

Saved by Crimson Kindness

John 8:1-11

MPS: Jesus commends those condemned in sin with crimson kindness to believe for eternal life.

OBJ: Every person can know God's mercy toward sinners and His desire to give grace for eternal life by four truths.

READ John 8:1-11

¹but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. ²Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him, and he sat down and taught them. ³The 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?" ⁶This 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. 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." ⁸And 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, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. ¹⁰Jesus stood up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" ¹¹She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more. **John 8:1-11**

INTRO

In the interest of full disclosure, some argue that this passage is not original to John at this point in his gospel. While it may not be original to John's manuscript, that doesn't mean it's not true. History has held this story as authentic.¹ This story shows the true nature of God's character in Jesus Christ. Leon Morris states, "But if we cannot feel that this is part of John's Gospel, we can feel that the story is true to the character of Jesus."² This passage faithfully points us to the One who is merciful to us in our sin, and gives forgiveness and cleansing from our sin when we believe in Him.

The first century was a blazing inferno of conflict for Jesus. Every day held new criticisms, attacks, and attempts to corner and catch him. But no matter how hot the tension got, Jesus stayed resolute on showing mercy and grace to sinners. Jesus shows mercy to sinners to demonstrate God's patience with us, wanting to give grace that brings forgiveness and cleansing from sin, and eternal life.

Jesus teaches in the Temple and the crowds come to hear him. Every person is hungry for truth because it speaks to the deepest and most important aspects of our life. The Pharisees saw these as captive moments to discredit Jesus, but it never seemed to work out that way.

The Pharisees bring a woman "caught" in adultery into the assembly. The disruption aside, their blatant disregard for people in the way they treat this woman and their disregard for God's Law is most noticeable. But that is exactly what religion enables one to do. [Religion mishandles God's Word to enable one to disregard people and justify self.](#)

Our study in John has continually shown religion's double standard. This is most obvious in this passage as the woman is brought forth for adultery. The Pharisees accuse that she has been "caught in the act of adultery". The way it is written we can be confident that they mean "caught in the act" literally. We are left to ask, "Then, where is the man?" This whole situation is the result of a trap set by the Pharisees to frame the woman but let the man go.³ [Religious people are the](#)

¹ Leon Morris, [The Gospel according to John](#), The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995), 779. Morris states, "Throughout the history of the church it has been held that, whoever wrote it, this little story is authentic."

² Leon Morris, [The Gospel according to John](#), The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995), 779.

³ Leon Morris, [The Gospel according to John](#), The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995), 780-781. Morris writes, "The woman these people bring had been taken in adultery. This means that the witnesses



meanest of all, and fully justified in their own minds for their actions.

The Pharisees show how religion mishandles and manipulates scripture for its own purposes. They tell Jesus the Law of Moses commanded that this woman be stoned.⁵ One commentator explains the “double-double wrong” of what the Pharisees have done. Leon Morris writes, “It is perhaps worth noticing that they slightly manipulate the text of the law. They say “such” are to be stoned, where their word is feminine, “such women,” whereas both relevant passages (Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:22) say that the man as well as the woman is to be put to death. The accusers are also a little more specific than the Old Testament, for they speak definitely of stoning, whereas the passages cited do not indicate the manner of execution. Stoning is prescribed for the guilty pair when the woman is “a virgin pledged to be married” (Deut. 22:23–24).⁴ The Pharisees not only manage to overlook the problem of the man’s absence to draw their conclusion, but they also overstate the woman’s deserved punishment. Another commentator states the matter simply when he says, “In the case of a married woman’s unfaithfulness both the woman and the guilty man were likewise to be put to death, but the method of death remained unspecified (cf. Lev 20:10; Deut 22:22).”⁵ No one disputes the woman’s guilt, but the absence of the man creates a big void in the Pharisees’ claim. And, the Pharisees appear far too eager and inclined toward their preferred method of death. [Religion loves to adhere to the Law in its strictest sense when it deals with people we don’t like.](#)

The Pharisees ask Jesus, “*So what do you say?*”⁵ We don’t have to wonder about their real purpose in asking. Leon Morris explains, “Their motives are made clear. They are not really seeking guidance, but “testing” him (*NIV* paraphrases). The word is often translated “tempt”; it signifies putting to the test with a view to the tested person failing. They wanted a legal basis on which to accuse him. Jesus’ reaction was to ignore them.”⁶ The woman was nothing more than a pawn for religion’s game. Their real intention was to tempt Jesus. [Religion destroys people, then discards them as human waste to justify itself.](#)

Jesus responds brilliantly. He bends down and writes in the ground with his finger. Those who think high and mighty of themselves are never more put off than when those they confront fail to agree. Jesus is not as bothered by their accusation as He is by the belligerence with which they make it. They continue to demand his answer, but will not like it when He gives it.

Jesus agrees with them in one way, but tells them that their response will say more about them than about the condemned woman. He says that the one who is without sin can be the first to throw a stone at her. The rats get caught in their own trap. They attempted to catch Jesus in the inaccuracy of his teaching to discredit him. They end up caught in their own temptation with no other way out but to abandon their demands. Jesus exposes the uselessness of religion. [Religion makes one feel so justified in condemning others, but blinds and deceives in regard to one’s own sin.](#)

Jesus immediately bends down and begins to write in the sand again. Everyone walks away except for the woman. When Jesus stands back up he addresses her and asks where everyone has gone. She responds that they are gone and no one is left to condemn her. Jesus says that he does not condemn her either, then. He then tells her to go and sin no more.

Gospel

This story paints a beautiful picture of the gospel for us. Sin’s condemnation never stands a chance when Jesus shows up. Religion amplifies the Evil One’s accusation against us and sin’s condemnation on us. But the only way religion deals with

had seen the very act; compromising circumstances were not enough. If the conditions required by Jewish law were as stringent as J. D. M. Derrett maintains, this can scarcely indicate anything other than a trap deliberately set.”

⁴ Leon Morris, [The Gospel according to John](#), The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995), 781–782.

⁵ Gerald L. Borchert, [John 1–11](#), vol. 25A, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 373.

⁶ Leon Morris, [The Gospel according to John](#), The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995), 783.



sin ends up crushing us under the weight of its condemnation. Jesus has the power to silence our sin. **Jesus is never soft on sin, but He is always kind and patient toward sinners.**

People too often impose religion's reaction on God when they think of His response to them in their sin. But Jesus reveals God's true desire to meet people in their sin. God loves sinners. And He wants none to perish but all to come to eternal life.^{2Peter3:9} No matter who you are or where you find yourself today, especially if you feel heavy or crushed under the condemnation sin is putting on you, listen to God this morning and know how He wants to meet you today.

Jesus Christ gives the glorious hope of the gift of eternal salvation through His crimson kindness. His kindness is "crimson" because it is made possible by His shed blood on the cross. Jesus died on the cross to show that God is kind toward sinners. Jesus purchases sinners for God with His blood, to give full forgiveness and redemption from sin. **All who believe in Jesus are saved by crimson kindness.**

Jesus commends those condemned in sin with crimson kindness to believe for eternal life.

OBJ: Today we see God's crimson kindness on full, glorious display when confronted by a condemned sinner caught red-handed. **Four truths reveal God's mercy toward sinners and His desire to show grace for eternal life.**

Truth #1: The Law condemns all as "red-handed" guilty sinners.

ILLUS "Red-handed" is a Scottish phrase from the early 15th century that set the standard for how one had to be caught to be convicted of the crime of murder.

The Law makes every person a "red-handed" sinner. All are guilty in sin because we have broken the Law.

***"for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God."* Romans 3:23**

The Pharisees' voices help us understand the voice of sin's condemnation in our head and spirit of accusation in our heart. But that's no surprise to God, just as it was not a surprise to anyone on that day. **Sin condemns every person because all are guilty.**

The difficulty is not to find someone who is guilty. The real challenge is understanding that someone else's guilt doesn't erase yours before God. God's not in the business of culling sinners, but saving sinners. **All people are sinners and in need of a Savior.**

We treat sin today worse than the Pharisees. Familiarity with adultery and fornication has bred an 'acceptance by normality' among us. This is even true among those who claim to be "Christian" so that we re-image sexual immorality for acceptableness. We've become hesitant to hold any measure of strong disdain and hatred for the moral repulsiveness with which Scripture addresses sexual immorality. We've made it an indiscretion, instead of the abomination that God calls it. The only exception is when it's the kind that we don't like. Be very careful that you do not convince yourself of this grave deception: God is NOT LESS offended by your sin than the sin of any other just because you are less offended by it and tolerate it. And too often among Christians, we give grace so freely that it paves the path for people to walk into and live in their immorality. **Christianity has become far too comfortable with and casual about sexual immorality.**

We are all guilty before God and imprisoned by sin. We are hopeless and helpless to do anything about our sin. We need a Savior. And for all condemned in sin today I want you to see how the Savior waits for you.

TRANS Everybody deserved to die that day, but no one did.

Truth #2: Jesus is merciful to show patience toward sinners.

We don't know what Jesus wrote in the ground. So much good can be learned from Jesus' response. Ignoring useless



accusation is often the best way to avoid getting trapped in pointless arguments. What Jesus did do, though, is simple and straightforward. He demonstrates God's patience toward sinners, both toward the woman in adultery and toward all who were holding stones of condemnation toward her that day. God is not waiting with bottled-up anger to demonstrate his aggressive nature. [God waits patiently to show His kindness and mercy to sinners.](#)

THIS is how God meets all who are guilty in sin.

God is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. 2 Peter 3:9

This passage provides an Awestruck moment for everyone! Those who are contemplating sin today should be struck with paralyzing fear by the "just" consequences of sin. Every person who has ever sinned should be frozen and piqued to hear how God responds to those caught in sin. Those caught in sin should be struck with liberating hope by the generous mercy of God to offer forgiveness and power to live above sin. Jesus is patient with sinners, both the religious and the self-righteous, not wanting any to perish but all to come to eternal life. [Jesus is kind to you today too, friend, waiting patiently for you to turn from your sin.](#)

TRANS And, unless we believe that Jesus' kindness is in any way accepting or tolerating of sin, we must see this.

Truth #3: [Jesus is the Judge, and judgment of sin should be left to Him.](#)

Judgment is, likely, the most mis-understood and incorrectly applied of all Biblical teachings. Jesus tells us that we are to judge no one unless we want to be judged by that same wrong standard.^{Matt7:1-2} We are not to judge the law, or discredit it in any way. This makes one a judge of God.^{James 4:11} When we judge others, we claim something about ourselves that is not true. When we fail to call sin "sin", we fail to bear a faithful testimony that God is true. [When we are honest with ourselves we cannot deny our conscience that we too are sinners, with no right justification to cast the first stone of judgment on anyone.](#)

Jesus didn't come into the world to judge. Jesus came to bring salvation.^{John12:47} Jesus doesn't have to judge on the earth because we are already condemned under sin. But those who believe in Him are set free from condemnation.^{John3:17-18} [God sent Jesus that the world might be saved through him.](#)

There is a right time for judgment. When the time comes for Jesus to return and judge, he will judge the living and the dead.^{2Tim4:1; 1Peter4:5} And when the time for judgment comes we should not be confused. Jesus will come and judge rightly.^{Psal96:10} Those who have not believed in Him will go to eternal damnation, and those who have trusted in Him will go to eternal life. [Judging is Jesus' work, not ours, until Christians judge with Him in glory.](#)^{2Tim4:1; James4:12; 1Cor6:2}

We should carefully note how Jesus deals with sin. He disarms sin's power in accusation before He addresses the sinner. Sin holds no sway with Jesus. Jesus has completely conquered sin in every way so that it is impotent before Him. Jesus has judged sin, and come to save sinners. And here is what the Judge himself says.

"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death." Rom 8:1-2

This promise reminds us why God is patient with us; he wants to save us. [When we believe in Jesus and trust His saving grace, we are set free from sin's condemnation.](#)

TRANS Why, then, is God patient with sinners?

4. God shows mercy to sinners to give grace for full forgiveness when they believe in Jesus.

Jesus is merciful with sinners to show God's kindness, that we might be moved to repentance and trust in Him. Do not confuse God's mercy with a full pardon. It leads to that pardon and full forgiveness, but never the freedom to continue in sin. One must respond to God's mercy by turning from sin to trust in Jesus to receive forgiveness and cleansing from sin. When we respond to God's mercy by continuing in sin, we trample on God's grace. George Beasley-Murray states, "Mercy from



God calls for life unto God.”⁷ God shows mercy to win our trust in Him for eternal life.

What a beautiful picture of the gospel. Sin accuses and is right in its condemnation of our guilt. This is why Paul says that the power of sin is the Law.^{1Cor15:56} Jesus silences sin’s accusation in us because he removes its condemnation from us. God gives victory over sin.^{1Cor15:57}

God never throws out the Law to bring forgiveness. God sends Jesus to satisfy the Law’s demand and become a curse for us.^{Gal3:13-14} (This woman deserved to die for her sin, because sin is death. That’s how adultery and fornication, and all sin, look to God.) The more correct question then becomes, “how can God dare overlook and NOT condemn this woman to death?” The Law said death is what she deserves because of her sin. How then can He possibly respond in any other way? God can forgive death without offending, denying or discarding His holiness ONLY because He covers the offense with the crimson blood of Jesus shed for sin. Jesus shed his blood on the cross that he might show mercy toward sinners, and in His kindness lead us to repent of our sin to trust Him. **Jesus shows mercy in His kindness to lead us to repentance.**^{Rom2:4}

God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance.

Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? Romans 2:4

God’s mercy toward sinners is expressed here by Jesus to not condemn the lady, as the Law gives ample justification to do. God’s grace in Jesus Christ enables Jesus to tell her to go and sin no more. The extent to which she believes in Jesus and sins no more will demonstrate her belief and trust in God’s grace, the power to overcome sin in life.

There is a very interesting understanding that we must see in this passage. People are bound by the law, without any way to escape it. This is the whole point of the gospel. And, this is the reason that self-help or improvement or aid is never sufficient to answer people’s ultimate need. But God is not bound by the law. Jesus didn’t “narrowly escape” the charges. Jesus is the “end of the law.”^{Rom10:4} “End” means Jesus is the perfect completion of God’s Law. The Law does not become obsolete because of Jesus, but is perfectly fulfilled in Jesus. In this way, the purpose of the Law shifts for us.

Jesus is God’s perfect love manifested in the world.^{1John4:9} When the Gospels record Jesus teaching, He is not dismissing or negating the Law, but fulfilling it. Jesus shows, in His life, teaching and work (death, burial, resurrection) the full purpose of God’s Law through the power of God’s love. And we know that when we love, we perfectly fulfill God’s Law.^(Rom 13:10) Therefore, what we know is that “believing in Jesus” means trusting in Him for our complete fulfillment (“*propitiation*” = removing God’s wrath by payment for penalty) of God’s righteous demand of the Law. Loving Jesus means “obeying” Him, to walk in His commands and teaching as the most loving way to live.^(1 John 2:1-6) For, in Jesus Christ, we are overcomers of sin.^(1 John 5:4) There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ^(Romans 8:1) Love is the fulfillment of God’s Law, which removes sin’s curse from our lives.

Jesus commends those condemned in sin with crimson kindness to believe for eternal life.

CLOSE

Those caught red-handed and condemned in sin find God’s mercy when faced with Jesus. But they must decide if they will believe in Him and trust to receive his grace and find forgiveness and cleansing from sin. God waits to give you full forgiveness and cleansing of sin. But He only forgives those who believe in Jesus.

We don’t know how this woman responded. We do know God’s intention by His kindness. Jesus is patient toward sinners, not wanting any to perish but all to come to eternal life. ^(2 Peter 3:9)

⁷ George R. Beasley-Murray, [John](#), vol. 36, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 147.



“Therefore the Lord waits to be gracious to you, and therefore he exalts himself to show mercy to you. For the Lord is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him.” **Isaiah 30:18**

“Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, no knowing that God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance.” **Romans 2:4**

“The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.” **2 Peter 3:9**

