance..*

Over the years I have heard people say that one of these days, when they get their lives cleaned up and get things in order, then they will come to Jesus. They go about this life living a life of sin and they are miserable. Oh my friend, I don’t know your heart tonight but let me say this; nowhere in the Bible will you find where the sinner is supposed to clean themselves up before being saved. That is not how it works. The sinner must come to Jesus even while in their sins and ask Him to forgive them and trust Him as their Lord and Savior. Let Jesus do the cleaning up. He loves you so much that he hung on a cross and died for you. That’s how much Jesus loves you.

What about you tonight? Will you be like the Pharisees and turn away from Jesus in your guilt? Or will you be like the woman that was taken in her sin and turn to Jesus for healing and forgiveness? Would you submit to him? He is the forgiving Christ.

† All Scripture from the Authorized King James Version of the Bible