



No.27 The woman caught in adultery - no condemnation!

John 8:1-11

The pressure is really rising on Jesus now as the religious authorities are trying harder than ever to get rid of this threat to their rule, their popularity, and their control. Previously He had a very tough day answering questions from the Jewish leaders knowing they were trying to destroy Him. At the same time Jesus knew He had a job to do, to point these people whom He loved passionately to the Truth. He spent the night on the Mount of Olives while 'each went to their own home'. He knew He

had to draw close to His Father to receive wisdom, refreshing, love and grace, in order to have victory facing up to so much hatred from all those He had come to save.

He is in the Temple court early and teaching all the people, they were so hungry for His Truth. Life was tough for these people at this time, their own rulers were corrupt and religion was full of does and don'ts that they could never obey. Their hearts were crying out for the real relationship with God and this Rabbi seemed to have something special, besides the talk was all about the miracles He had been doing. Suddenly the Rulers break in on His talk, dragging this dishevelled woman in front of Him. This is a new plan of the rulers so they can trick Jesus and then arrest Him as a result of His reply. According to the Law of Moses this adulterous woman should be punished by death. But this cannot be done, since the Roman overlords have stripped Jewish leaders of the power to execute a criminal. If He does not condemn her He violates the Law of Moses. Jesus recognizes immediately that it is a set-up.

So the authorities by law should have made sure the male adulterer had also received the same treatment. As he was not in front of the rulers at this time it showed Jesus the real reason this woman was being dragged out publicly. She was terrified, hopeless, and messed up since she had disgraced herself and her family, and now faced the horrific death sentence. Stoning was a particularly brutal form of execution. The first stones had to be thrown by the witnesses to the adultery, and then after that each member of the community in which the two adulterers lived had to come forward and throw a stone. The thinking behind this was that, since every person in the community threw stones, no one person could be held responsible for the death of the pair.

Criticism

Pointing the finger at others has always been a comfortable way of shifting the blame from ourselves. In recent years many Christians have taken to being shocked at social injustice heard about on the web. We have difficulty speaking the love of God over a tyrant in a foreign country or a rich man's greed and thank God we are not like that, **Luke 18:13**. Yet we ignore it when we try to control our own positions in Church, at home or work, not realising when we point the finger there are three pointing back at us! Criticism is such a destructive force in our lives and so ungodly and full of pride. We think we are superior to all people we point at, and yet in our hearts we know we have the same problem but don't want anyone to know as we are not willing to deal with it. We are such ignorant children, if only we knew and believed the amazing love of our Father who gave Jesus so willingly to wash us clean. We would be so transparent to God and each other and have no thoughts or pleasure in the sins of others, and realise how long it has taken us to grow to where we are with Jesus. It is only Him who can change us, it is not our hard work that has changed us but His complete grace. This story urges us to examine our own lives and ask how we ourselves can be better people. This message is aimed directly at each one of us.

Jesus, well aware of the authority's motives, now saves an adulteress' life using the supernatural gifts of wisdom and knowledge. He knew all about the private lives of these men but He did not use it to condemn them. He walked in the supernatural love of His Father and kept His own motives pure. His own pure lifestyle must have been a point of great conviction to these men, and as He bent down and probably wrote women's names in the sand, they all left feeling they had been exposed for their hypocrisy.

Again Jesus protects, elevates and shows great love towards a woman. He certainly transformed the thinking of the men of His day towards women and showed them how women should be treated. He showed women that there **are** men who walk in obedience to the Word, so, by the power of the Holy Spirit, God will protect, provide for, and promote them, as He promises. If we are in a position of choosing a husband it is vital that we look for a man who is obedient to the Word and being led by the Holy Spirit, long before we enter into a close relationship with them. Praying together is a great way to check out a relationship for a

suitable husband. A good test for a Boaz quality man, rather than a 'Bozo' man are the five points from the 'Five languages of Love' by Gary Chapman.

1. Do they affirm you? Not shallow words to get you into bed.
2. Do they give you quality time? Not in front of the computer screen or TV.
3. Do they bring you gifts? Not expensive but well thought out.
4. Does he do acts of service? Or does he expect you to run round after him all the time.
5. Does he touch you gently and not sexually? Or is his touch always out of control and if you refuse does he try to get round you, become aggressive or sulk.

If you want to know more about Boaz read the beautiful love story in the book of **Ruth**. Surely if you are going to have a long-term relationship it is helpful to be speaking the right language of love.

If we are married as this lady probably was, it is so important that we do not listen to the lie that any man would be an improvement on the one we have. Every time we want to criticise our husband then choose to think about a good point in him and focus on that. If that is difficult remember the day you got together and some good points he had then! Guaranteed that any man has negative character traits and you have to take yourself with you if you have an affair and deal with the guilt and the effect on others. In this day we are not stoned physically for adultery, but so many women share how their reputation is ruined, so many relationships affected and can be so difficult to forgive ourselves, with so many broken promises.

God shows mercy to us when we least deserve it!

We are totally responsible and accountable to God for **our attitude** to all people who we know have fallen into any kind of sin. As Jesus shows mercy to this lady and says the most exciting words any of us will hear - '**Neither do I condemn you**' so we also have no right to do anything but show mercy to every person we live with, have fellowship with, and share our life with.

'His compassion never ends. It is only the Lord's mercies that have kept us from complete destruction. Great is His faithfulness; His loving kindness begins afresh every day.' **Lamentations 3:22-23**. If it wasn't for the Mercy of God, we would all be wiped out. Satan would love us to be wiped off the face of the earth before our time. Remember it over and over, so that we may stop ourselves from judging anyone. All the characteristics that God in His mercy shows to us, **we should show to others, Matthew 25:40-46**.

Mercy is shown in so many ways, Faithfulness, Love, Forgiveness, Grace, Kindness, Endless care.

Note "Since you have been chosen by God who has given you this new kind of life, and because of His deep love and concern for you, you should practise tender-hearted mercy and kindness to others." **Colossians 3:12**. Don't worry about making a good impression on people, but be ready to suffer quietly and patiently so they can receive mercy. We must die daily to our flesh and its own cravings, desires and opinions.

How do we show the mercy of God to others daily?

1. **Imitate Christ's** compassionate, forgiving attitude.
2. Let **love guide** your life, **1 Corinthians 13:4-8**.
3. Let the **peace of Christ** rule in your heart, and act as umpire continually, **Colossians 3:15 (Amp)**
4. Always be **thankful**.
5. Keep **God's Word** in you at all times.
6. **Live as Jesus Christ's** representative, **Luke 6:35-36**

Daily we must give sincere love to all people, especially in the body of Christ. This requires effort, time and money, and not just a superficial interest.

We know that God is full of mercy but we need to recall it everyday. If we constantly speak out the promises from **Psalms 103**. 'Father I come to You in the Name of Jesus and praise You as You forgive all my sin; heal all my diseases; delivers me from hell. You surround me with loving kindness and tender mercies; fills my life with good things; gives justice when I am treated unfairly and reveal Your will and nature to me'.

As we remind ourselves over and over of His great mercy to ourselves, we rekindle our hope and stir up our faith and make us more confident in God's love. We don't just need to know about God's blessings but we need to be **part** of them. As we agree with the Word, and our faith rises, we see these blessings come to us 'new every morning'.

Jesus does not condone what this lady had done, or dismiss her sin as unimportant, or understandable. He knows, and she does too, that what she has done is wrong. But He condemns the sin, not the sinner, and commands her not to sin again. This woman is called to change after one very close intimate contact with Jesus. He had saved her life and risked His own but now she would know true love.

No.27 The woman caught in adultery - no condemnation! Challenges Questions

Read all the notes about the woman caught in adultery – no condemnation

1. What spoke to you in the notes? How can you apply this to your own life? Is there anyone you could share this story with who may find it helpful?
2. As this situation of people committing adultery is very modern what should be our reaction? Is our reaction the same if the person caught up in it is a) our sister b) sister in the Church c) non-Christian friend d) politician?
3. Do you know where there is a lot of criticism? Do you feel God wants you to do anything about it? What?
4. From the points in the notes for finding a Boaz quality man, which do you find most helpful? Which point do you like for yourself?

Read 1 Kings 17:1-24

5. In what situation did Elijah find himself and what was the cause?
6. Who fed Elijah at this time? What was his food? What do you think would his reaction be to that food?
7. What was the instruction that the Lord gave to Elijah when the brook dried up?

8. As he arrived in Zarephath who did he meet and what was his request from her?

9. What was her situation and response to Elijah?

10. How do you think she must have felt in this situation? Do you know any situation where the person is down to their last meal? Do you think this is harder if you have children?

11. What instruction does Elijah give her? What encouragement does he give her and what will be the outcome?

12. Who has she to help first? Why do you think this was the instruction? How do you think you would feel if you were giving your child's last meal away? Would you do it?

13. What happened to the widow's son sometime later? What was her reaction to Elijah? **1 Kings 17:17**

14. What did Elijah do with the son? Who caused the positive outcome for this situation? Describe the woman's reaction?

15. Which other woman have we studied who had a similar miracle to this? Give reference for her story.

16. Looking over the whole story of this woman's life and relationship with Elijah what is outstanding for you?

17. Do you think her faith will have increased? Are there any points in the verses to back up your answer?