

The Gospel of John: That You May Believe
The Wonder of Grace
John 7:53-8:11 (page 746)

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Issue: Is John 7:53-8:11 authentic to John's Gospel?

Problem:

- The story is not found in any manuscripts before the 5th century AD
- All the earliest church fathers omit this story in their commentaries on John
- No Eastern church father before the 10th century cites the text.
- When it begins to appear in later manuscripts, it is placed in various locations (after Jn 7:36; 7:44; 21:25) or after Luke 21:38.
- its style and vocabulary are much different than any other portion of John's Gospel.

Conclusion:

Though most likely not a part of original to John's Gospel, the story is probably an authentic event from Christ's ministry which was later inserted in John's Gospel; no questionable doctrine is present in the text and it is certainly consistent with and characteristic of the way Jesus dealt with such circumstances.

John 7:53-8:11....

We have all been caught in our sin
(Jn 8:1-6; Lev 20:10; Deut 22:22-24; Heb 4:12-13)

We are all condemned because of our sin by God's Law
(Rom 3:9-20, 23; Eph 2:1-3)

Self-righteous people are just as guilty of sin as outwardly immoral people (Jn 8:7-9; Matt 7:1-5; Deut 17:7)

The Law reveals our sin but Jesus offers grace and forgiveness (Jn 8:10-11; Rom 6:1-2; 8:1; Tit 2:11-12)

Taking hold of truth....

We are not to focus on the sins of others before we have done a thorough and exhaustive examination of our own sin.

Forgiveness is always designed to set us free so that we might begin to live a different life, never to go back to the things we have left behind.

God deals with guilty sinners not on the basis of Law, but on the basis of grace and truth in Jesus Christ.

Growth Group Sermon Study Helps

John 7:53-8:11 (Week Eighteen)

(Note: This guide is to help *facilitate* discussion with your Growth Group. Use it as a *RESOURCE* for the group in discovering and applying the truths of God's Word. There may be questions you *do not want to use* and there may be instances where the group *chooses to focus on a particular point, verse or truth*. This guide is to assist the group in growing in their relationship with Christ and the Scriptures, thus, it is not necessary to complete all of the points in the discussion guide...use this with flexibility and not as a rigid task list to get through. God's richest blessing upon you all.)

Intro:

While chapter 8 (actually 7:53-8:11) is bracketed and footnoted in your Bible, it was likely an event that occurred in Christ's ministry, even though it may not be original to John's Gospel.

It is the well-known and beloved story of the woman who is caught in adultery and it contains some wonderful truths and lessons that can serve us well in our walk of faith. It certainly fits well with Jesus' statement in 7:24 "*Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment*". We see a wonderful picture of this laid out for us in this story as well as the wonder of God's grace and forgiveness toward all of us who are guilty and under the condemnation of sin. Lots to explore here!

Discussion Questions

Was there anything said on Sunday that got your attention or that you have a question about?

Did the brief explanation at the beginning of the sermon help you understand the issue and reason for the footnote in your Bible, or did it confuse, or cause you to question the integrity of the Bible? Discuss.

Why do you think the evangelical church tends to overlook sins like hypocrisy, pride, covetousness, and gossip but judges sins like drunkenness, immorality, divorce, homosexuality?

Which would you rather experience as a result of your wrongdoing - condemnation or grace? Which is easier for you to extend to others when they have wronged you?

Do you think Jesus' response to the Scribes and Pharisees in v 7 was designed to embarrass them, shame them, or cause them to understand grace and mercy or _____? Discuss.

Read Matthew 7:1-5. Why is it so difficult for us to live out this truth in our lives? Discuss.

Does grace eliminate, or erase, the consequences of sin? Explain why or why not. Give a specific example from your life or from the Scriptures that help support your answer.

Read Romans 6:1-2. What does this say about the serious -ness of sin and the proper response to grace? How has your life changed because of the grace and forgiveness that you have received from Jesus?

Taking it to the streets....

When you are forgiven and showered with grace, in spite of your wrongs, what kind of loyalty do you have toward the one who has forgiven you? Does it affect your behavior?

Homework: Because of the grace of Jesus in my life, I will no longer be bound by the sin of _____. With God's help, I will begin to live in harmony with His purposes for me this week in this area of my life.

What can you learn from Jesus about how to help someone who has fallen in sin or is being condemned by others?