



MESSAGE/SERIES:

Series: Jesus in John

Message: “Where are your Accusers”

Text: John 8:1-11

DATE: February 28, 2021

SCRIPTURE FOR THIS WEEK:

(These verses will help you understand themes within as you read our core text as scripture proves scripture)
John 8:1-11, Leviticus 20:10, Deuteronomy 22:22 (Adultery death), Deuteronomy 17:7 (Witnesses first stone), John 3:17-18 (Jesus came to save), **Romans 2:1-3, 14-16, 27-29, 1 John 3:20-24**, Mark 3:2, (Setting the trap for Jesus), **Matthew 9:1-8** (Jesus alone can forgive), Isaiah 45:3, Exodus 33:17 (a person focused ministry), **Galatians 6:1-5**

OPENING SCRIPTURE:

[John 8:1-11]

“They went each to his own house, ¹ but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. ² Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him, and he sat down and taught them. ³ The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst ⁴ they said to him, “Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. ⁵ Now in the Law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?” ⁶ This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. ⁷ And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, “Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.” ⁸ And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground. ⁹ But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. ¹⁰ Jesus stood up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” ¹¹ She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.”
The Holy Bible: English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Jn 7:53–8:11.

BACKGROUND & OTHER STUDY HELPS:

[SCRIBES] “John, who deals only with “Pharisees” and chief priests, nowhere mentions “scribes,” who are more frequent in the other Gospels; scribes functioned as teachers of the law.”

Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), Jn 8:3.

[TEACHING IN THE OUTER COURTS] “The outer court served as the venue for many scribes to gather their students around them and expound the law to them. Jesus used the same facilities, even if his content could not easily be compared with what the others taught.”

D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991), 334.

[MISHNAH] The Jewish codified law

“The Mishnah is a philosophical law code, produced in Roman-occupied Palestine ca A.D. 200. The first Talmud was formed in this area ca A.D. 400 and is called “the Talmud of the Land of Israel” or “the Jerusalem Talmud,” and, in Hebrew, “the Yerushalmi” (abbreviated TP in this encyclopedia). This Talmud covers thirty-nine of the Mishnah’s sixty-two tractates. The second Talmud was created in Babylonia (present-day Iraq) around Baghdad, ca A.D. 600, and is called “the Talmud of Babylonia,” and, in Hebrew, “the Bavli” (abbreviated TB in this encyclopedia). This one treats thirty-seven of the Mishnah’s sixty-two tractates, and not the same tractates as the other. Both Talmuds consist of a series of citations of paragraphs from the Mishnah and systematic, carefully drafted explanations of words and phrases of the Mishnah passage, followed by secondary expansions of principles of the Mishnah passage; these non-Mishnaic portions are called Gemara. Each Talmud may therefore be described as a commentary on the Mishnah, and both are organized in commentary form.”

J. Neusner, “Talmud,” ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Revised* (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1979–1988), 717.

[MISHNAH ON ADULTERY] “The penalty is strangulation, and even the method of strangulation is laid down. ‘The man is to be enclosed in dung up to his knees, and a soft towel set with a rough towel is to be placed around his neck. Then one man draws in one direction and another in the other direction, until he be dead.’” “The Mishnah

reiterates that death by stoning is the penalty for a girl who is betrothed and who then commits adultery.”

Barclay, W. (2001). *The Gospel of John*(Vol. 2). Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press.

[THE OMISSION OF JOHN 8:2-11 IN EARLY TEXTS] It is true that the early and best manuscripts of the New Testament do not include John 8:2-11. It is not doubted to be a true story about Jesus, but rather it was a risk in the culture as some would use the story to justify adultery as it was an issue in that day. We should not be worried about its inclusion in modern texts as it is a truthful story of the Lord Jesus and brings much insight for today.

[PHARISEES]- A JEWISH RELIGIOUS SECT- “Since *prš* can also mean “expound” (Jastrow, pp. 1241–44), there would be a connection between “Pharisees” and biblical exegesis. This view could be supported by Josephus’s statement that the Pharisees were “the most accurate exegetes of the law”

R. J. Wyatt, “Pharisees,” ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Revised* (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1979–1988), 822.

“The Pharisees held minimal political power throughout the Hasmonean era and into the Roman period, although at times (for example, during the reign of Salome Alexandra) their influence and power in the Sanhedrin rose. Phariseism essentially was a lay movement dedicated to obeying the Torah in daily life.”

Thomas V. Brisco, *Holman Bible Atlas*, Holman Reference (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), 212.

[SCRIBES] “A Scribe who was also an expert and authority on Jewish scriptures.”

David Witthoff, ed., *The Lexham Cultural Ontology Glossary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014).

“Along with the chief priests, these two groups are often associated in the Gospels. Some have denied that there is any relationship between them. Others have understood the scribes to be the Pharisees learned in the law or an elite amongst them. The phrase “scribes of the Pharisees” (Mk 2:16; Acts 23:9) indicates the probability that scribes were associated with various sects and associations within first-century Judaism”

Graham H. Twelftree, “Scribes,” *Dictionary of New Testament Background: A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 1087.

“‘Scribe’ occurs fifty-seven times in the Synoptic Gospels (and Jn 8:3 in some MSS). Twenty-one times they are mentioned with the chief priests and eighteen times with the Pharisees. The scribes are depicted as scholars and teachers of Scripture, the custodians of Jewish traditions, the major opponents of Jesus and heavily involved in his trial.”

Graham H. Twelftree, “Scribes,” *Dictionary of New Testament Background: A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 1088.

OUTLINE:

(Background concerning John 8:2-11)

The scene around this is placed after the feast of booths has ended. Jesus had been at the mount of Olives most likely in one of His times of prayer with the Father and has now returned to teach in the temple complex. Jesus is in the respected teaching position and the people are in a receiving position (Jesus seated and the people standing).

As late as Jerome and the Latin Vulgate Bible the story about Jesus and the adulterous woman as recalled by the apostle John was added to the record of the Gospel of John. God has seen fit to draw our attention to the placement of this story whether it is in its correct sequence or not as it reveals the heart of Jesus in concerns to the lost sheep, those that He came to seek and save from sin. We should not be concerned about the inclusion of this story and accept it as true and necessary for us today as God has provided this text a voice to speak into our lives today.

I. CALLED IN (v3-6a)

³“*The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been **caught in adultery**, and placing her in the midst ⁴they said to him, “Teacher, **this woman has been caught in the act of adultery**. ⁵Now in **the Law, Moses commanded us to stone such women**. So **what do you say?** ⁶**This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him.**”*

- A. **(v3) The Temple-** this lady was placed on display in the temple
 - 1. *We see sinners placed on display in the temple all the time*
- B. **(v3) The Scribes and Pharisees-** The teachers and Custodians of Jewish law are the ones who the people have appointed to interpret right from wrong
 - 1. *They taught in the temple complex daily*
 - 2. *They (Pharisees) were the group whose sole purpose was to see that the law was followed*
 - 3. *Due to these roles amongst the Jewish people, they appointed themselves the judge of right and wrong*
- C. **(v3) The Adulterous woman-** is brought before Jesus
 - 1. *Her guilt is never questioned by the Pharisees and scribes or the woman or even Jesus as she was caught in the act of adultery*

2. *The woman's name is most likely not known by the religious leaders*
 - a) It was never personal between the woman and the leaders
 - b) However, it's always personal for Jesus (He called people by name many times in scripture)
 - c) The religious leaders did not care about the people only the law and authority

3. *The woman was only a tool of the Scribes and Pharisees for the purpose of baiting Jesus*
 - a) Into law-breaking (Roman law forbid Jews to pass a death sentence on anyone)
 - b) Into contradicting peoples view of Him (as one of Grace and mercy)

D. (v4) The Law Commanded death-

1. *It is true that the Torah (first five books of the Bible/Law) commanded death for adultery*
 - a) **Deuteronomy 22:22-24** ²²“If a man is found lying with the wife of another man, both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman, and the woman. So you shall purge the evil from Israel. ²³“If there is a betrothed virgin, and a man meets her in the city and lies with her, ²⁴then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city, and you shall stone them to death with stones, the young woman because she did not cry for help though she was in the city, and the man because he violated his neighbor's wife. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.”

2. *The Mishnah would go into further detail even than scripture as everything was covered both sin and penalty*
 - a) The Mishnah (the Phariseeical view) was written by rabbis in postbiblical-Judaism (their interpretations and their wisdom recorded and imposed on the Jewish people)

3. *This woman is brought alone so therefore this woman is most likely a harlot and the man was not found*
 - a) This woman may be well known to many of the men of the city

E. (v5b-6) “...So *what do you say?* ⁶ **This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him.”**

1. They wanted Him to go against the Mosaic Law

2. The predicament they were trying to cause for Jesus was 3 fold
 - a) *If Jesus made light of the woman's sin he would set Himself against the law*
 - b) *If Jesus said she was guilty and deserving death he sets himself against the Roman law which restricted any Jew power to pass or carry out judgment on anyone*
 - c) *If Jesus did pronounce judgment He would do great harm to his image as being "Gentle and Lowly" Matthew 11:29*
 - (1) He had come to seek and save and not pass judgment on the trip to earth
 - (2) The next trip to earth will be as judge and to pass judgment

II. CALLED OUT (v6b-9)

"⁶Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. ⁷And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her."⁸ And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground. ⁹But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones"

A. Jesus doesn't answer right away-

1. *Jesus could have been just delaying to allow them to think*
2. *Jesus could have been writing something very specific as He writes in the sand*
 - a) "Write"= *graphein- to describe, to write*
 - (1) *Maybe Jesus wrote some of the ten commandments*
 - (2) *Maybe Jesus begins to write names*
 - (3) *Maybe Jesus wrote some of their specific sins down*
 - (4) *It may be that those there many were guilty of sleeping with this same harlot*
 - (a) *Needless to say, there is enough here to say that what Jesus wrote confronted the accusers with their own sin*

B. The Jewish authorities kept badgering Jesus for an answer as if they were the judges (which they truly believed)

1. *Jesus Stood to address them then stoops back down to write again*
 - a) *The sitting posture of teaching is mimicked here as He is teaching as He writes*

C. (v7) "Those without sin cast the first Stone"-

1. *The witness by law was to cast the first stone (Deuteronomy 17:7)*
 2. *The remaining people around were encouraged by the law to join in (Deuteronomy 13:9)*
 - a) Was the witness also guilty and no one else saw it
 - b) Or as many of them guilty of the same crime?
 - c) All of them had sin in their lives as we all sin and fall short of God's Glory (Romans 3:23)
- D. **(v9)** It is obvious that what Jesus said and what He wrote convicted the heart of the accusers
1. *The accusers could not accuse with the same sins in their own hearts*
 2. *The accusers from the oldest to the young left*
 - a) The older would have known what Jesus was referring to scripturally as they knew the law
- E. **(v9)** Jesus was there to bring understanding from the same scriptures they were using
1. *We must first help people understand what the word of God says which brings the only true understanding*

III. CALLED UP (v9-11a)

⁹ *and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him.* ¹⁰ *Jesus stood up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"* ¹¹ *She said, "No one, Lord."* And Jesus said, **"Neither do I condemn you"**

- A. **Jesus did not come to render the final judgment in His first visit as the God-man**
- B. **Jesus came to seek and save the lost sheep**
 1. **John 3:17-18** ¹⁷ *For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.* ¹⁸ *Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God."*
 2. **The Word of God is the convicting agent as well as the Holy Spirit now who uses the word as a tool for change**
 - a) **Hebrews 4:12** ¹² *For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and marrow, and **discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.***

b) **1 Corinthians 14:24-25** ²⁴ *But if all prophesy (preaching of the word), and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all, ²⁵ the secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so, **falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you.***

3. *Only Jesus has the power and right to forgive sins (Matthew 9:1-8)*

4. *Jesus had cleared the crowd to speak to her alone*

a) *MAN was not her judge*

b) *GOD deals with our heart one on one*

C. **We have a responsibility as the church** to continue His mission to seek and save the lost sheep

1. **Galatians 6:1-5** *“Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. ² Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. ³ For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.”*

IV. CALLED DOWN (v11b)

^{11b}... *go, and from now on **sin no more.***”

A. Jesus knows we are sins and He makes it clear that **He as the judge knows her heart**

1. *He calls out the individual sins in our hearts when He convicts*

2. *Jesus knew she was a harlot but he loved her and wanted her freed from her prison to sin*

B. Jesus is also showing us that **the response to true forgiveness in Christ is repentance** (turning from the patterns of Sin)

C. Jesus teaches us that **His mission was to restore, reconcile man to God** as He transformed lives through the cross

1. *So also lives would come under the control of the Spirit resulting in exactly what Jesus is presenting to the woman*

a) *When Jesus forgives He will not hold that sin over your head again as we live life for Him in newness*

MEDITATION MOMENTS:

- *Man is not the Judge but how many times do we try and be God and condemn others?*
- *How many times do we forget that if not for the grace of God today that sin could be mine?*
- *Do we forget that Jesus came to seek and save the lost which means to forgive us completely of our past sins?*
- *Are you trapped in a sin that has held you down and you feel like every eye is on you... will you allow Jesus to speak to your heart one on one right now?*

“There are two ways of covering our sins: man’s way and God’s way. If you seek to hide them, they will have a resurrection sometime; but if you let the Lord cover them, neither the Devil nor man will ever be able to find them again.”

—D. L. Moody

MY PERSONAL STUDY NOTES:

