

## Introduction

- When I was a little kid, we had these huge Christmases at my Grandmother who lived in Lenoir
  - There was all kinds of foods, especially chocolates, which I loved at that age.
    - I must have been around three years old
    - Because there is a picture of me with my face just covered in Chocolate
      - IT would be impossible to say that I hadn't gotten into the chocolates that day, I was caught red handed.
- There have been other times
  - I shared with you about the time I found that mug underneath my sink, I didn't know if it was good or not
    - But my wife told me to test it in the sink with water.
      - Did I do that?
        - No I fill that thing up with coffee to the brim and take it into the living room.
        - That;s where I decide to test it.
          - Soon, coffee colored liquid is cascading down towards our cream colored carpet.
- We all know what it's like to get caught, unfortunately.
  - IF you don't your day is coming, let me tell you.

## The Passage

- Now look in your Bibles at Chapter eight in John's Gospel
  - Most these days have a note about this particular passage
  - Turns out its not in some early editions, and it's in a different place in other editions
    - All you need to know is that scholars believe that this was excluded from John's Gospel for just a period of time making its way back in later.
- The passage is a good one though, isn't it.
  - IT protects us against overly malicious religious prosecutions.
- SO what's going on here?
- Well, the men accusers bring a charge against a woman to Jesus while he's teaching in the synagogue
  - Notice how people are always hovering around Jesus, looking tto him for answers

- Jesus is the way the truth and the life, remember, he is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
- The law they are referring to is found in a couple of places. [Deuteronomy 22:23-24](#) says, “If there is a betrothed virgin, and a man meets her in the city and lies with her, then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city, and you shall stone them to death with stones, the young woman because she did not cry for help though she was in the city, and the man because he violated his neighbor’s wife. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.” [Leviticus 20:10](#) says, “If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.”
- But the real reason the Jews bring him is that they’re hopeful to trap Jesus
  - The Jews don’t have the right to bring capital charges only the Romans could do that so these men are trying to get Jesus in hock with the Romans.
    - This is all a deliberate ttrap
- And they’re not even upholding the law very well,
  - They’ve only brought the woman.
  - Both the statutes they’re adducing require death for both the man and the woman.
    - Additionally, these two accusers must have warned their people ahead of time and catch them in the act.
- Imagine this also, these men are bringing shame on this woman not because they’re morally incensed but because they want to advance their own political ends

Jesus teaches here, doesn’t he?

- “*“Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.”*”

So who is guilty

- Well, the woman is, she’s been caught in adultery.
- But you know who else is guilty, Jesus is going to let them know.
- All of the religious leaders are guilty for bringing this charge

### **The Pharisees’ Problem: Blind to Their Own Sin**

- The religious leaders were experts in the Law. They knew the Scriptures inside and out, yet they were blind to their own sin. They were so focused on the woman’s failure that they failed to see their own.

- They were **selective** in their justice—where was the man? If she was caught in adultery, someone else was involved. But he’s nowhere to be found.
- They were **legalistic** rather than compassionate—using the Law as a weapon rather than a tool for restoration.
- They were **self-righteous**—seeing themselves as the righteous judges rather than sinners in need of grace.

### **Our Own Stones: The Sin of Judgmentalism**

We may not drag people into the public square, but we throw stones in other ways.

1. **We judge others harshly while excusing our own sins.**
  - We gossip about someone’s failures while ignoring our own struggles.
  - We criticize others for their parenting, their choices, their politics, their lifestyle—while ignoring the areas where we fall short.
2. **We assume the worst about others but expect grace for ourselves.**
  - When we mess up, we want understanding: *“I was having a bad day. I didn’t mean it.”*
  - But when someone else fails, we assume the worst: *“They’re just a bad person.”*
3. **We love justice for others but mercy for ourselves.**
  - We want the person who wronged us to face consequences.
  - But when we fail, we hope others will show us grace.

Jesus exposes all of this with a single sentence. *“Let him who is without sin throw the first stone.”*

### **The Reality: We Are All Guilty**

The Bible is clear—no one is righteous on their own.

- **Romans 3:10** – *“There is no one righteous, not even one.”*
- **Romans 3:23** – *“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”*

That means *you, me, and everyone we know* stand guilty before a holy God. If we were standing in that crowd, we would have no right to pick up a stone either.

But here’s the good news—**recognizing our guilt is the first step toward grace.**

If we refuse to see our own sin, we will never fully embrace Jesus' forgiveness. But when we admit our need for grace, we position ourselves to receive the mercy of God.

### **Application: How Do We Drop the Stones?**

#### **1. Examine Your Own Heart First**

- Before pointing out someone else's sin, ask: *"What about my own life needs addressing?"*
- Matthew 7:3-5 – *"Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?"*

#### **2. Replace Judgment with Compassion**

- Instead of condemning, ask: *"How can I help this person grow?"*
- Galatians 6:1 – *"If someone is caught in sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently."*

#### **3. Remember That You Need Grace Too**

- The same grace you need from God is the grace others need from you.
- James 2:13 – *"Mercy triumphs over judgment."*

Who Has the Right To Judge – Jesus

### **Jesus' Right to Judge**

Why does Jesus have the right to judge?

#### **1. He is sinless**

- Jesus is the only one in history who has never sinned.
- Hebrews 4:15 – *"For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin."*

#### **2. He is the fulfillment of the Law**

- The Pharisees used the Law as a weapon, but Jesus came to fulfill the Law with grace.
- Matthew 5:17 – *"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them."*

#### **3. He is the Judge of the world**

- John 5:22 – *"Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son."*

- But even though He has the right to judge, what does He do? He extends mercy.

## Why Didn't Jesus Condemn Her?

Some might ask, *"Is Jesus just ignoring sin?"* Not at all. Jesus is not saying, *"Sin doesn't matter."* He's saying, *"I have come to deal with sin differently."*

How? Through the cross.

### 1. Jesus Came to Save, Not Condemn

- John 3:17 – *"For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."*
- Jesus knew that in a short time, He would go to the cross and bear the condemnation she deserved.

### 2. Condemnation Was Coming—But on Jesus Instead

- The Law demanded death for sin. And Jesus didn't deny that punishment was required.
- But instead of condemning her, He would take her place on the cross.
- 2 Corinthians 5:21 – *"God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."*

### 3. Mercy Doesn't Excuse Sin; It Transforms the Sinner

- Jesus' mercy doesn't mean sin is okay. It means He offers a **way out of sin**.
- Romans 8:1 – *"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."*

## Three Aspects of Transformation After Forgiveness

### 1. A New Identity – You Are No Longer Defined by Your Past

Before this moment, the woman was known only as **"the adulterous woman."** She was defined by her worst failure. But after encountering Jesus, she was no longer just an adulteress—**she was a forgiven child of God.**

- **The world defines you by your past; Jesus defines you by His grace.**

- 2 Corinthians 5:17 – *“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”*
- When Jesus forgives you, **He gives you a new identity.**

### **Application:**

- Stop letting your past failures define you.
  - Walk in the truth that you are **a new creation in Christ.**
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## **2. A New Direction – Grace Leads to Holiness**

Jesus tells her, *“Go and sin no more.”*

- He doesn’t say, *“Go and be perfect,”* because perfection is impossible.
- He doesn’t say, *“Go and try harder,”* because transformation isn’t about willpower.
- He says, *“Go and sin no more,”* meaning: **walk in a new direction.**

### **What does this mean for us?**

1. **Turning Away from Sin** – True repentance isn’t just feeling sorry; it’s changing direction.
  - Acts 3:19 – *“Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out.”*
  - The woman had a choice: return to her old life or walk in obedience.
2. **Walking in the Power of the Holy Spirit** – Jesus never calls us to change without empowering us.
  - John 14:26 – *“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things.”*
  - Transformation isn’t about self-effort; it’s about the Spirit working in us.
3. **Living a Life that Honors God** – Forgiveness means we now live to reflect Christ.
  - 1 Peter 1:15 – *“As he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct.”*
  - We don’t obey to earn love; we obey because we **are loved.**

### **Application:**

- What sins do you need to leave behind?
  - Where is Jesus calling you to walk in holiness?
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### 3. A New Purpose – Redeemed to Be a Witness

The woman's story doesn't end with her leaving in silence. While John's Gospel doesn't tell us what happened next, we can imagine she had a story to tell!

- She walked into that place expecting death and walked out with a new life.
- She encountered **the grace of Jesus firsthand**.
- How could she not tell others what He had done for her?

**Forgiveness isn't just for you—it's for others to see God's grace through you.**

- Matthew 5:16 – *“Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”*
- A transformed life becomes **a testimony** to those who are still lost.

#### **Think about it:**

- The people in her town knew her story.
- They knew her past.
- Imagine the impact of seeing her changed by grace!

#### **Application:**

- Has God forgiven you? Then tell someone about it!
  - Your story could be what leads someone else to Jesus.
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