

The Adulterous Woman - John 8:2-11 Transcendent Series

2 Now early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him; and He sat down and taught them. 3 Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, 4 they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. 5 Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?" 6 This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear. 7 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." 8 And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. 9 Then 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. 10 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?" 11 She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more."
– PRAY

There was a young man who wanted to become a great writer

A) Somebody said, "Well define what great is."

B) He said I want to write the kind of stuff the whole world will read,

1) the kind of stuff that really brings people to an emotional response.

C) I want to write the kind of stuff that makes you scream and cry and howl in anger and pain.

D) Well he got his wish. He works for Microsoft writing error messages that come up on your computer

1) He moves people emotionally.

John chapter 8 is probably, to most people, a familiar text of Scripture.

A) It's one of the most loved or beloved stories of Jesus in the New Testament.

B) It is the story of a woman who was brought to Jesus who was caught in adultery,

1) She was brought by religious people and Jesus extends such mercy to her.

C) But it's also the story of Jesus writing something.

In fact, it's the only occasion the Bible ever records that Jesus wrote something down.

A) Now it wasn't permanent. He didn't write it on paper or parchment or in a computer.

B) He wrote it on the dust of the stones of the temple courts.

C) Today we are going to focus on what Jesus did and what Jesus said to both these people who brought the woman and the woman herself.

Before we do, I want to read something to you written by Phillip Shaff, one of the great historians of the church.

He says "Jesus of Nazareth, **without money and arms**, conquered more millions than Alexander, Caesar, Mohammed, and Napoleon.

Without science and learning, He shed more light on things human and divine than all philosophers and scholars combined. **Without the eloquence of the school**, He spoke such words of life as never were spoken before or since and produced effects which lie beyond the reach of orator or poet. **Without writing a single line**, He has set more pens in motion and furnished themes for more sermons, orations, discussions, learned volumes, works of art, and songs of praise than the whole army of great men of ancient and modern times."

I wanted to start with that quote because we are in this series – Transcendent – surpassing the ordinary

A) **Exceptional** – that is who Jesus is – He is excellent in the way he handles situations people and life

B) If you are a Christ follower today – Jesus is living in you – wants to live through you

1) See learn today of the heart of Jesus

The Scene:

A crowd has gathered – temple area -Jesus sits down and is teaching them that's when it happens

A)The temple was divided into 4 courts – Outer court – the Gentiles – on temple MT. – outside

B)The Court of the women – Large courtyard

1)Court of Israel – THE MEN

C)The Court of the priest - Only the priest

D)Jesus was in the court of the women – the only way they could bring this woman to him

1)He is teaching a morning Bible study

An intrusive interruption – the religious leaders come with a woman in hand –

A)They throw her down at the very feet of Jesus – declaring – she was caught in the very act of adultery

B)In my mind I picture her covered only in the bed sheet from the bed she was sinning in.

C)Make no mistake about it, the text is clear, these were not trumped up charges –

1)this woman was guilty, As the Pharisees put it, "caught in the very act".

It makes us though wonder what happened the night before.

A)How did the Jewish Pharisees catch her red-handed?

B) And if she was really caught in the very act of adultery – **where was the DUDE. – THE MAN...**

1)Some Bible commentators suggest that it was one of their religious friends –

C)How else did the Pharisees know exactly where to go to find a her?

D)Apparently, they **had trapped her to trap Jesus.**

The implications here are interesting...

Though guilty, this woman was the victim of a Pharisaical sting.

A)She had become a pawn in a bigger game - the bait to catch a bigger fish.

B)However it happened, the Pharisees brought this woman into the Temple & threw her down at His feet.

C)Jesus had been teaching God's truth. Interested ears were all around Him.

1)Suddenly there were angry voices - and a stern group of Pharisees marched into the circle w/ the woman

D)They threw her down in the dust like a piece of garbage.

They're barking accusations – their faces are scrunched up in disgust –

A)They're pointing fingers at the woman as if they were thrusting her through with little swords.

B)These are a *hostile bunch of so-called "holy men"*.

1) It's as if **blood is in the water**, and the sharks are circling for the kill.

C)They have stones in their hands – they are ready to render capital punishment on this woman

D)In Contrast to the Pharisees, there lies the woman

Picture her: Embarrassed – Shamed -

A)She is someone's daughter or perhaps someone's mother.

B)Now she is exposed – it is as if -A Scarlet letter A for adulterer is now plastered across her forehead –

C)It is interesting that the Bible doesn't tell us her name -

1)See God was not interested in embarrassing her- He is interested in saving her.

D)Jesus summarized His mission on earth in John 12:47, "I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world."

1) In John 8 we have an example of Jesus in action.

Notice v.5 again The Pharisees say, “Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?” And John adds, “This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him.”

A)The seventh commandment of the ten is you shall not commit adultery.

B)It was considered one of the three biggies to the Jewish people 2,000 years ago.

1)Idolatry, murder, and adultery were the three biggies.

C)In fact, it was such a heinous sin in God's eyes because it destroys the very fabric of the family

1) that it's one sin in the Old Testament that they command capital punishment for.

D)Two places: Leviticus 20 and Deuteronomy 22. Capital punishment.

Now There is no exact wording as to how it should be carried out.

A)But according to the Mishnah – the man made Jewish commentary on the law of God

B)the adulterer was placed knee deep in a box of manure.

1)Perhaps this was the origin of the expression "knee deep in trouble".

C)After being placed in the box of manure the victim was pelted with stones

1)until their face slumped into the slime.

D)After the execution a tree was planted in the box of manure to stand in the city as a testimony to the seriousness of adultery.

E)SO, a town with a lot of trees would be considered a "shady place"... in more ways than one!

So the Pharisees remind Jesus that the Law of Moses ordered for her to be stoned- trap was set

A)See on the one hand, if He refuses to execute the proper punishment the Religious leaders would label Him permissive – *soft on sin*.

B)Jesus really doesn't obey the Bible and follow the law of Moses.

C)On the other hand, If Jesus were to say yes, I agree with Moses and the Bible, stone her,

1)that would've instantly ruined His reputation as being the friend of sinners.

D)The compassionate Christ. The One who was merciful and forgave. Who said, *come to Me all ye who labor and are heavy laden, I will give you rest.*

E)He might as well have said, *come to Me all ye who labor and are heavy laden, and I'll make sure you're stoned*, if He would've said stone her.

On top of all of that the Romans had taken away the Jewish people's rights for Capital punishment

A)So if Jesus said stone her – and the religious leaders followed through –

B)Romans show up – they could blame it on Jesus

1)He told us to do it – Checkmate on all sides

C)Which would he choose?

Before we answer that question: - Put yourself in the story: Who do you identify with the most.

A)The woman or the Pharisees? – If you were in the crowd – saying – *Yea stone her? – your own rock?*

B)Or would your heart be filled with compassion

1)Would you be hoping Jesus showed mercy!

C)Unfortunately I see a lot of believers who are quick to pick up rocks –

1)Or instead of Rocks – *they are ready to throw Bible verses at people*

Been said: Christians are soldiers in an army -but we are the only army that shoots it's wounded.

A)When we have walked with Jesus for a while – it is easy – to become self-righteous

B)Easy to feel like we have it altogether – because we have had some victories

C)We are not struggling with the things we used to struggle with –

1)We ignore other sin issues in our lives.

D)We are no longer hooked on drugs – or some other vice – *but we are hooked on PRIDE.*

E) To me the saddest sight, is to see a person who's suppose to know the love of God *with a rock in their hand*.

Perhaps you have a hard time relating to this woman lying at the feet of Jesus, but I don't!

A) I can see myself lying right next to her – curled up beside her in the dust.

B) But for the grace and mercy of God, there go I!

C) I know what I am capable of apart from Jesus – ugly

1) I am capable - the evil thoughts that sometimes come out of nowhere and shock my sensibilities.

D) It only takes one bad decision to ruin your life

1) and I don't want to be so foolish to think – I am not capable of that.

E) If we are going to be extensions of Jesus to people trapped by sin in this broken world

1) We have to see them the way that Jesus does!

So the Trap is set – the religious leaders think that they have Jesus right where they want him.

A) It is a lose, lose situation – what is he going to do?

B) Jesus responds in a most unusual way, verse 6, “But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear.”

C) It is as if Jesus just starts to doodle – while he is thinking.

D) Understand, this is the only occasion in Scripture where it's recorded that Jesus wrote anything down.

1) But here He stoops and begins to doodle in the dirt.

E) Like a **backyard quarterback**, in the midst of the huddle, drawing a play in the dirt –

1) Jesus bends down and begins to write with His finger.

verse 7, “So when they continued asking Him...”

A) They start pushing Jesus for a response.

They're proud and presumptuous.

B) They don't realize that there are two types of sinners in this Temple this day...

1) There's a *sinner sulking* in the dirt, and there're *sinners seething* with rage.

C) There's a sinner who's been caught in the very act,

1) and there are sinners who have hidden their sin in their religious piety

D) The Pharisees don't realize that both the *unrighteous* and the *self-righteous* are equally guilty before the eyes of holy God.

E) Here the religious leaders are like a pack of rabid dogs waiting to attack their prey.

We're told, V.7 “(Jesus) raised Himself up and said to them, “He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.”

That is a devastating answer to their argument.

A) It suddenly raises the issue from a legal issue to a spiritual issue.

B) Jesus is not arguing about the Mosaic Law, He's not arguing about the seventh commandment,

C) He's not arguing about Roman versus Jewish justice.

He is saying you lack the qualifications to be her judge and her executioner.

A) There is one qualification that you need. If you want to do this, you have to be without sin.

B) There's only one person qualified in that group to do that and **to be that and who's that? Jesus.**

1) All of them are disqualified.

C) Why should we be people of mercy? We have been shown great mercy.

1) Why should we be people who are quick to forgive? We forgive because we have been forgiven so much

And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground.”

Of course, the intriguing question is, “what did He write?”

A) We're not told what Jesus wrote, but there's a clue imbedded in the original text.

B)The Greek word usually translated “wrote” is “*grapho*”, from which we get our word “*graphic*”.

C)But John adds a prefix to the word He uses here - the prefix “*kata*” which means “*against or in opposition to*” - “*katagrapho*” means “*to write against*”.

Some Bible commentators believe at this point Jesus began to write against these guys in this way

A)Names – dates – sins that they committed – he was exposing their guilt!

B)Joseph – Adulterer – Ehud – thief – etc

C)Many Bible teachers think that because of the response that we see in V. 9

9 Then 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

In one stroke Jesus stirred up the guilty conscience of the Pharisees

A)and gave hope to sinners everywhere!

B)Whatever Jesus wrote with His finger in the dirt that day, He showed that God was willing to get down **in the dirt for us.**

C)Note He stooped down to where the woman was
1) He did that when He left heaven came to earth.

The Pharisees had condemned this woman to death.

A)Their way of dealing with what's ugly and useless was to destroy it.

B)The Jewish remedy for sin was a stone, **but Jesus' remedy was a piece of wood, a cross!**
1)He would take our sin upon himself

C)Salvation happens when we realize we are sinners and we throw ourselves down at the feet of Jesus

1)Understanding that He paid the price for us – He took our punishment

D)In RETURN – He offers us HIS LIFE!

Let's consider how Jesus dealt with this woman. We're told, “And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.”

A)I love this scene – she had been thrown to the ground – embarrassed – condemned

B) Sitting there in the dirt as this whole exchange is happening – **But now we see her raised up**

1)**She is standing in the midst –**

C) That is what Jesus seeks to do with sinners
Raise them up – **New life – New Start - What a scene!**

1)For maybe the first time in her life, she's had a man stand up for her.

D)He took her side over the religious crowd.

Notice also it says that Jesus was left alone with her

A)Now this is a public square – not a back room somewhere –

B)But the idea is he is dealing with her on a personal level. – Not the crowd here

1)It is just Jesus and the woman

C)Reminder: Jesus is interested in relationship with each of us – Knows us – personally

1)Know Him personally

3rd thing: He treats her with Respect

10 When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, “Woman,

A)Woman = Gune – what Jesus called his mom – term of affection and endearment. And respect

B)He doesn't call her a slut or a whore – or anything derogatory at all. – Woman Gune –

1)You have worth – you have value

Woman where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?”

C)Verse 11 records the woman's simple, joyous reply, **“No one, Lord.”**

Jesus lifted her up, and restored her dignity, and treated her like a real person.

A)In a single act, Jesus returned her virtue, and gave her life value.

B) His love disarms her and **unlocks the padlock** of her heart. –

4th He speaks a word of Grace to her - "Neither do I condemn you

A)The only one who had the legal right to condemn her and stone her – bc he was sinless

B)Says – I don't condemn you!

But I also want you to notice Jesus isn't soft on her sin. Go and sin no more."

A)He calls it what it is – Sin – not a mistake – not an affair –

B)He didn't call it a hang-up or a disease or an alternate lifestyle or a mistake--He called it sin.

C)It's an offense against God. And He also gave her a command. He said, **"Go and sin no more."**

The tone was not harsh – it wasn't a warning – You better not ever do that again – or else!!!!!!!!!!!!

A)He was speaking a word of life and freedom to her

B) **"Go and sin no more."**

1) **You don't have to live like that anymore.**

C)**This is what Jesus does for us!**

1)Freedom in His love

D)Offers you today – Freedom and Power over sin

³² And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

E)Truth about who Jesus is and what He came to do – the Life He offers

³⁶ Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.