

The Gospel of John Pt. 13

John 8:1-30

Big Idea

- Jesus introduces the concepts of grace vs law, light vs darkness.

Exposition – John 8:1-11

There has been debate over this passage of Scripture. Some old manuscripts didn't include it and others included it in different places. However, we believe it is inspired and fits nicely between the preceding and following passages. The Feast of the Tabernacles has ended, but Jesus lingers in Jerusalem to minister to those who had made the pilgrimage for the Feast. This passage takes place in the Court of Women in the Temple where the Treasury was located.

1. The Woman Caught in Adultery (V8:1-11)

- (V1-5) – Chapter 8 begins in a precarious place. At the end of chapter 7 we see the people go home then in V8:1, Jesus goes to His resting place of the Mount of Olives. Word had spread that not only was Jesus in attendance at the Feast, but that He openly taught in the Temple. Luke 21:37-38 show us that Jesus' ministry in the Temple drew a crowd. As per usual, Jesus and His teaching will draw the angst of the Jewish leaders.



The scribes and Pharisees bring the woman supposedly caught in adultery. Leviticus 20:10 and Deuteronomy 22:22 required that both adulterous parties were to be stoned. However, the man was never presented. This brings up two issues: there could not be a legal trial without both parties present. Second, the man's absence makes us wonder if he was part of the plan? The Jewish leaders rudely interrupted the Lord's teaching. Their lack of respect and order clearly show their disdain for Jesus. Their hearts were hard and their minds made up.

Further, it seems unlikely that the woman was caught, "in the very act" of adultery. This is emphasized by the absence of the man. It is repulsive how the Pharisees could so strain on one part of the Lord's Law, but completely overlook another part.

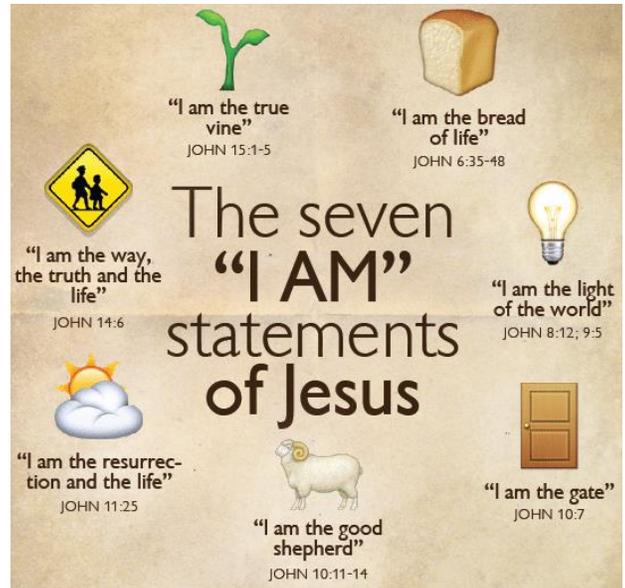
- (V6-11) – There were two trials happening; one for the woman, the other for Jesus
 1. (V6) – Of courses this was a test, a snare for Jesus by the Pharisees. They were attempting to force a dilemma on Jesus. If He says the woman should be stoned then He would lose His reputation as a "friend to sinners". If He says she should be set free, then He has opposed the Law of God and is an infidel. The Pharisees continually try to set Jesus in opposition to Moses (John 5:39-47; 6:32f; 7:40f)
 2. (V7-8) – Jesus alludes the trap. He was appalled that theses men could judge the woman without first judging themselves. It was required that the accusers "cast the first stone" (Deut. 17:7). The accusers could not cast the first stone without first judging their own hearts. Jesus knew none of them were perfect, but He also understood that the sin they accused her of could be committed in the secret chambers of the heart through lust (Matt. 5:27-30)

3. (V9-11) – The Pharisees leave one by one, beginning with the older ones. We could assume that the older ones were more honest with themselves about the grip that the flesh holds on the human heart.

We shouldn't understand this story as Jesus taking a soft position on sin. In order for Him to offer this woman forgiveness He would one day have to bear the cross. Jesus did not abolish the Law, but perfected it. By challenging the Pharisees He forces them to live in the light of Law and not their own desires.

2. Jesus Defends His Claims About Himself (V8:12-18)

- (V12-13) -- Jesus uses the metaphor of light. As mentioned in our discussion of Chapter 7, Jesus draws on the familiar symbols of the Feast of the Tabernacles (Lamp lighting and water drawing). His proclamation is laid out in a I/He arrangement. "He who follows Me will not walk in the darkness". The Pharisees refute His testimony because He testifies about Himself. They are mimicking His words from 5:31. Jesus pushes back by saying that He has already supplied other witnesses of His Messiahship, including Moses, John the Baptist, the Scriptures, and the Father.
- (V14-18) – Jesus gives three reasons why Jesus' witness was true
 1. He knew where He started and where He would finish. The Jews were making uninformed assumptions.
 2. His intimate union with the Father guarantees His witness
 3. The perfect agreement between the Father and Son's testimony about Him



3. Jesus Teaches About His Divine Origin and Citizenship (V8:21-30)

- Jesus turns from His proclamation about His identity to communicating the consequences of rejecting Him. All of these reveal the ways in which a person can die in an unregenerate condition.
 1. Being self-righteous (V20-22)
 - A. Jesus repeats His claim from 7:33
 - B. The Jews mock Jesus. According to Jewish tradition, suicide condemned a person to the worst parts of Hell (or in this case, Hades)
 2. Being bound by the things of earth (V23-24)
 - A. Jesus is pointing out the obvious difference between Him (from above) and man (from below). James would echo the spiritual implications of this in James 3:13f
 3. Unbelieving (V24) – Jesus is talking loosely about the rejection of the work of the Spirit. Jesus speaks more boldly about this in Matthew 12:31, rejecting the testimony of the Holy Spirit, blasphemy of the Holy Spirit.
 4. Being willfully ignorant (V25-29) – Jesus has repeatedly supplied them with the information they needed to identify Him, yet they were still lost in terms of both faith and understanding. Had they even listened? Jesus goes further by telling them that they would later realize who He was, but it would be too late.