

CCC YOU MIGHT BE SURPRISED Part 2

What Jesus Came To Do

There are some people when riding down the road are bothered just being in the presents of a police car. When we see one on the road its like here comes the judge. Think about yourself... what do you do when you see a police car? "Slow down," "Make sure everything is ok seat belt on!" Maybe you just "Scream." When you're at a stoplight and a police car pulls up behind you how many of us get nervous? You're already thinking, "What did I do? Did they see me run that yellow light sign last week? We're afraid that our actions will have consequences.

I think when it comes to God, many people, if not most of us, view God as a spiritual cop, rather than the Savior that He wants to be. If we're really honest and think about how

we view God we kind of view God like He's in heaven with a night stick, and a sin ticket book just kind of pacing around, waiting for us to move into the darker parts of our lives so He can take out His sin citation book and give you a ticket.

The problem is if you have that view of God, is you will tend to distance yourself from Him. Just as you feel uncomfortable when a police car pulls up behind you... You will fell the same getting close to God. It's a faulty image of God.

Let me tell you some Good News this morning... God has revealed to us in His love letter that we call the Bible, a totally different picture than Him being this spiritual cop or a judge. In this series called "What Jesus Came to Do" we're looking at events in the life of Jesus and the people that he came in contact with... were looking at the Bible

like a picture album and the stories in the Bible are the snap shots. The snap shot I want us to look at today is of a woman who was actually forced into Jesus' presence. It's found in the gospel of John, the eighth chapter, I am going to read entire story... then we will come back and look at it more verse by verse. Read John 8: 1-11. Starting with verse 1 and 2 we read *"Jesus returned to the Mount of Olives but early the next morning He was back again at the temple. A crowd soon gathered and He sat down and taught them."*

Circle the word "crowd." The Bible tells us that everywhere Jesus went there was a crowd. People wanted to hear Him teach, people wanted to be around Him, they wanted to see Him.

Verse 3, *"As He was speaking the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees brought a woman they had caught in the act of adultery and they put her in front of the crowd."* So

Jesus is teaching in the temple, there's a crowd all around, the religious leaders and Pharisees walk in and they drop this woman off who had been caught in the act of adultery. Just to let you know the religious leaders and Pharisees lived their lives keeping every letter of the law or they thought they did... They really looked good on the outside and fulfilling every dot of the law, let me say this... you would be very impressed by them. In the Bible, when you see Jesus' angered most lot of the time it's not at common folk, it wasn't the notorious sinners. It's was normally at the religious elite. Those who thought they knew it all and looked as if they did... These people were concerned about the outside, about the external and Jesus was concerned about the internal. So here is where we are at: the religious leaders bring this woman to Jesus but they really weren't concerned about justice at all... because if they were really

concerned about justice it would have been man and woman bought before Jesus. That was the Law. As a matter of fact, this woman was meaningless. She was an object, she was a pawn. She was the bait these leaders were using to catch a bigger fish.

They said in verse 4, 5, 6 “*Teacher, they said to Jesus. ‘This woman was caught in the very act of adultery. The Law of Moses says to stone her.’ What did You say? They were trying to trap Him into something they could use against Him.*” Circle “trap” because this is really the backbone of this event. If Jesus says “No,” He loses; if He says, “Yes,” He loses. That’s the trap. The Law of Moses says to stone her. If He says, “No,” He violates the Mosaic law. You just didn’t go against this. People would say, “He’s going against Moses. He must not be of God.” So if He says “No” He loses. If He says, “Yes” He violates

Roman law. The bottom line of that was Romans said Jews could not have execution in their jurisdiction. So either way – if He says “Yes” He loses, if He says, “No,” He loses.

I’ve got to imagine these religious leaders were pretty smug at this time. I just think they were pretty prideful at this point. “We’ve got Him!”

The Bible says, “*Jesus stooped down and wrote in the dust with His finger.*” We don’t know why. He just stooped down and wrote in the dust. Maybe in a very non-verbal way He was turning His back to the religious elite. Maybe He knew He was 100% God and 100% man, He knew what was going on in the hearts of everybody there. The Bible doesn’t tell us what He wrote. We don’t know. Some people think maybe He wrote the sins of the people... and

then drew arrows to where they were standing or something. Maybe He just wrote, “Jesus was here. We just don’t know.

We are left with some uncertainty of what He wrote but what He says to us is very, very clear. Verse 7, *“They kept demanding an answer. So He stood up again and said, ‘All right, stone her. But let those who have never sinned throw the first stone.’”*

Wow was that a surprise to everyone, the crowd, the religious leaders, everyone! See, it would have been very easy for Jesus to move into the role of judge here if He wanted to... but make sure you get this part clear... He doesn’t do that... He avoids that role of judging... I don’t think the religious leaders and the Pharisees counted on Jesus saying this or they had been open hearing his teachings. The Religious leaders had never got their arms

around Jesus’ which was to love one another, not to law one another. Love one another not judge one another, love one another not be critical of one another. This brilliant response broke the dilemma. Yet at the same time it held up the Jewish morality because He didn’t say that what she did was right. He is saying by his words and actions, “I will not judge her. That’s not why I’m here.” I am Capable of it? Oh, yes I can judge her. But willing? No.

Stooped Here

Let me ask you a question, why do you think no one threw a stone? He said stone her! *“Those of you without sin, throw the first stone.”* Because I think even in moments when our hearts are hard we know the evil of our own lives. Even two thousand years later we know right now there’s not a person in here without sin in their life. If I were to say, “You can stay if you don’t have sin. If you

have sin in your life or if you have sinned in your life you have to leave,” ... I’d be the only one left!

In verse 8 it says, “*He stooped down again and wrote in the dust.*” Again we don’t know why. Part of me thinks, knowing the character of God, He didn’t want to add shame to the people what they were already feeling. It makes me think how very different I am than God. It is so easy for us to judge others, to allow that critical spirit.

Jesus doesn’t do that. Maybe as He’s down for that second time, maybe He in His mind is imaging what this woman was created God to do and to be. Maybe He was looking at her and thinking that this creation was created to enjoy life, to have right relationships with one another and with God, to be loved and appreciated... and friends that is the same dream that He has for all of us.

The result is in verse 9. “*When the accusers heard this they slipped away one by one beginning with the oldest* (maybe the older religious people were more aware of their own sin) *until only Jesus was left in the middle of the crowd with the woman.*” As they guys walked away what they were doing in reality was admitting their sins. I’ve got to believe that the ones that tried to hatch this plot had to be talking to each other, going “Who’s idea was this anyway? What just happened was so embarrassing. They were talking to themselves saying, I can’t believe this is what has come from my judging. We should have thought this through more.

Verse 10 “*When Jesus stood up again and said to her, ‘Woman, where are your accusers? Didn’t even one of them condemn you?’*” Circle “woman”. I want to give you a little bit of insight into this word Jesus used. This is

a word of affection that Jesus' uses. This is the same word that Jesus used when He addressed His mother. Imagine how this woman must have felt: I am sure she had been called some ugly things by crowd and the people around her that day. What she was thinking about herself at this time wasn't one of pleasure or a close relationship. Yet Jesus said, "Woman." it was a name of affection.

Verse 11 "*She answered, 'No one, Sir.'* [to the question of who's left to condemn you] *Then Jesus said, 'I also don't judge you guilty.'*" Underline those words. *I also don't judge you guilty.* Jesus doesn't step into the role of judge, but he steps into the role of Savior and Friend. The only one who could have thrown the stone was Jesus and didn't even pick one up.

Only Jesus alone could said to this women, *I also don't judge you guilty* . Only Jesus alone could pronounce

her, "Not guilty." Why? Because in just a little while He was going to go to the cross and He was going to take all of her sins with Him as a payment for what she had done wrong, so He could say to her, "Not guilty." Then He says these incredible five words, "*Go and sin no more.*" Do you see this picture of a pardon here? Do you see this picture of "Not guilty, go now and enjoy your freedom."

What's important to understand about the character of God is that Jesus accepts the woman without approving of the sin. I love His focus. His focus is much more future oriented. He doesn't bring up the act of her adultery. He doesn't give her a lecture about adultery and that type of stuff. He says "Go and sin no more. You're forgiven. Now, go act like it."

The Bible doesn't tell us what happened to her. We don't know. We don't know if she went back to her way of

living. We don't know if that infidelity turned into devotion. We don't know if her lust was transformed to love. We don't know if her sin became a sincere desire to follow the one who said, "I also don't judge you guilty." We don't know. But we do know this event reveals the character of God. It's like the windows have been opened onto what God is like.

So we ask the question, what does Jesus want to do for us? What if we were in that situation right there? I know a lot of us don't think we'd ever be in a situation where we'd be totally exposed like that. But go to the ugly place in your life for a second. Go to that place where if what you know about yourself was to be broadcast on this screens that there would be guilt and shame. I did that this week and it's not a pretty place. I know you probably look at me and go, "I can't imagine that there would be bad

stuff. You're nice and you're jovial and you're warm and you're wise and you're intelligent and good looking.

When you go there, you can either deny it – you can take that role – and pretend it doesn't exist. What that leads to is a hard heart and a distancing of oneself from God.

Or you can bring it up and think about it and that's all you can do is just focus on it and think about what a worm you are and you'll continue to spiral downhill.

Or you can examine it... You can express it. Explore it and confess it. You see it for what it really is... You own it as yours. You don't blame it on other people. Then you confess it. It's like you're putting it at the feet of Jesus. I have this picture in my mind of Jesus taking it and hanging it on the cross with Him.

What does Jesus want to do for you? One, **He wants to replace that guilt with grace**. He wants to take your guilt and He wants to replace it with grace and if you don't fully understand grace I encourage you to start a journey to understand grace. Even in my words I can't give it full justice. But grace is this unconditional love with forgiveness that God gives to us that we don't deserve and we can't earn. It's a totally free gift. Its undeserved favor. God says, "I want to come in and that guilt that is overwhelming you, I want to overwhelm you with grace and erase that guilt. Romans 6 says when you have grace, *"Sin is no longer your master for you are no longer subject to the law which enslaved you to sin. Instead you are free, free by God's grace."*

We have such a difficult time understanding this as humans because this is not how we treat one another. We are quick to judge, we are quick to be critical.

But that is saved for the courtroom of the wooden cross of Calvary and the debt that was paid was suffered by Jesus Christ. When He hung on the cross it was if He was saying, "Bill, you deserve to be here because of your sin but I'm going to die in your place because I love you and I don't want you to die eternally. I want you to have a relationship with Me so I'm going to pay for it so I can look at you and say, 'Not guilty.'" That's grace. And He wants to take that guilt and give you grace.

The other thing **God wants to do is replace your shame with salvation**. Grace is a daily thing, a daily giving. Salvation is for eternity. Guilt says this: I did wrong. Shame comes a little bit later typically. After, "I

did wrong,” shame enters in with “I don't have much value. I feel worthless. I am unwanted.” Some of you even walking into church feel shame. Somebody's invited you and you feel like this place is filled with holy people and you go, “I don't belong there.” Where there's guilt, then a little bit later comes shame. And God says, “I want to take that shame and I want to give you salvation.”

The easiest way to explain salvation is with the word “adoption.” If you picture an adoption, someone that is outside of a family, that is really brought in to a family and loved. That's what a Christian is. Christian means “Christ's one”. When God adopts us into His family, all we have to do is say, “Yes, I want to be a part.” And what He does is He puts no limits on that adoption. You are adopted into the family of God and we choose to live as

our savior and friend Jesus taught us to live and treat each other

God has given us a snap shot of Himself. You just heard what took place. What do you do with this? The Bible gives us a picture of what God is like. As I think about how He treated that woman I could only come up with one action step. I could really think of only one thing I want to challenge this church to do. That is to pursue Jesus. That's it. When you just see and experience what we just talked about the only thing left to do... the only thing is to pursue Him and allow that judgmental spirit that critical spirit to be gone. We want to be like Jesus was with things and others you come in contact with... Love them were they are at... I realize that we are all at different places in our spiritual journey with the Lord. Some of you that are just checking this thing out called Christianity and you've been invited

by a friend and maybe it's your first time here and you're on the outside of Christianity looking in and you're hearing "Pursue Jesus," you're thinking, "Slow up!" But I want to encourage you, to challenge you, Pursue Jesus.

Today as a church we are going to pursue Jesus as a family and participate in Communion together.

For some of you the question is what is Communion? Who can participate and take Communion? Jesus when he was here on earth gave us a few things to do in honor of Him He said do this in remembrance of Me. Communion is for those who have asked Christ to be their Lord and Saviour. Let this Communion time be a time of dropping the rocks of judging others, let this time be a time of stopping the critical spirit of others and let us all humble our selves and pursue Jesus with all our heart soul and mind.

Prayer:

God, thank You, that even though because of our faulty thinking we think of You as this judge who's out to get us. Thank You that You're real character is that You love us and You want to overwhelm us with Your love by giving us Your grace and replacing our shame with Your salvation, that we could be a part of Your family. Thank You that Your love for us is not based on what we look like. You love us because You created us and now You want a relationship with us.

If you're sitting out there today and you want to "Start" You right know right now you want to make a commitment to Christ," just say something as simple as this in the silence of you heart. "God, I want to know You. I confess to You that I have blown it in the past. And I thank You for Your forgiveness that You would look at me and say, Not guilty. I want to understand more of Your love. I want to begin that journey and that relationship with You."

God, thanks for hearing our prayers. We want to be different people as we leave here today. We pray all this in the name of Jesus. Amen