

JOHN 7:53-8:11

⁵³ [[They went each to his own house,¹ but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

7:53-8:1 – Jesus did not have a home in Jerusalem, and apparently the only one who would provide something for Him was the owner of a cave with an olive press on the Mount of Olives. Here is the Giver of Life and no one offers a roof to protect Him on the cool fall nights (Matthew 8:20).

² Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him, and he sat down and taught them.

8:2 – The fearlessness of Jesus was apparent in the fact that He returned again to the temple to teach despite the Sanhedrin's plan to have Him arrested by the temple police. Jesus knew He was in complete control (7:33). Fear has no place in a believer's life when he is walking in obedience to God (Psalm 118:6).

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?"

8:3-5 – The Sanhedrin's plan to have Jesus arrested did not work so they conspired to catch Him in a trap by using the Law. They clearly did not learn their lesson (Mark 12:13-34) in trying to use the Law against the one who created the Law. I could only imagine the tension and emotion involved in this confrontation. What might the woman have felt like? How about the scribes and Pharisees? How did Jesus feel, or the crowd?

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.

8:6-9 – With the trap set, expecting no way out for Jesus, the scribes and Pharisees wait for His response, but Jesus writes on the ground. We don't know what Jesus wrote, but we know what He said, "Let him who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." They were silenced, and this should be a good lesson for us as well. At a Jewish stoning, the accuser was the first to throw a stone (Deuteronomy 13:9). Jesus changed that. He asked the sinless one to throw the stone. He did not deny the law. He did not justify or make light of her sin. He asked the accusers to look into their own hearts and ask themselves if they were sinless (Romans 3:10-12). The trap they set to either condemn the woman or Jesus resulted in their own admission of guilt as they walked away silenced once again.

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."]]

8:10-11 – Jesus is now alone with the woman and the first question Jesus asks the woman is, “Where are they (your accusers)? He has saved her life, set her free from a shameful death of stoning, and then He asks, “Has no one condemned you?” The woman responds with “No one Lord.” Now Jesus has set her free from the condemnation of the mob, but she isn’t fully free yet. Jesus responds with, “Neither do I condemn you.” The only one who could truly condemn this woman has just absolved her. Jesus was the only witness in this situation who had every right to condemn her. He was sinless, but didn’t he go against his own Law (Ezekiel 18:4, Leviticus 20:10)? How could He be just and allow this to go unpunished? (John 8:17-18) He came first and foremost as a Savior to die for those who sin, but He will come again and judge those who have rejected Him (Revelation 20:11-15).

Questions:

Where did the story take place?

Why did the story take place?

Why did Jesus’ response silence the accusers?

What did Jesus tell the woman?

How could Jesus forgive the woman and still be just?

How are we like the woman?

What should be our motivation for sinning no more?