

**John 8: 1-11; “Go Your Way, and Sin No More”, Sermon # 50 in the series –  
“That All May Honor the Son”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall,  
on February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019, in the Afternoon Worship Service.**

As we will observe the Lord’s Supper in a few minutes, I want to set before you 1<sup>st</sup> – What these verses teach us about this woman’s sin, that it found her out. 2<sup>nd</sup> – What these verses teach us about the Lord Jesus and what He came to do. And 3<sup>rd</sup> – What these verses teach us about the greatness of our salvation in Christ. May we see the great compassion of the Lord Jesus toward guilty sinners, and how great the salvation is, which He purchased for us.

**1<sup>st</sup> of all – I want to set before you what these verses teach us about this woman’s sin, that it found her out.** (verses 1-4)

Here we find the Lord Jesus on the evening of the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, going to the Mt. of Olives. Everyone else went to his own house it say in verse 53 of chapter 7. The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air had their nests, but the Son of Man had no place to lay His head. He probably went there so that He might be out of the reach of His enemies and so that He might spend some time in prayer there, so that he would be ready for all of the labors of the following day. He may have also gone to see Mary and Martha and stayed with them. We are not told here. But early in the morning, then, He comes back again into the temple and all the people came to Him and He sat down and taught them. There were, no doubt, some persons who had remained in the City of Jerusalem on that last evening of the Feast, just so that they might hear the Lord Jesus teach them one final time before they went home. And then there were the people from Jerusalem who did believe in Him, and they wanted to hear Him as well. The scribes and Pharisees also came, but they came for a different reason. Their reason was not to be taught by Jesus but to test Him. They would test Him in relation to what He would do about someone who had blatantly broken God’s holy law. We read here that they brought to Him a woman caught in adultery; in the very act. And they set her right up in front in the midst of the crowd, between the congregation and Jesus.

Now, I cannot think that there could be any greater humiliation than what was taking place here; for a woman especially, to be brought directly from having committed this sin of adultery, to being brought directly into the presence of a great congregation of people who were gathered for the purpose of receiving the word of God from the Lord Jesus Christ. The Feast of Tabernacles was over, and all of the Jews were supposed to be present in the worship of God during that time, and yet here we find this woman, right on the heels of the Feast ending, engaging in this illicit and immoral act. This was indeed a great sin. What led her to commit this adultery? Was it attraction to the man who had fled from her when the scribes and Pharisees interrupted them? She probably thought: I should have never gotten involved with this man. I didn’t realize what my affair with this man would lead to. This being caught in this sin was no doubt something which struck great fear into her, because she sensed and she knew what these men were going to say and what they were going to ask Jesus to do to her.

This leads me to say this; that we little realize where our secret sins will lead us when we are committing them. The Bible says that you ought to be sure of this; that your sin will find you out. I took the time to look that verse up while I was studying, and the context was this. It is found in Numbers chapter 32. The situation was this; that the children of Israel were going into the land of Canaan and the Lord had commanded them to take the land of Canaan and to drive out the inhabitants of the land. But the children of Reuben and the children of Gad had a very great multitude of livestock, and when they saw the land of Jazer and the land of Gilead, that it was a good place for them to keep their flocks and their herds, they came and spoke to Moses about their living there and putting down roots there, instead of going over the Jordan and taking a possession for themselves there in Canaan. At first Moses was ready to pronounce a judgment upon them,

because he thought that they were rebelling against the Lord's word and His covenant purpose for them, to go and fight with the rest of the tribes of Israel; to take the land and possess it. He thought that they were not willing to go into the land to fight to establish the inheritance of each tribe in the land of Canaan. But they told Moses – No, this was not the case; it was not a matter of rebellion against the Lord. They promised Moses that they would not return to the homes that they would build until every one of the children of Israel had received his inheritance.

And so Moses said to them that if they would do that; if they would do their part to help the other tribes to receive their inheritance, then they could return to the eastern side of Jordan afterwards, and be blameless before the Lord and before Israel; and that land would be their possession. But, he said, if they did not do what they had promised that they would do, then, they should take note, that they would be sinning against the Lord, and that they should be sure of this, Moses said to them, “Your sin will find you out”. Now, what was the issue here? It was loyalty to the Lord's cause and the Lord's people and God's purpose in relation to them. It was a matter of covenant faithfulness. And it is just so, my dear brethren and friends, with the commitment to loyalty in marriage. It is a matter of covenant faithfulness. God has a great and abiding purpose in marriage, and it is that a man and a woman in marriage would be faithful to each other, to love each other exclusively, and attend to each other's needs for companionship, friendship, and find their ultimate fulfillment being expressed in their one-flesh sexual relationship.

Sometimes one of the persons in marriage may think that they can sin in secret against the Lord and against their spouse in marriage, and that it does not matter and it does not have consequences; that the Lord will not see, or cause their sin to be found out. But as we see in this passage, the Lord surely knows how a matter like this ought to be handled. In this case, the sin of this woman found her out, and it found her out publicly. But as we will see here, as we go along, in thinking about what happened to her, we find out to our great joy, that in doing this, in God's permitting her to be exposed to public infamy and shame, that He also had determined that He would save her from her sins. Will you not see, my friends, that all of our secret sins, if we have them, are open and plainly exposed in the sight of God at all times? And God does not have to show mercy, but in this case He did? How this ought to help us, to learn to come to Him and to have dealings with Him, over our secret sins, or any besetting sin of our heart and mind that we might have; that we might repent of them. Can your sin be forgiven after it has found you out? Thankfully, this woman was being brought to Jesus.

**2<sup>nd</sup> – I want you to see what these verses teach us about the Lord Jesus and what He came to do in relation to the law.** (verses 5-9)

Now, I believe that this display, of dragging this woman into the midst of the congregation in the temple was done according to a premeditated plan which was intended by these scribes and Pharisees, not only to publicly shame her, but also to publicly attempt to bring shame and disgrace on the Lord Jesus, and prove to everyone there that Jesus was not a true prophet or the Messiah. When these men said the things that they did, they were representing the law. If this woman was caught in the act of adultery, they said, then Jesus you should agree with God's holy law in the punishment which should be brought to her because she had done this thing. They say – “Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned.” “But what do You say, Jesus?” If Jesus did not agree that she should be stoned, then, they thought, then everyone would know that He did not come to keep the law or fulfill the law. He really would be seen as being against the law; He was an antinomian.

If He says that she should be stoned, then how can His statement be true that He had come not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved? They thought that they had Him in just the position that they wanted; the position of proving Himself not to be their Messiah. They thought that whatever He did, they would have something which they could accuse Him of. Well, what did Jesus do? It says in verse 6b that He stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear.” But, of course, He really had heard. So what was He

writing? Well, we are not told, but let me try to explain what I think that the Lord Jesus might have been doing. He could have been writing about Himself as the giver of the law, for it was His finger that wrote that law when it was first given on Mt. Sinai. Exodus chapter 31, and verse 18 – “And when He had made an end of speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony, written with the finger of God.” In connection with the law, He could have been writing down their need to present two or three faithful witnesses to establish the truth. And in regard to the breaking of the law, He could have been writing down the sins that these men were committing in their bringing this woman to Him in this way that they had.

We are not told, but we need to ask ourselves some questions. How could this woman have been caught in the very act of adultery, in the first place, unless somehow others knew what was going on, on this particular day and this particular time? And how could she have been caught in the very act of committing adultery unless some of these men who had brought her to Jesus knew beforehand that this sinful act would be taking place at that time, even that they were making their own plans in relation to that sinful act, to expose it? What? Did they have adultery police in Jerusalem? And further, where was the man who was also guilty of committing this sin of adultery? Why was he not brought before Jesus and the congregation as well? Had he simply escaped somehow? Had he actually helped them to stage this event? We do not know the answers to these questions, but we do know that their dragging her, guilty as she no doubt was, to be brought before Jesus in this way, was not the right way to proceed in the first place.

Yes, adultery had been committed. And certainly every sin deserves to be punished. And in the Theocratic nation of Israel, commandment had been given in the law in Leviticus 20, verse 10 – “The man who commits adultery with another man’s wife, he who commits adultery with his neighbor’s wife, the adulterer and the adulteress, shall surely be put to death.” The law was very clear, and these men were intent on finding out whether Jesus would have it enforced. Let us understand that the breaking of any of God’s moral law does deserve the punishment of death. And without repentance from such sins, a person will be cast in to hell. The reason that we have been given the law of God is to show us where we fall short, and what we deserve when we break it. But the law was also given as a schoolmaster to bring us Christ. These men who brought this woman to Jesus were hoping that He would tell them that she should be put to death.

But Jesus’ response shows us that He knew that not only did this woman need to be convicted and convinced of her sin, but that all of these men who brought her needed to be convicted of their sins, and repent of them, and believe in Him, if they were ever going to be saved, or righteously represent God’s law to others. And He knew how to effectually bring them to conviction of sin. “So, when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, ‘He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.’” “And those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last.” “And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.” Let us see from this that God has given us a conscience so that we will be brought to conviction of sin in relation to God’s holy law. The older that we live, the more sins we will accumulate. We are certainly not without sin, and therefore we need to look at our own hearts and lives before we insist on others being punished for their sins.

This doesn’t mean that the sins of people around us cannot be addressed or punished by a nation or a state, or that a church shouldn’t put sinning unrepentant members under discipline. These actions can be taken if those who legislate in government and those who prosecute and those who judge make sure that they themselves have dealt with their own secret sins in the sight of God, or it will only lead to hypocrisy and God’s judging them and sending them to hell on the Day when the secrets of men’s hearts will be revealed. God will also bring judgments on hypocritical nations. And so, we should each of us strive to have a conscience that is void of offense in the sight of God and men. Our conscience will commend us when we do right. These men knew in their hearts that they had committed many sins which, even though not known to others around them, were deserving of God’s judgment. They knew that they were not without sin. And so, they knew that

their conscience would only be assuaged if they left. And so that is what they did. Jesus was without sin and He could have cast the first stone. But He knew that this woman was trusting in Him. She would take refuge in Him. She now believed in Him. Let us come down front now and I will relate to you how this whole episode ended so well.

**3<sup>rd</sup> – I want you to see what these verses teach us about the greatness of our salvation in Christ.** (verses 10 and 11)

Verse 10 says – “When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, ‘Woman, where are those accusers of yours?’ ‘Has no one condemned you?’ ‘She said, ‘No one, Lord.’” “And Jesus said to her, ‘Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.’” We read here that the Lord Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground a second time, just before this. I believe that He was writing that, yes, she deserved to die, but that He was promising that He would die for this woman’s sins. You remember whose finger wrote the first set of the 10 commandments which were given to Moses? Yes, it was our Pre-Incarnate Lord. And do you remember what happened when Moses brought them down from the mountain to present them to the children of Israel. In the 40 days that Moses had been gone, they had grown tired of waiting for him, and so they had Aaron make them a golden calf, and they began to worship it, calling it the god who had led them up out of Egypt. Their sins were so great that when Moses saw them, he threw the tablets of the law down and broke them, to show them how greatly he was grieved.

In Deuteronomy 10: 1, however, we find God commanding Moses to once again, “Hew for himself two tablets of stone like the first, and come up to God on the mountain and to make himself an ark of wood. In verse 2 God says – “I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke; and you shall put them in the ark.” “So Moses made an ark of acacia wood, hewed two tablets of stone like the first, and went up the mountain, having the two tablets in his hand.” “And He wrote on the tablets according to the first writing, the Ten Commandments, which the LORD had spoken to him in the mountain from the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly; and the LORD gave them to him.” And then he turned and came down from the mountain, and when he got down, he put the tablets in the ark which I had made; and there they are, just as the LORD had commanded him.” What does this mean for us?

At the first writing of the Law upon the commandments of stone, when Moses brought them down from the mountain, he saw that the people had sinned, and they had sinned a great sin, and so he threw them down and broke them. But at the second making of the tablets of stone, Moses is instructed to put them in the ark. The ark is a type of our Lord Jesus Christ who had the law within His heart and fulfilled it perfectly on our behalf, and thus He became the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. This is what Jesus was doing when He stooped down and wrote on the ground the second time. He was writing that He would suffer and He would die for the sins of this woman and all who would trust in Him. And since it was the case that this sinful woman was now repenting of her sin and believing in Him, He says to her – “Woman, where are those accusers of yours? (Those representatives of the law) Has no one condemned you? “She said, ‘No one Lord.’” You see, the law is satisfied by the promise of Christ to stand in the place of sinners, both in fulfilling the law, and in suffering and dying for our sins.

And so, Jesus can say to her, “Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus; for those who are trusting in Him. But I want you to see as partake of this Supper the reason that Jesus died. He died so that we would go and live our lives to God and sin no more. This statement will be good for us to meditate upon as we partake of the Supper because we should understand that the Lord calls us to this high standard; to live in light of what He has done for us in obeying God’s law perfectly and in His suffering and dying on our behalf. It is that we would live our lives thinking of His perfect righteousness and holiness and that this would be our greatest incentive in living a godly and holy life before Him. When you become a Christian, you do not have to sin any more. You now have the power to do what is right, and you should pursue it with all of your strength, believing that our God

and our Christ would have us to be perfect as He is perfect, and holy as He is holy. May as many as are mature have this mind, and let us press on for the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

**Footnote regarding the authenticity of this passage** – It is true that there are some commentators who question whether this passage was ever in the original manuscript which John wrote; that it was somehow inserted into it later on, either by John himself, at some later time, or by some well-meaning scribe drawing from some other reputable apostolic source to supplement what John had written. For, this passage is not found in some of the ancient copies. Having looked for some explanation of this among the many commentaries that I peruse in preparation for preaching sermons, I came across this in the A. W. Pink's Commentary on John. He says – "First, if our passage be a spurious one then we should have to pass straight from John 7: 52 to 8: 12." "Let the reader try this, and note the effect; and then let him go back to John 7: 52 and read straight through to John 8:14." "Which seems the more natural and reads the more smoothly?"

"Second, if we omit the first eleven verses of John 8, and start the chapter with verse 12, several questions will rise unavoidably and prove very difficult to answer satisfactorily." "For example: 'Then Jesus spoke to them.' But when did He speak to them?" "What simple and satisfactory answer can be found in the second part of John 7?" "But give John 8: 1-11 its proper place, and the answer is, Immediately after the interruption recorded in verse 3. 'Then Jesus spoke to them again...' (verse 12)—unto whom? Go back to the second half of John 7 and see if it furnishes any decisive answer." "But give John 8: 2 a place, and all is simple and plain." "Again in verse 13 we read, 'The Pharisees therefore said unto him': this was in the temple (verse 20)." "But how came the Pharisees there?" "John 7: 45 shows them elsewhere." "But bring in John 8: 1-11 and this difficulty vanishes, for John 8: 2 shows that this was the day following."

He says – "As we shall examine these eleven verses and study their contents, endeavoring to sound their marvelous depths, it will be evident, we trust, to every spiritual intelligence, that no uninspired pen drew the picture therein described." "The internal evidence, then, and the spiritual indications (apprehended and appreciated only by those who enter into God's thoughts) are far more weighty than external considerations." "The one who is led and taught by the Spirit of God need not waste valuable time examining ancient manuscripts for the purpose of discovering whether or not this portion of the Bible is really a part of God's own Word."