



John 8:1-11

The authenticity of the passage?

Our approach and goal...

What we want to see in this passage is that Jesus is much nicer to serious sinners than many of us dare to be

An outflow of a key theological component of the Missio Christi

John 3:16-17

16 For God **so loved the world**, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

17 For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

Jesus was on a **mission of mercy** to set people free

- He has sent me to proclaim **release** to the captives...  
To **set free** those who are downtrodden,  
To proclaim the **favorable** year of the Lord. (Luke 4:18 and 19)

What Jesus did not read was the rest of the passage from Isaiah 61:2

- To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord, and **the day of vengeance** of our God...

The **day of vengeance** is coming, but it is still prophetic (future)

- A day when every wrong will be made right and every injustice will be dealt with
- **NOTE: In a way, justice is still prophetic**
  - Though we work for justice wherever we can in human relationships
  - We must realize that we are living in the "**favorable year of the Lord**"
    - The age of grace
    - "... the kindness of the Lord leads you to repentance." (Ro 2:4)
    - What we are called to be is people who **dispense, disperse** the grace of God
      - 1 Peter 4:10  
As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as **good stewards of the manifold grace of God**.

God has made us stewards of **His grace** (underserved favor and kindness)

This is a key area where we seem to be failing

National surveys have revealed that 87% of non-Christians see Christians as judgmental<sup>1</sup>

- And yet, **God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world**
- Did Jesus send us into the world to judge the world? No. (prophetic element)
  - (next week we may talk about how to and how not to judge)
- But for now = **stewards of grace**

What Jesus displayed to the worst of sinners was the grace/kindness of God

The difference between the religious leaders and Jesus was that they were looking to condemn and Jesus was looking to **set free**

- How do we see people?
- Jesus saw a very bad woman in very bad need of mercy
- We are often **reluctant missionaries** like **Jonah** (See Jonah 3:10-4:11)

Another difference is that the religious leaders cared nothing for the woman while Jesus cared wildly for her

- **v. 4**
- Where is the man? The Mosaic Law required both parties to be out to death
  - Deuteronomy 22:22 (Cf. Leviticus 20:10)  
**If a man is found lying with a married woman, then both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman, and the woman; thus you shall purge the evil from Israel.**
- They were (1) guilty of having a double standard, and (2) violating the law by doing so
- They also had ill motives: They wanted to trap Jesus (**v. 6<sup>a</sup>**)
  - The dilemma before Jesus: **His message of repentance and forgiveness is at stake? What does it look like?**
  - **They were merely using the woman to do so**
    - They were about an agenda and not the person...

○ Another key perception of Christians by non-Christians is that we are "insensitive to others"<sup>2</sup>

- **Jesus seemed determined to show compassion and care toward people**
- **And note this:** Toward people who did not deserve it
  - It would be meaningless if they deserved it
  - Luke 6:32-33  
**32 If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.**  
**33 If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.**

Jesus was relationally oriented while the religious leaders were rule oriented while

That does not mean that Jesus disregarded the Mosaic Law!

<sup>1</sup> David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons, *UnChristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks About Christianity... and Why it Matters* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 97.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

- He upheld it perfectly (Had to die in our place)
- He did not negate the Law here
- **Vv. 5-7**
  - **He was willing to have the Law of Moses carried out to its full extent, but He knew that there was more going on here than a strict application of the Law**

Jesus here is subtly challenging the nature of justice

- Is it always a strict and immediate application of the law that is right? (as good as that may be)
  - Is that what God does with you? Do you always get what you deserve immediately?
- Or can we think of the **prophetic definition of justice** found in the **servant songs of Isaiah**?
  - Concerning the Suffering Servant the Lord said in Isaiah: (Will not and will)
    - **A bruised reed He will not break, and a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish; He will faithfully bring forth justice.** (Is 42:3)

### The religious leaders wanted a strict and immediate application of the law...

- Jesus fights for compassion for the bruised reed and the dimly burning wick that He sees in the woman before Him
- Each seeks "**justice**"
- Which should prevail?<sup>3</sup>
- **Are we justice oriented or compassion oriented?**
  - **Because Jesus was able to look forward to His work on the cross for this woman**
    - **He was able to show radical compassion and extravagant mercy**
      - (She did not deserve it—we get that) (She deserved to die—please know that)
      - Jesus was not easy on sin (cross was not easy)
  - **Because we are able to look back to the cross, and forward to a day when God will right every wrong and justice will be served**
    - We are able to show radical compassion and extravagant mercy
    - (Historic and prophetic view of justice)

We do not need to compromise on truth in order to show compassion

- The most important truth is that: **For His glory, on the Cross, Jesus died in the place of sinful humanity, in order that He might set us free from the law, sin, death and the devil**

Jesus had a compassionate orthodoxy

- **My conversation at lunch with John Piper about liberals and the emerging church**

<sup>3</sup> Kenneth E. Bailey, *Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes: Cultural Studies in the Gospels* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Books, 2008), 234.  
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Our faulty thinking is that unless the rules are applied fast and hard no one will fear or obey God

- That may be true with your two year old, **but is that true for humanity?**

Apparently not:

- Jesus frees the woman from condemnation (hard and fast application of the rules) and then says "**sin no more**"
- He actually thinks this will work!
- This is the Gospel
  - **The gospel is not "you do," but "Jesus did." Obedience follows & is empowered by the Spirit.**<sup>4</sup>
- Psalm 130:3-4
  - 3 **If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?**
  - 4 **But there is forgiveness with You, that You may be feared.**
  - **His kindness leads us to repentance** (a changed mind and changed behavior)

**"The Gospel spreads best not through force, but through fascination."**<sup>5</sup>

He has made His wonders to be remembered;  
The LORD is gracious and compassionate. (Psalm 11:4)

Because what this kindness, this mercy, this **grace that fascinates** does (through the cross) **is it sets us free!**

### Verses 10-11

- The sentence of condemnation, though demanded by the Law of Moses, had not been pronounced against her
- It is not so much that she was getting off the hook per say, as it was that Jesus was getting on the hook
  - Colossians 2:14 (NLT)  
He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross.
  - Romans 8:1-2  
Therefore there is now **no condemnation** for those who are in Christ Jesus.  
For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus **has set you free** from the law of sin and of death.
  - Romans 8:3  
For **what the Law could not do**, weak as it was through the flesh, **God did**: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin...

<sup>4</sup> Ed Stetzer Tweet 3.19.10

<sup>5</sup> Shane Claiborne & John M. Perkins, *Follow Me To Freedom: Leading and Following as an Ordinary Radical* (Ventura, Ca.: Regal 2009), 105.

**Are we compassion oriented (looking to set people free)?**

- Or are we justice oriented (looking to see people pay for what they have done)
- Reluctant missionaries like Jonah

**Are we relationally oriented (caring about and sensitive to people's stories)?**

- Or are we rule oriented (concerned about the hard fast application of rules without a view of the cross and Christ's coming)

**Do we care little for people (and their plights and stories)?**

- Or do we listen carefully and therefore care wildly for people

Listening to people's stories seems to change how we feel about them

- My experience in gay bars in Chicago... and in Carpinteria

**Would it change how we feel about key issues of the day that connect with biblical principles, if we took the time to understand people?**

- Jesus understands people (He knows their hearts)
- But He also seemed to take time to listen to them
  - One of the major accusations the religious leaders had against Him was that He dined with the worst sorts of people (Cf. Mark 2:15, etc)
  - I am just assuming their was conversation going on

Would it affect how we dealt with issues like homosexuality and immigration if we took time to listen to people and know their stories

Not that their stories change the Biblical story

- But their stories are in some way the biblical story (Cf. John 8)

Can we have a kinder, gentler orthodoxy? **Jesus had a compassionate orthodoxy**

**Psalm 103:1-13**