

## A Stones Throw Away

### I. Slide1 **Announce:**

- A. Slide2-7 Larry: Camps. Children's. REAL. Prayer Guide. Baptism. UPG's update.
- B. Slide8 Sun Night Prayer Tonight.
- C. Slide9 Every Mind Matters: Wed May29th, Kay Warren. *A Talk About Hope 4 Mental Health*.

### II. Slide10 **Intro: A Stones Throw Away**

- A. Watch closely, *the darkness of the world being met by the Light of the world*. (8:12)

### III. Slide11 **FAILED ATTEMPT TO ARREST JESUS (7:40-52)**

- A. This section is a pretty straight forward text.
- B. (51) Nicodemus defending Christ's legal privileges.

### IV. Slide12 **TEXTUAL CRITICISM (7:53-8:11)**

- A. Do you see in your bibles above the text [The Earliest Manuscripts do not include 7:53-8:11].
  1. Don't let this scare you, this is so so rare in your bible.
  2. There is a branch of biblical studies called *textual criticism*.
    - a) The story is missing in the Greek manuscripts of John before the 5th-century.
    - b) The text can flow from 7:52-8:12.
    - c) When the story starts to appear in manuscript copies it shows up in 3 different places (Jn.7:36, 7:44 this, 21:25 & in Luke 21:38).
  3. The few times these texts are found, they do not change any Christian faith, practice, or doctrine. **Actually** we can be **thankful** that God has in His sovereign providence watched over the *transmission process* for over 2000 years.
  4. **Most agree, it has historical accuracy** (it happened). Most just aren't sure if it should be placed here (prob after Luke 21:38).
  5. This story is at the least...an **echo** and a **pointer** to other parts of Scripture.
    - a) It fits perfectly into the story of what the Pharisees have been trying to do, **to test Jesus to see if you will contradict the law**.

b) **This is the *prevalent message*** of the NT.

6. Early Christian writers mention this event as soon as the early 2nd century. We have every reason to believe that this actually happened.

## V. Slide13a **THE WOMAN CAUGHT IN ADULTERY (7:53-8:11)**

- A. This little story captures magnificently both the gracious, forgiving spirit of Jesus & His firm call to the transformation life. I believe in our text is the most precious & sensitive statements & show of love spoken & displayed to any woman in the bible. Why did Jesus treat her so gently?
- B. There's always so much more to these stories - Was she victimized as a little girl over & over growing up? Was she a woman abused by her husband? Was she searching for love in all the wrong places? Was she sexually broken? Was she one who would sell love for a price, but had none to give? Would she forever confuse love with sex? These can be so very painful.
- C. Slide13b The woman's walk of shame... *guilt, caught, embarrassed, humiliated, judged, used and abused, labeled, failure.*
- D. Problems with this story? Both of them deserved to die says Lev.20:10...
1. Slide14a *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.***
    - a) Judaism's 3 gravest crimes: *idolatry, murder, adultery* were all punishable by death.
- E. (5) The horns of a dilemma: If He says, *no don't stone her*, as the law required, He could be charged with being a lawbreaker. If He says, *yes stone her*, the wrath of the Roman Government would come upon Him.
1. Slide14b Do you *kill the woman or kill the Law?*
- F. Let's make it clear... *Adultery* is a very grievous sin.
1. It has destroyed homes. It made God's top 10 chart. It was in fact so serious it was a **capitol offense**.
  2. *I wonder how the children of parents who divorced, because their mom or dad had an affair, feel about this woman?*

3. This story does not a wink at sin. He addresses it. She is not a victim but a willing participant. There was a pattern of sin, *Go & sin no more*.
- a) *Don't commit adultery anymore*. Not mainly because you fear **stoning**. But because you have met **God**, and have been rescued by **His grace**, saved by **grace**.
- G. I say we stop calling this, *The woman caught in Adultery* (cuz its really not about adultery). But instead, *The men caught in self-righteous hypocrisy*.

## VI. Slide15a THE MEN CAUGHT IN SELF-RIGHTEOUS HYPOCRISY

- A. See, the most offensive sin described in this story is not the **adultery**; it's the *malice, arrogance, and ignorance* of the Pharisees to use the sin of another person, for personal gain, while ignoring the sin that resides *in their own heart*.
- B. (6) The *self-proclaimed guardians of righteousness* must have set up this sinful rendezvous to spring the trap.
1. How did they catch her any ways? Voyeurism (peeping tom's/Pharisees)? How long did they watch? Going in & grabbing her naked, not 1 sinful thought?
  2. They're *using her*, just like all the rest of the men. *To them she had no name, no personality, no heart, no feelings, no soul. She was simply an expendable pawn in their strategy to corner Jesus into checkmate.*<sup>1</sup>
    - a) This woman was the **bait**. The **hook**, the Law. The **fish** they were trying to catch... Jesus. And Jesus silence must have been *deafening*. The drama, *intense*.
- C. Slide15b The religious leaders walk of shame - one by one the rocks thud to the ground. The vigilantes retreat home, heads hung in **shame**, or at least in **defeat**.
1. If those who are the **religious elite** are **closest to God**, why is it that they are **so rarely** closest to **love**?
    - a) If *God is love*, those who *know God best* would *love people most*.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Charles Swindoll, John 8, pg.26.

<sup>2</sup> Erwin McManus, Entry #13 Soul Cravings.

- D. What if it was a *different* sin? What if she was a lesbian, *or* a woman who had an abortion, *or* a drunk driver, *or* a prostitute? That just might put the *pharisaical shoe* on the other foot.
1. Would **you** be a little more reluctant to drop your stones? A little more ready to condemn? A lot less glad to hear Jesus say, *Neither do I condemn you.*
  2. Which sin do you consider unforgivable? *Or* at least would want to believe it's unforgivable? (maybe because you were a victim to it?)
- E. These men are fortunate the title/pericope isn't called, *The Revenge of Jesus!*
1. *Slide15c* Jesus had already said in 3:17, *For God did not send His Son into the world to **condemn the world**, but that the world through Him **might be saved.***
- F. I say we stop calling this, *The Woman caught in Adultery.* *But*, *The Men caught in self-righteous Hypocrisy.* *Or*, *The Savior caught in Compassion.*

## VII. *Slide16a* **THE SAVIOR CAUGHT IN COMPASSION**

- A. Jesus stooped down & wrote on the ground w/His finger -
1. How healthy to stop & collect thoughts before you speak. This is the only thing Jesus ever wrote. (in scripture)
- B. (7) He who is w/o sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first -
1. *Slide16b* Deut.17:7 says, *The hands of the witnesses shall be the first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So you shall put away the evil from among you.*
    - a) So Jesus merely forces these legalists to go strictly by the law.
    - b) He makes only 1 qualification...that *they take a look at the log in their own eyes before they try to take the speck out of somebody else's.* Mt.7:1-5
- C. (8) Did He write on the ground to remind them of *the tablets of stone, written w/the finger of God?* Ex.31:18 [*here* the finger of God writing in dust, *there* the finger of God writing in stone]
1. *Slide16c* *Or* to remind them of Jer.17:13? *Those who depart from Me Shall be **written in the earth**, Because they have forsaken the Lord, The fountain of living waters.*

2. Some say it was normal for rabbis to just *draw geometrical shapes* on the ground as they are thinking/waiting to respond.
- D. Even when others try to force Jesus into *meanness*, He would not allow it.
1. If there was ever a perfect opportunity to bring down the wrath of God on a sinful woman, it was right then.
  2. Of course **she** should be stoned. **And YOU** should be stoned. **As** should I.
    - a) *Slide17 But then she hears a voice of HOPE, which should be one of the markers of a NT community.*<sup>3</sup> Erwin McManus
- E. I say we stop calling this, *The Woman caught in Adultery*. **But**, *The Men caught in self-righteous Hypocrisy*. **Or**, *The Savior caught in Compassion*. **And...** *The Forgiven caught in Grace*.

## VIII. Slide18a THE FORGIVEN CAUGHT IN GRACE

- A. (9b) **What a contrast she & Jesus make:** The guilty & the **Guiltless**. The adulteress & the **Advocate**. The sinner & **Savior**.
- B. Her heart must have been *pounding, deep breathes, flush*. **Then** He speaks. He said to her, *Slide18b WOMAN...not sleaze, not sad-excuse-for-a-lady, nor home-wrecker*.
  1. But with **respect & love**, He uses the same word He'll later use for *His own mother, WOMAN*.
  2. *Slide18c* He said to her, **Surely a sermon** must be gathering momentum. **But no sermon comes**.
    - a) *Moms & dads, we can all learn from that.*
- C. **Has no one condemned you?** *No one, Lord*. [Rm.8:1 *there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus*]
- D. (11) When everyone had left, Jesus addressed the woman's 2 greatest needs: **Forgiveness** & a challenge to **Holiness**.
- E. Jesus, full of *grace & truth*...**forgives** the sinner w/o **condoning** the sin.

<sup>3</sup> Erwin McManus, Unstoppable Force, pg.162.

1. Slide19a Neither do I condemn you...wait, wait, wait! How does Jesus get out of **not** stoning her, as the Law clearly said! Remember, *the wages of sin death*.
  - a) But because of Christ's substitutionary death, God would treat Christ like He lived her life; & would treat her like she lived His life.
  - b) Jesus doesn't blow-off her sin...He goes to the cross for it. Jesus doesn't blow-off her sin...He smears the mud of her sin on His clean righteous soul.
- F. Slide19b Go & sin no more? (like sinless?) - Imagine Jesus saying, *go and sin a little bit less than you're used to*.
  1. Go & sin no more - or, Go now & leave your life of sin. Come to Him for grace, and set your face to sin no more.
  2. Slide19c You are a woman. Go leave your life of sin. Live like a woman. Live like a dignified, forgiven, cleansed woman. Go live that life.
- G. So I guess we can say...
 

*What these guys meant for evil Christ meant for Good.*

*What these guys meant for death Christ meant for Life.*

*What these guys meant for wrath Christ meant for Mercy/Grace/redemption.*

  1. And we received the same.
- H. You have been caught in \_\_\_\_\_. Have you heard...neither do I condemn you???
- I. If this story reveals 1 thing it's the truth that, *the safest place for a sinful person to go, is to JESUS*.
  1. The story reads like **a modern soap opera** with all of its immoral activities. But at the core of this incredible story is what happens when a sinner is placed at the feet of the Savior. It's where we must all find ourselves in order to experience is incredible promise of forgiveness, grace, & eternal life.
  2. He will neither condemn us, nor leave us in our brokenness.
  3. Slide19d The woman realized: God wanted her. Jesus was her place to belong. Grace gives her a fresh start. Love gives her a reason to live. (have you realized this?)
- J. Slide19e I titled my message *A Stones Throw Away*, because we are all *A Stones Throw Away* from judgment and *A Stones Throw Away* from grace. Depending on which voice

we're listening to (the critic or The Christ).

- K. I love the story of a **young lady** who **migrated** to the **United States from Cuba**. Being a devout **Catholic** she wanted to attend **confession**, and she wanted to confess her sins in English to the priest. She had a friend translate her list of sins in English by writing the words out phonetically, so she could say them using her limited knowledge of the English language.
1. Taking her place in the confession booth, she said the first phrase that she had memorized. With a thick Spanish accent, she said "*Father, forgive me for I have sinned.*" Then she looked down at the list, but it was too dark in the booth for her to read it. She said again hoping her eyes would adjust to the dim light, "*Father, forgive me for I have sinned.*" Then in *obvious frustration*, she said in Spanish, "**I cant' see my sins.**" To which the priest said in Spanish, *You are forgiven. Go and sin no more.*
- L. **Prayer:** Thank you Lord for catching us in our sin. We **deserve** the *full weight of the Law*, yet we are blessed with the *full strength of Your Grace*. *We can't see our sins!*
1. Jesus You took **the rock** in your own hand & cast it upon **Yourself**. TY