

Come, Be Forgiven and Freed!

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[0:00] please take your Bibles and go to John's Gospel John's Gospel if you're visiting with us there's a card there you can fill that out and put that in the box there in the back or on the table in the lobby but there's also a black Bible that's here in front of you you can pull that black Bible out and go towards the back and find page 78 of that black Bible 78 John chapter 7 John's Gospel chapter 7 verse 53 John 7, 53 we'll do 7, 53 to 8, 11 oh we didn't sing happy birthday to Shauna happy birthday to you happy birthday to you happy birthday dear Shauna happy birthday to you oh look at you're turning red you're like like Allie's red sweater oh cool okay

Kaylin wasn't here where was he at so now that's on the tape that's cool John 7, 53 to 8, 11 this little bracketed section in John's Gospel let me read and then we'll jump in and study and each one went to his home but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives excuse me and early in the morning he again came into the temple and all the people came to him and sitting down he taught them and the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery and setting her in the midst they said to him a teacher this woman has been caught in the very act of committing adultery and the law Moses commanded us to stone such women therefore what do you say and they said this testing him in order that they might have grounds to accuse him but stooping down and with his finger

Jesus wrote on the ground verse 7 and as they persisted asking him he straightened up and said to them the one who is without sin among you let him be first to throw a stone at her and again he stooped down and wrote on the ground and when they heard this they went out one by one beginning with the older ones and he was left alone and the woman being in the midst and straightening up Jesus said to her woman where are they did no one condemn you and she said no one Lord and Jesus said neither do I condemn you go from now on no longer sin in Iran it is standard practice for families of murder victims to oversee the execution of the murderer of their family member they're also given the choice to pardon the offender such was the fate of a young man who had already served seven years for killing seventeen year old

I'm probably going to botch up these names Abdullah Al-Najid in a street fight according to the Associated Press in May 2014 Samare Al-Najid watched as a noose was slipped around the neck of Bilal Ghassari her son's killer this was her chance to have the vengeance she'd waited seven years to have but instead she and her husband stepped forward at the last minute and removed the noose from his neck Ghassari's death sentence was commuted and he will finish serving a twelve year prison sentence instead now that's forgiveness and yet how much greater it is for us who should be sentenced to hell forever but Jesus grants us forgiveness but he grants us even more John's gospel has come come and receive Jesus come and know Jesus come believe Jesus trust Jesus and today we see in this section come be forgiven and freed come be forgiven and freed come Jesus will forgive you and Jesus and Jesus will free you come be forgiven and freed Jesus the merciful judge graciously grants us forgiveness by taking our judgment upon himself and then frees us from a life of sin that's what this passage is about he's the merciful judge who graciously grants us forgiveness and he can grant that because he took upon himself our judgment our condemnation but then he also frees us from a life of sin

[5:58] Jesus is the merciful compassionate judge of us all and the only judge who is without sin yet on behalf of sinners the judge takes on himself the condemnation required by his own law he takes it on himself where we should be condemned Jesus does not condemn instead he grants us forgiveness and calls us to righteous living which is living under his law with him as our focus and with him as our joy that's Christianity that's the that statement is the heart of the gospel this is the epitome of grace of love of mercy and compassion the sinless judge takes on himself our judgment to save us so we can live in freedom by sinning no more free to live free to love free from every plan

of darkness

I'm not as dumb as I look there's a reason why we sang that song Jesus here's some other statements for you Jesus is the true judge the very finger of God and his people as his people we live under his mercy and under his law which is to go and sin no more now we can freely choose to not sin we can freely choose to say no to sin and yes to righteousness so enjoy having been set free from the law of sin you see from this passage Jesus is concerned with our selfish sin selfish entrenched sin only he can help us we can't save ourselves we should be judged condemned only God can save and the demands of God's law are as one writer put it drowned in the grace of the cross of Christ and it's this grace at the cross that drives us to embrace righteousness it drives us to live in righteousness or at least it should this gracious command go and no longer sin now before we get into the passage if you notice in this section of

John's gospel this section is bracketed brackets at the beginning of verse 53 at the end there of verse 11 chapter 8 there's textual issues with this passage so let me put it to you succinctly and then unpack that more for you so in a succinct way this section it most likely does not belong in John's original gospel it most likely was not in John's original gospel now don't be alarmed by that there are variances in the bible they account for less than 1% what is it in just the new testament alone there's over 5,000 different manuscripts just the new testament we're not talking about the old testament and of those 5,000 manuscripts we are over 99% sure what the original said that's a big deal and for this section earlier manuscripts even some later manuscripts either omit this section completely or they mark it with a little asterisk or a little marking to make the reader or even the copier aware that it was added later it wasn't part of the original in some manuscripts this section 753 to 11 is actually at the end of John's gospel at the end of John's gospel some manuscripts actually have it after

Luke chapter 21 verse 38 and that's what's called external evidence for why it seems like this section was not in John's original gospel now here's some internal evidence several expressions and constructions in these few verses 11-12 verses are not Johannine not from John but are those that you would find in the synoptic gospels especially you'd find these this language and these constructions in Luke's gospel and my personal opinion is I believe this actually belongs in Luke's gospel that's my personal view and others hold that as well not just me but others but I go with what they say I think it should go in Luke's gospel but even though it's most likely not in John's gospel we're going to treat it with respect and it was a true story but maybe it should be placed in Luke's gospel and not in John's so that puts the timing a little bit different it most likely occurred during Jesus last week if it was in Luke's gospel in chapter 21 just before his passion so it's in that last week after Palm Sunday before he resurrects from that in that last week but be that as it may let's go through the text and work through the text and see what God has to tell us from his word and there's three aspects I want you to notice from this come be forgiven and freed first aspect notice the judge's law condemns the judge's law or the law of the judge condemns chapter 7 verse 53 to 8 chapter 8 verse 6 7 53 they went to their homes the departure of the priests the Pharisees if it's in Luke's gospel again during the week of

[12:50] Passover that's what's happening but Jesus noticed chapter 8 verse 1 he went to the mouth of olives much more commonly seen in the synoptic gospels it's never put in John's gospel but then from there early in the morning verse 2 notice Jesus went into the temple to teach all the people so he's there teaching and again it is during the Passover feast many people are present many people are there in Jerusalem notice what happens in verse 3 of chapter 8 scribes and the Pharisees notice the scribes first another word used in a synoptic not in John's gospel at all except for here these scribes were lawyers theologians and they were jurists as well did it again didn't hurry hurry I'm not having anything for a while so you're good they would give legal backing to their scheme of trying to trap

Jesus so these scribes and Pharisees they interrupted Jesus teaching by bringing a woman caught in adultery again verse 3 they brought a woman caught in adultery and setting her in the midst they said to him verse 4 teacher this woman has been caught in the very act of committing adultery now notice she was placed in the midst now remember Jesus is teaching the people so she was standing in the midst of the religious leaders and the crowd so of everybody in the midst of all of them so this was a total setup teacher another title that the synoptic gospels use Matthew Mark and Luke Nicodemus used that to be polite he didn't really mean it he was just being deriding Jesus and demeaning Jesus teacher this woman has been caught in the very act of committing adultery yeah

right so we're left wondering where's the dude where's the guy where's he at either he took off and escaped

I don't think so or these judges were chauvinistic focused their verdict upon her with no regard for the man in the very act look at verse 5 in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women well actually that wasn't what God's finger wrote for the people if you go to Deuteronomy chapter 22 verse 22 and Leviticus chapter 20 verse 10 both the woman and the man were to be stoned plus stoning was only to take place if the woman was a virgin Deuteronomy 22 verse 23 and 24 oh and notice this too to stone such women we should lynch this chick

Jesus what do you think here's the irony they're going to tell the law giving judge the law really how ironic they had no idea who Jesus was they had no idea of his mission and yet it's true this woman should be condemned in that sense they're right but notice the true purpose comes out verse 6 and they were saying this testing him in order that they might have grounds to accuse him the narrator tells us their true intentions it was to drop Jesus their focus wasn't really her necessary but Jesus she was on trial but really Jesus was on trial because if he sided with Moses he'd be in trouble with Rome because you're not supposed to stone and kill people without Rome's approval if he sided with the woman well then he's condoning what she did you see what they're doing trap him but here's the reality the reality is this the law of God judges us all we should all be punished and condemned period we all stand condemned we all should be punished there's none righteous not even one says

Paul in Romans 3 you don't deserve anything from God he doesn't he's not obligated to you in any way why do you think he is he's not as as I said the points the judge's law condemns but notice the second aspect here the judge's law condemns to the judge who wrote the law condemns all and I'll put the judge or the perfect sinless judge who wrote the law condemns all because notice what happens in verse 6 of chapter 8 the second part of verse 6 but stooping down and with his finger Jesus wrote on the ground he wrote in the dirt or in the sand it was almost like he ignored everything that he said and the focus is not so much what he wrote but more he wrote on the dirt with his finger so they're trying to pit him between Rome and the law of

[19:00] Moses and yet it was Jesus who gave Moses his position of authority because remember Jesus is the word made flesh God in the flesh and as a matter of fact it was Jesus' finger that wrote the law not Moses' finger see there's a play on words here when it says when the narrator says with his finger he wrote on the ground why in Exodus 31 verse 18 and Deuteronomy 9 verse 10 the 10 commandments were written by the finger of God so the narrator was pointing out to his readers that Jesus was God made flesh who wrote the law it was his finger who wrote the law you clowns so what was he writing on the ground nobody knows it's that phrase hmm don't know don't care why does that matter it doesn't matter don't try and these commentators well he wrote nobody nobody knows he doesn't say nobody knows what matters is that he wrote on the dirt with his finger that's the narrator's trying to get you to think about

God writing the law with his finger and then from verse 8 he's going to go back to writing the dirt it's used to emphatically show that Jesus is the true author of the law because it was his finger that wrote the law and he condemns us all because look what happens in verse 7 as they persisted asking him he straightened up and said to them the one without sin among you let him be first to throw a stone at her they were becoming annoyed that Jesus seemingly was ignoring them so the one without sin throw the first stone at her go ahead a forceful command not just no he was forcefully commanding them go ahead let the judgment begin by the one who was not guilty of this particular sin

Deuteronomy 13 verse 9 Deuteronomy 17 verse 7 the witnesses to the sin were to be the first to throw stones because they've not been participants in the crime or in the sin itself but see it's not just guilty of this particular sin but Jesus is saying of any sin any of you who are without sin period who's the only one without sin the judge Jesus he's the only one only Jesus is without sin this this broke right at the hearts of these pompous arrogant self seeking Jesus hating legalistic religious leaders no care no mercy no compassion and then he just verse 8 goes right in the finger to lay that guilt heavy upon their conscience and then notice what happens verse 9 and when they heard it they went out one by one beginning with the older ones and remember this would consist not just of the religious leaders but also the crowd because of that phrase in the midst and those who left they knew they weren't without sin it starts with the older ones the young ones like

I'm good why are they all leaving I guess I'm not sure that's what happens the older ones knew their sin and then notice the emphasis here and he was left alone and the woman being in the midst emphasize that only Jesus himself met those very qualifications only he's without sin only Jesus the true judge is without sin himself and only Jesus is the true judge who judges us all he can judge us perfectly because he's the perfect judge he judges everyone perfectly because he is the perfect judge who wrote that very law because we all fall short and there's the woman left alone who hadn't moved an inch she's just standing there he didn't move at all and then you have this third aspect here which is so key the third aspect the judge forgives and frees condemned sinners the judge forgives and frees condemned sinners verse 10 and 11 straightening up

Jesus said to her woman and this is the same word that he used with his mama in John chapter 2 and it was a way to distance himself from her and yet he came to her defense but he wasn't really on her side necessarily this shows how Jesus can embrace our sinfulness but not endorse our sin woman where are they did no one condemn you the perfect judge of being curious maybe even sarcastic here where they go now he didn't believe the woman was necessarily innocent he never said that she should be condemned she should be judged where did all the accusers go did anyone condemn you she said to him no one

[25:47] Lord no one was there to condemn her but who Jesus the judge the perfect judge the sinless judge the judge who wrote the very law verse 11 and Jesus said neither do I condemn you even though I can because I'm the perfect just judge of all mankind I do not condemn you and here is the great paradox of the gospel God does not condemn us because Jesus the true just judge takes that condemnation upon himself for us that's what we celebrate in the Lord's supper that's what we celebrate in the gospel you don't pay for your sin you can't pay for your sin well you can it's called eternity in hell that's how you can pay for your sin but

Jesus takes that on himself Jesus came to save the world and forgive sinners showing them mercy by taking upon himself their very sin he takes it upon himself so that you can be forgiven forgiven means the sin is taken away it's taken away that's what we celebrate in the Lord's supper that's why if you're here you don't know Jesus you should come to Jesus you should repent you should trust Christ he'll take your sin away he'll free you he'll take that condemnation upon himself and he brings forgiveness and mercy and compassion come and Jesus will save you that's why God can still be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus because Jesus takes that justice on himself justice and mercy righteousness and love all in one act

Jesus on the cross that's what we celebrate and then and then and then and then go from now on sin no longer no longer sin his great compassion merged with his great command go and sin no more be free and live live as under my law Jesus says God's grace is seen in him not condemning us and also calling us to live in freedom his grace to forgive us and his grace to free us from sin so that our only worshipful thankful joyful response to God's forgiving salvation is a future pursuit of purity and godliness we sin no more we can actually say no to sin we can actually say yes to doing what's right not because we have to it's a worshipful thankful joyful response to the forgiveness that God has brought to us in Christ he made him and knew no sin to be sin for us or that in him we may be the righteousness of God that's why we read that that coincides perfectly with what we're seeing here from the passage we're reckoned with God's righteousness because

Jesus took upon himself our sin this is the gospel of love this is the gospel of grace and mercy praise the Lord and this is how we deal with each other in the church body this is why we can deal with sin within a church body with grace and mercy where there is sin in the body we show grace and love to forgive and we can do this because of God's grace to us but we also call each other to go and sin no more that's how we bring reconciliation it's how we bring forgiveness it's how we bring rectifying of these relationships where the conflict that happens in these relationships they can be built up and strengthened and we magnify the gospel when skirmishes happen in marriages between the man and the woman the husband and the wife and then they can come back together and bring forgiveness because of the gospel because of

Christ that's why I can forgive her she can forgive me that's why you have that in the church body it's how we deal with sin it's how we should deal with sin right as a community as the body of Christ where we should be condemned Jesus does not condemn instead he grants us forgiveness and calls us to righteous living which is living under his law with him as our focus with Jesus as our joy so Jesus is the merciful compassionate judge of us all and the only judge who is without sin he's the only one yet on behalf of sinners the judge takes on himself our very condemnation that's required

by his own law Jesus the merciful judge graciously grants us forgiveness by taking our judgment upon himself then frees us from a life of sin and I that's why

[32 : 05] I thought this would be perfect to celebrate the Lord's Supper with this passage in mind if you're here you're not a member of this church but if you come from a church of like faith and practice and we would prefer you're baptized by immersion come from a church of like faith and practice celebrate the Lord's Supper with us it's for you if you don't know Christ it's not for you for Christians to remember what God has done for us and his son what the father's done for us and his son and I would also say if you're a Christian you have something against another believer or non-believer for that matter something against another believer you can't let go of that and there hasn't been reconciliation trying to happen maybe you shouldn't partake of the Lord's Supper wait try and reconcile with that person if you can't reconcile that's only all you can do if you tried to reconcile or you did reconcile then come back next time which we'll do actually not next week a week after we'll celebrate the

Lord's Supper again you can take it then but this is for us to celebrate who God is and what he's done the identity of Jesus and his mission so let's take a moment let's pray asking the Lord to work in our hearts and to thank him we thank you father for your perfect word you have spoken and we as your people have heard we want to respond in a worship thankful joyful way so thankful for your forgiveness and we will come to the Lord's table we know we're not worthy we come we examine our hearts and we know we're sinners and yet we thank you that you bring your forgiveness and grace and we remind ourselves once again of our fellowship our communion with you we repent and we put all our hope in you

Jesus because only you can save only you have forgiven only you have freed us remind us fill our minds with this truth this morning we pray so I encourage you take just few moments minutes couple minutes to fill your mind with truth with God's word and we'll sing and we'll set everything up for the Lord's Supper or how we'll do that but just take these few moments to focus your heart your mind your soul upon the truth of the gospel with such thanks worship a joyful response let your mind be filled with truth please do that now hum so let someone « next « first whatever am I ■ for the