

The Gospel of John

8:1-11

Welcome back to this week's study in the book of John.
As with this study and all bible studies, remember to pray before you start.

✚ **John 7:53 & 8:1-2** *And everyone went to his own house.
But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. 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.*

You may be wondering why we have verse 53 of chapter 7 included in this week's study. Well remember last week when we ended, I said that I sometimes wonder why some chapters or verses are broken up the way they are. After all, man did this, not God. There are no chapters and verses in the original manuscripts. Man did this to make it easier to memorize and reference scripture.

I think it's a good thing, but sometimes I have to wonder why they stopped where they did. Case in point is beginning with chapter 8 here.

Looking at the first verse it says: ***But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.***

Yea, from where? To find out, you have to go back to chapter 7. As you will remember the end of the chapter 7 we read that it was the end of the feast of tabernacles and the religious leaders were upset because the officers didn't arrest Jesus. Also Nicodemus stood up for Jesus and what He was teaching. At this they rebuked and challenged Nicodemus.

✚ **John 7:52** *They answered and said to him, "Are you also from Galilee? Search and look, for no prophet has arisen out of Galilee."*

After that came verse 53 *And everyone went to his own house.*

Which is fine, but then verse 1 in chapter 8 says again; ***But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.***

I think you get the point, but if it was me, I would have ended chapter 7 with verse 1 of chapter 8.

Now that I have wasted a half page of your paper, let's get started in this week's study again.

✚ **John 8:1-2** *But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. 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.*

Remember last week there was a little ruckus or arguing about who Jesus was.

† **John 7:40-43** *Therefore many from the crowd, when they heard this saying, said, "Truly this is the Prophet." Others said, "This is the Christ." But some said, "Will the Christ come out of Galilee? Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, where David was?" So there was a division among the people because of Him.*

But here it is the next day and they are all together again wanting to listen to Jesus teach. They may have not understood who Jesus was, but they knew He was from God, whether a prophet or the prophet as it is put, or the Messiah.

Either way, they knew Jesus was speaking on God's behalf and they wanted to hear what God had to say.

I love listening to teaching and preaching from various pastors throughout the day (I am blessed to be able to do this at work), but some times my greatest times in the word are when it's just the Lord and me, as I sit there and read His word, and listen to what God has to say to me through His word.

Now there is nothing wrong with listen to teachers and pastors, I really learn a lot by doing this and I would encourage all of you to listen to different pastors throughout the day or week.

But sometimes God has things He wants to say to you personally that cannot be said through any pastor or teacher.

It's like a man and woman, a man can quote all the romantic poems he wants to his wife, but sometimes she just wants to hear words from his heart and not someone else's.

The people here where so used to hearing the Jewish leaders teach, that they where just hungry to here from God and not man's point of view. So they all return to hear from God through Jesus Christ, because they knew Jesus' words where not His own, but that He was the mouthpiece (so to speak) of God Himself.

† **John 7:46** *The officers answered, "No man ever spoke like this Man!"*

† **John 6:68** *But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.*

So we now have the setting. Jesus goes up to the Mount of Olives, which we know He did often to spend time alone with God. He now returns the next day to the temple and the people are sitting or standing here listening to Jesus teach, and in the middle of Jesus' teaching there is a disruption. What is this disruption? None other than the Scribes and Pharisees.

✠ **John 8:3-6** *Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?" 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.

I know your first question is, “*What was Jesus writing?*” we will get to that in few minutes.

A couple of things we need to notice.

First the Pharisees brought the woman who was committing adultery, but where is the man? According to God’s law both the man and the woman are to be brought forth.

† ***Lev 20:10 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.*** (Underlined for emphasis)

It kind of makes you wonder who the man was? Is it possible that he was a religious leader or possibly someone who gave much in the weekly offering?

We don’t know, but it does give us something to think about.

Second thing is, how did they know there was an adulterous affair going on at that particular moment.

✧ ***Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act.***

Did they set up this woman just to try and trap Jesus? Once again we don’t know, but they made sure she was the center of attention.

✧ ***And when they had set her in the midst.***

We are so quick to point out sin in the church, until it’s us that are the ones committing the sin, and then we try our best to hide it.

So the religious leaders are now putting this woman and Jesus on the spot.

They are now questioning what Jesus was claiming in the last chapter, that He was God’s spokesperson.

✧ ***"Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?"***

“OK Jesus, if you are so in tune with God and only speak what God tells you, what is God saying now? After all, when God gave Moses the law, God said to stone this woman, right?”

✧ ***This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him.***

They tried everything to catch Jesus in a lie, or at least trying to catch Him speaking against the government or the law. Everything else had failed, so all they could do was setup a woman so that they could have justification for getting rid of Jesus. They didn't care that this woman was going to die for her sin. They wanted this Man, Jesus out of there.

We sometimes go on witch-hunts trying to find evil in the church or our town. The problem is that the bible never tells us to go seeking out sin, but rather we should seek righteousness.

† **Zeph 2:3** *Seek the LORD, all you meek of the earth, who have upheld His justice. Seek righteousness, seek humility. It may be that you will be hidden in the day of the LORD's anger.*

† **Matt 6:33** *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

"Look what she's doing."

"I heard that he did this."

"I wonder how they got the money for that?"

"Look at the way they are dressed, how could they call themselves Christians?"

"I know he's doing something wrong, I just can't figure it out, yet."

"I bet they are sleeping together."

Just a few examples of how we seek after sin, and I'm sure you can think of others, maybe even some you have said or thought or even done recently.

We judge according to appearance, if they are not dressed like everyone else, then they don't belong here. Let them go to that other church.

And as soon as we do find sin in the church, we are quick to let others know. We want to parade it around so that those who have committed the sin will leave; after all they are messing up OUR church.

It's like saying, *"Let's get all these sick people out of this hospital, so that others here can enjoy it"*

Even Jesus said the same type of thing.

† **Mark 2:17** *When Jesus heard it, He said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."*

Jesus called us to be fishers of men, but we want to clean them, and then catch them before we bring them to Jesus.

But Jesus said to just catch them, and He would do the cleaning.

† **John 21:9-10, 13** *Then, as soon as they had come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, "**Bring some of the fish which you have just caught.**"*
Jesus then came and took the bread and gave it to them, and likewise the fish.

But these religious leaders were not fishermen, at least not in the sense that Jesus taught us to be. You see, these were the type who would fish for sport. They were the ones who would mount their catch on the wall for all to see.

They had a big one here with this woman who was caught in adultery. They thought they were hot stuff because they found sin and brought it before the Lord. Maybe they were looking for brownie buttons from God. After all, they knew what sin was, they hunted it out and found it, and they knew what the law said. The only problem was that they didn't know the giver of the law and His mercy and compassion.

So what are we to do if we see sin in the church or another believer in sin?

First, go to that person in love; show them what the bible says. If they won't listen, then take two or three witnesses and confront the person(s) again. If he or she still will not listen, then it is brought before the church. The pastor usually does this, because he should be included in the two or three witnesses.

† **Matt 18:15-17** *Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.' And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.*

But these religious leaders skipped all the steps and went straight for judgment.

Now, Jesus could have lashed out at them, but instead He kept calm and silent and: ***But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear.***

Now the answer to the question that the world wants to know, "*What was Jesus writing?*"

The answer: I don't know; the bible doesn't tell us.

I know this sounds like a copout, but it's just what we have to accept. If you really want to know, I would make sure that you are a Christian so you can ask Jesus when you get to heaven.

So what do I think Jesus was writing?

Well, I can only think of two other times that we have a record of God writing.

The first is in the book of Exodus and Deuteronomy

† **Ex 31:18** *And when He had made an end of speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.*

† **Deut 9:10** *Then the LORD delivered to me two tablets of stone written with the finger of God, and on them were all the words which the LORD had spoken to you on the mountain from the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly.*

And what did God write? The Ten Commandments.

† **Ex 32:15-16** *And Moses turned and went down from the mountain, and the two tablets of the Testimony were in his hand. The tablets were written on both sides; on the one side and on the other they were written. Now the tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God engraved on the tablets.*

“So was Jesus writing the Ten Commandments?” I don’t know, but it is a thought.

“OK, so when is the second time?”

I’m not sure if this was God writing this, but it was God’s message.

† **Dan 5:1-6 & 25-28 (NLT)** *A number of years later, King Belshazzar gave a great feast for a thousand of his nobles and drank wine with them. While Belshazzar was drinking, he gave orders to bring in the gold and silver cups that his predecessor, Nebuchadnezzar, had taken from the Temple in Jerusalem, so that he and his nobles, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them. So they brought these gold cups taken from the Temple of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his nobles, his wives, and his concubines drank from them. They drank toasts from them to honor their idols made of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.*

At that very moment they saw the fingers of a human hand writing on the plaster wall of the king's palace, near the lampstand. The king himself saw the hand as it wrote, and his face turned pale with fear. Such terror gripped him that his knees knocked together and his legs gave way beneath him.

"This is the message that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN. This is what these words mean:

Mene means 'numbered'--God has numbered the days of your reign and has brought it to an end.

Tekel means 'weighed'--you have been weighed on the balances and have failed the test.

Parsin means 'divided'--your kingdom has been divided and given to the Medes and Persians."

Just a couple of thoughts, and as we read on, we may have a little enlightenment on what Jesus wrote.

✠ **John 8:7-9** *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." And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. 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.*

So Jesus is writing, but it seems they don't pay attention to what He is writing because they continue to hound Jesus about this woman.

So Jesus stands up and says very calmly: *"He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first."*

Now this could have been a dangerous thing to say, because even like today, there are people who think that they are not sinners, or at least as bad as others.

But Jesus isn't worried, He takes His eyes off of them and once again starts to write in the ground.

After Jesus says this and continues to write, they now take their eyes off of this woman and pay attention to what Jesus is writing, and the results are.

✠ *Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last.*

So Jesus may have continued to write the following:

I *You shall have no other gods before Me.*

II *You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.*

III *You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.*

IV *Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.*

V Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

VI You shall not murder.

VII You shall not commit adultery.

VIII You shall not steal.

IX You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

X You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's.

Ex 20:1-17

As each man reads these they start to realize that they have broken God's commandments. It says that it started with the oldest to the youngest. The oldest knew right away that he had disobeyed God's commands, whereas the younger, more cocky ones had to think about it for a while. But if anyone says they have never sinned, then they need to read God's Commandments again.

Also one other thought is that it went from the oldest to the youngest. You must remember that these are Jews we are talking about here, and as Jews, they were of the twelve tribes of Israel. So Jesus may have started with the tribe of Reuben pointing out their sins, all the way down to the youngest, which was Benjamin.

So as these guys leave, being convicted, it seems no one is left.

✧ **John 8:9b-10** *And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. 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?"*

Now you must remember there where a lot of people there who were listening to Jesus teaching. These people had stayed, but those who were so quick to judge and sentence this woman had all left with their heads hanging low.

Jesus knew these men had left, because the accusations became less and less as Jesus wrote on the ground, finally there was only silence, except for a woman still crying standing next to Jesus. She knew she was to be stoned and she may have heard of this man named Jesus. She knew she was a sinner and wondered how she would ever get out of this one.

She thought her only hope would be death.

She may have heard of how Jesus had healed many and even cast out demons from others. But she was different. She had willfully committed sin against God and His command. She had her fun and made her money for what she was doing, she now knew it was time to pay the piper (so to speak).

But to her surprise Jesus stands up and looks at her in only the way a father could to his child when they have messed up, with love in His eyes Jesus says, ***“Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?”***

And she responds.

✎ ***John 8:11 She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more."***

The only thing with reading is that we don't always get the emotion of the person.

In this case I think the emotion is too clear for us.

Here is this woman; possibly wrapped in a blanket because she was snatched out of the bed she was committing this adulterous act in. She is dirty from being dragged through the streets and fighting and trying to get away from her accusers as they drug her down the street up to the temple where Jesus was teaching.

They throw her on the ground at the feet of Jesus and say, ***“Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act.”***

There she lies in the dirt, wrapped in a blanket, trying to cover her sin with it. Her face is both dirty and muddy from the tears rolling down her face. Her tears mixing with the dirt causing trails of mud from her red eyes to her the bottom of her chin.

She knows this blanket cannot cover her sin as it is exposed to the world. Sure, everyone may know what type of woman she is, but she is finally facing what she had been doing for years.

With a shaky voice she answers Jesus, ***“No one, Lord.”***

Jesus picks her up, looks into her eyes and says, ***“Neither do I condemn you”***

What a nice story, that's the way we are used to hearing it, but did you notice that I left out five little words Jesus also said? ***“go and sin no more.”***

We seem to think that the Lord will forgive us, and the truth is that He does.

It's like when our kids mess up and we tell them we forgive them, but we also tell them not to do it again, if not then they would think that they could go out and do it any time they wanted to.

We tell people that they need to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior and to confess their sins to Jesus and they will be saved. Once again this is true, but Jesus also tells us to confess and repent of our sins, in other words it just what Jesus told this woman.

“Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.”

Salvation is a two parter.

Part one, confess your sins and believe in Jesus.

Part two, repent of your sins.

We don't really like that word "repent", just like we don't like the phrase: "Thou shalt not".

But like them or not, they are what God's word says.

† **2 Chron 7:14** *if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.*

† **Jer 36:3** *"It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the adversities which I purpose to bring upon them, that everyone may turn from his evil way, that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin."*

Do you call yourself a Christian?

Do others call you a Christian?

Do others know that God is your God?

God does hear your prayers and you are forgiven.

† **Psalms 86:5** *For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You.*

Maybe you want to stop certain sins that seem to have you bound. We shouldn't beat ourselves to death over sins that we struggle with. Instead we should confess them to the Lord and to others also so that they can help us and pray for us. If your heart is truly to stop that sin, God will deliver you, just as the Lord delivered this woman from her sexual sin that she was used to committing, probably on a daily basis.

One more quick thing to note about this week's study.

In some of your bibles, there may be a footnote that says that from 7:53-8:11 are not in the original manuscripts or not in most manuscripts.

Those who would want to get rid of this story are the ones who don't want you to realize God's mercy toward you.

This really did happen, regardless of what your footnote says; so don't brush off God's grace and mercy.

Next week we will continue in chapter eight.

May God richly bless you in His love, grace and mercy, and may you always remember that God is merciful and gracious and loving toward you and others.