

Responding To Legalism

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alpharetta, Georgia. This is the next message in our series on the book of John entitled, Jesus is God.

Don't you praise God that he came into the world to seek and save that which was lost, amen? And it was the day that Jesus came here to this earth and leaving heaven already there, came to earth to be born, to live, and to die, to be buried, and rise again to take us to heaven if we will put our faith and trust in him.

What an exciting message we have. And today we come to a story where, you know, Jesus is kind of being put on the spot because he has stated very clearly that he's God by working miracle after miracle after miracle.

He has turned water into wine. He has healed a guy that for 38 years couldn't find anybody that could help him. He's healed a guy on the Sabbath day. More than one time he's done great and mighty miracles.

Things are shocking them. And the people are then responding and they got an adverse reaction to him. They're like, who do you think you are and what are you doing? And he said, I'm God.

[1 : 14] And I'm the son of God. And I'm the Christ. And if you don't buy into that totally, you don't have any life in you. And then all of a sudden, we come to this story right in the middle of all that's going on.

And in that story, Jesus goes up to teach. And all he does is walk in the temple, just like regular times, sits down, gets the people around him, and begins teaching.

He's not looking for any excitement. He's not looking for any fanfare. He's not trying to get everybody to follow after him. He just sits down to teach. And all of a sudden, they come dragging this lady in.

And they kind of throw this woman at him. And they say, we found this woman. And we caught her in the very act of adultery. And you claim to really know God.

And you claim to know the truth. And we want to know what you're going to do. Now, they really weren't that worried about what the woman was doing. It's kind of a staged deal if you think about it.

[2 : 11] Number one, they don't bring the guy. They only bring the woman and they caught them both. And they bring them in there. And the real reason the Bible tells us is they were looking for a way to accuse Jesus.

They thought they had him. They said, hey, he can't let her go. If he does, that'll prove he's bad. But he can't condemn her because he's this nice guy that goes around healing everybody.

Goes around helping people nobody else can help. Now we have him. But you can't catch him because he's God. Amen. And he knew exactly what he was doing. And so they come in there and they start fussing at him.

And he bends down and he starts writing in the sand. And as he writes in the sand, they finally are, they're just yelling at him. Well, what do you say? Moses said, killer, what do you got to say?

And he just kept writing and ignoring them. And then he stands up and he looks at them and he says, hey, whoever's got, whoever's here without any sin, why don't you throw the first rock? And then he bent down and he started writing again.

[3 : 08] And those guys were all standing around and their conscience began to eat them alive. He never said a word. Really, he didn't accuse them. He didn't name their sins. And the older men started thinking, well, I'm not sure I want to be the first guy to throw a rock.

I imagine he could think of some of the things he did wrong. And some of the older guys, they all started leaving. And the next thing, you know, everybody's gone. But there's a crowd there because he's in the midst and they're still standing around.

And now the lady's standing there and all the people are standing there watching. And Jesus stands up and he said, lady, where are those that accuse you? Have you got nobody accused you? And she says, no, they've gone. And he says, well, go and sin no more.

And I'd like to share with you today how we confront legalism. Because what happens is as soon as you get right with God, it's like people think you've got to be the meanest jerk on the planet.

We actually went through a sermon and a passage just recently this Thursday night about how Jesus brings division. And so you might think, man, he's a harsh and a rough guy.

[4 : 10] And serving God means I've got to be a jerk. Well, that's completely and totally the opposite. And he illustrates that in this story. And so I just want you to look at how we would respond to legalism.

The first thing is they wanted to use religion to hurt people. That's probably one of the most common things that we would see going on. Look at your Bible, if you would, in John chapter 8 and verse 3.

They wanted to use religion to hurt people. The Bible said in the scribes and the Pharisees, brought unto him a woman taken in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, they said unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery.

In the very act. I mean, we caught her doing it. Now, Moses in the law commanded us that she should be stoned. What do you have to say about that?

The woman is simply a tool in the hands of religious leaders. We want to catch Jesus. We want to get him in trouble. There were two, but they only brought one.

[5 : 10] That's always interesting, isn't it? Whenever you're playing the religious game, you pick and choose who you want to blame. Whenever you're playing the judging game, you pick and choose. In the Old Testament, they had a law.

They had to have at least two eyewitnesses that were willing to go on the record with irrefutable proof that they were saying, We don't accept, he said, she said. We don't accept just accusations against another person.

They bring this lady in. They basically throw her at Jesus' feet. They don't bring the man. She was caught in the middle of the very act. So she was with a man, and they just want to humiliate her in front of Jesus.

Isn't it a sad thing that you would use the loving truth of Jesus Christ to hurt people? Isn't it a sad thing that you would use God and the Bible to hurt people, humiliate people, and embarrass people?

But look how Jesus handled it. First, I want you to see, they just wanted to trap him. He knew. Look, if you would, at verse 6. He knew what they were trying to do. It had nothing to do with the woman. It had nothing to do with the adultery.

[6 : 16] It had nothing to do with the Bible. It had to do with, Let's take Jesus down a peg or two. Let's embarrass Jesus in front of everybody. Look at verse 6. This they said, Tempting him that they might have to accuse him.

But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger rolled on the ground, as though he heard them not. Underline, tempting him. That's testing him. Putting him to the test. Tempting him. Trying to get him off message.

Trying to get him to forget who he was. Trying to forget him. To make him forget who he was, and to start attacking. And they said, We're only doing this so we can accuse him.

We're only doing this so we can accuse him. They wanted to trap him. If he goes against the scriptures, he can't be right. And they've got proof. Then they'll go around and tell everybody, Hey, he might have been claiming to be God.

Might have been claiming to come from God. Might have been showing all these miracles. But we know what the word of God says, and he stands against it. If he agrees that she should die, he'll no longer be compassionate, as he's tried to show others that he is.

[7 : 16] If he forgives her immediately, under these circumstances, they've got plenty of witnesses. No respect for the word of God. No respect. They're using guilt and manipulation.

They're using guilt and manipulation. They want to guilt the woman in front of everyone. They want to manipulate Jesus. By the way, religion uses guilt and manipulation.

The religion, religion uses guilt and manipulation. Jesus uses grace and mercy. Totally the opposite of what religion would use. By the way, the law will always find us guilty.

You know that? This woman was brought in there. She was taken in the very act. She was guilty. She deserved to die. She deserved to be stoned. And you deserve to be stoned. You deserve to go to hell.

Not a person in this room, in any way that we stand, like in a righteous position, we have sinned against the holy God. And the law always brings us to the end of ourselves and shows us our failure and shows us our sin.

[8 : 20] But instead of focusing on failure, Jesus focuses on grace and mercy. Religion often doesn't care who gets hurt. As long as the letter of the law is obeyed.

So the first thing I want you to notice, and there is how they, these guys use religion to hurt people. The second thing I wish you'd notice is this. How do you respond correctly to religion?

How do you respond correctly to religion? There are quite a few people in here. You've started coming to vision. And the truth of the matter is you got hurt in the last place you were. You got hurt in another church.

You got hurt by what you saw a church or religion do. And sometimes we don't handle that very well. And sometimes we don't respond well. So I really think this passage of scripture right now goes right to where we ought to be and what our attitude ought to be.

How do you respond correctly to religion? Look if you would at verse six again. And notice this, please write it down. Jesus did not attack them. Jesus did not attack them.

[9 : 22] The Bible says in verse six, this they said tempting him that they might accuse him. But Jesus stooped down with his finger and he wrote on the ground as though he heard them not.

So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself and said unto them, he that's without sin, let him cast a stone at her. Their method gave Jesus ample opportunity to attack them in front of everyone.

You know, the truth is that when we see that happening, the mercy in us rises up and we're like, you brought that woman in here and you want to humiliate that woman. And we want to say, you are a liar and you're a hypocrite and you're prideful.

And we want to start pointing fingers and attacking. Boy, that's our natural reaction. Isn't it amazing? Jesus did not do that. He had every right reason to. He had every way to.

Now, I know you've heard a hundred sermons about how when he bent down and started writing in the sand, he wrote, you're a liar and you're a hypocrite and you're a, you know, the Bible doesn't say that and whatever he wrote in the sand wasn't important enough for God to write it down so you don't need to worry about what he wrote.

[10 : 25] I don't know if he was just doodling. I don't know if he was just drawing stars and plus marks. I don't know if he's playing tic-tac-toe. The Bible doesn't say, but here's what happened. He could have attacked.

He could have easily stood up and said, listen, you bunch of jerks. Why didn't you bring the man with you? He could have easily stood up and said, you're just trying to be ugly. He could have easily attacked them.

And amazingly, when you've been hurt, you allow the hurt to drive you away from God and away from the Bible and away from the church and you develop a bitter attitude that wants to strike out.

Jesus didn't do that. He didn't attack. Some seem to be so worried about how we treat the unchurch that they're bitter against God and they think it's better to attack God than living in the church.

You'll see signs sometimes around different parts of the country. Church, not like your grandmama went to. And their attitude is, you know, grandmama's church used to tell you it was sin and don't worry, come on, we won't tell you it's sin.

[11 : 26] And they want to make it all popular and all better. The church, we, I, have been harsh and judgmental. But if you follow Jesus' example, you won't attack churches or believers, you do right and you be kind to both sides.

That's what happened in the story. He did right and he was kind to both sides. He didn't attack the Pharisees and the Jews and he didn't attack the woman. He did not attack. The second thing I noticed about how he responded to religion when it came is he didn't argue.

He didn't argue. That's the next thing we enjoy doing, isn't it? You know, it's a basic thing. I just, we like to argue politics. We like to argue sports and we like most of all to argue religion.

Jesus had every chance to get in an argument. He had every chance to say, let me prove my debating skills. Let me show these Pharisees I can trip them up.

I can stumble them. I can make them look like fools in front of everybody. But that's not what he does. He doesn't attack and he doesn't argue. They simply want to accuse him and all he wants to do is teach the truth.

[12 : 34] He didn't get into an argument. Where no one can win, by the way. You know, you don't win those arguments. You're going home for Christmas. Don't argue. Don't go fight with everybody.

It's amazing. You want to argue about whether or not you ought to have a Christmas tree or whether or not you shouldn't. You want to argue about whether or not Christ is in Christmas or he's not at Christmas. You want to argue about what all the people in your family are doing. You want to start accusing and arguing.

Jesus did neither. Could you say amen right there? He did neither. He was loving. He was kind. He's going to end this story and he's the only winner in this story.

Well, the lady will be a winner too but he's the main winner in this story because he did not get into an argument. Nobody wins. He just does the right thing. Why don't you quit arguing with either side?

Why don't you live out your faith and quit causing trouble? Why don't you live out your faith and quit causing trouble? First thing he didn't do is he didn't accuse them and he didn't argue with them.

[13 : 32] Secondly, and the third thing is he didn't act like sin wasn't important. See, they were kind of hoping he'd act like sin wasn't important. They thought we got him. He's going to be nice. We already know that.

He's going to heal the person that's in trouble. He's going to heal the guy nobody's ever tried to help in 38 years. We got him. We'll take this woman to him. We'll do it in such a way that to be just, he can't really condemn her without the guy.

We got him. We got him over a barrel. We're going to win in this deal. And so they're hoping that he'll kind of say, well, you know, it's not that important. Isn't that what we do? Typically, those of us that are kind of angry about church and religion and we got hurt and legalism bothered us, we swing totally to the other side to licentiousness and loose living and ungodly lives because we're like, well, those other people, they were snooty and they were pharisaical and they tried to live holy lives and they made everybody feel guilty.

So I think I'll go the other way and we'll just be cool, baby. You just do anything you want to do. Come like you are, leave like you were and nothing really matters. That's not what Jesus did that day. He didn't argue and he didn't accuse but he didn't act like sin didn't matter.

He didn't act like that at all. Look what he does. Got your Bible open there. Look at verse 10. And when Jesus had lifted up himself and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers?

[14 : 49] Hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said to her, Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more. Jesus does not excuse the lady taking adultery.

He doesn't try to explain it away. Could I ask you to underline in your Bible he said, Go and what? Go and sin no more.

You know what? You met Jesus. You've been forgiven. Now when you leave here, you're expected to live a new holy life. Can you say amen? By the way, grace is no excuse for you to ever sin.

We preach grace. We have a wonderful, graceful, loving, kind, and merciful Savior. Isn't it fantastic? He loves you no matter where you've been.

He loves you no matter what you've done. He takes all your sin and places it on him. He takes all of his holiness and righteousness and places it on you and places it on your record. You have no past but Jesus.

[15 : 47] You have no present but Jesus and you have no future but Jesus. Jesus is all the world to you since you're born again. Isn't that a wonderful fact? But don't you dare act like, well I'm saved by grace.

I'll live like I want. Jesus said, lady, do you have any accusers? No sir, I don't. Well then go and keep on sinning. He said, no, go and what?

Sin no more. So you know what? He didn't act like it wasn't important. By the way, by the way, he also shows the sinfulness of hypocrisy without ranking sins like they wanted. You know, he could have easily stopped and said, you're right.

This woman is a prostitute. This woman is an adulteress. This woman deserves to be stoned and he could have easily jumped on and said, let's get her. Isn't it amazing how in church we like to rank sin?

You ever notice that? Well, we got to about three or four sins that we really, man, we hate abortion and we hate homosexuality. Let's kill them. But let's don't worry about pride and hypocrisy and greed and covetousness.

[16 : 47] Those sins don't get in the rank because that's the ones I do. I don't do those others. Say amen right there. And Jesus wasn't playing that game with them. Jesus wasn't playing that game with them. He didn't say one word to her and he didn't say one word to him.

He just stooped down and started writing in his hand. They acted like he didn't hear them and then they said, hey, what are you going to do about it? And then he stands up and says, hey, I don't know. If you don't have any sin, you throw a rock.

Then he goes back to writing and they all got to thinking, you know, I was looking at her adultery but maybe I'll look at me. Maybe I, maybe I ought to check out what's in my eye instead of looking at what's in that other guy's life.

Jesus didn't act like sin wasn't important. We shouldn't act like sin isn't important but maybe we ought not rank sin. It is amazing.

Smoking, drinking, cussing, dancing and going with them to do. They rank way up there but our covetousness and our pride and our hypocrisy and how we fake what we're not and act like we're somebody we're not and we want to try to act like that's okay.

[17 : 52] By the time it's over, those men leave. And might I remind you, I doubt very seriously those Pharisees were involved in any major sin like adultery. But there's no room for judging in this room because if you're without sin, throw that stone, we won't be throwing any rocks because there's a whole heap of us and all of us have done wrong.

By the way, can I remind you before I go to the next thing, sin had destroyed that woman. And it was destroying them. You know the sad thing that day is? Can you imagine?

Could you for one minute put yourself in that woman's position with me? Do you have any idea what it must have been like to be caught in sin and know you're in sin and to be dragged out and TV cameras catch you with your hands in handcuffs and all the police and everybody's announcing what you've done wrong?

Then they take you to the holy place, the holiest of holy places, and they throw you down in front of the holiest of holy men. That woman's life was trashed, ruined, destroyed.

And could I just stop and say to all of you, we preach grace and hope and help because sin is destroying everybody everywhere.

[19 : 07] That poor woman's life was ruined until she met Jesus. And by the way, so was yours. Your marriage is at an end. Your finances are at an end.

Whatever's going on, your depression, your discouragement, you're beat up and you're whipped. And sin is destroying us. By the way, those Pharisees were on their way to hell. They weren't even believers yet.

They had not trusted Jesus Christ and most never would. Sin destroys. Jesus never acted like, that's okay. You know what? Can I just say this?

We're going to love the sinner, but we're never going to love and accept sin like it's okay. You know, we're going to try to have a sweet and a kind spirit, but let me just tell you, I hate sin.

I hate pornography. I don't dislike it. I hate it. I hate adultery and fornication. I hate stealing and lying and cheating because I know what it does to people.

[20 : 02] I know what it does to people. Just recently on the news, they brought out a man who had risen to the height of power in Georgia and had become the second most powerful man in our government in Georgia and who was caught in adultery and caught taking money and caught doing a whole lot of things and it's been two years since he tried to kill himself and they asked him questions and he's crying and he said, I'm sorry, but my life was over.

That's where I find that woman today. Boy, she's in trouble. Thank God she comes to Jesus. He didn't accuse. He didn't argue. He didn't act like it wasn't important.

And by the way, he didn't accuse the others either. Look at verse 7. He didn't accuse the others. He didn't attack them. He didn't argue with them. He didn't act like it wasn't sin and he didn't accuse even the Pharisees.

Look at verse 7. So when they continued asking him, see he didn't say a word, they just kept asking him. He lifted up himself and said unto them, he that's without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

Whichever one of you, whichever one of you haven't sinned and whichever one of you is doing right and whichever one of you is writing this thing, you throw that first rock.

[21 : 17] I think that's interesting. These are the guys trying to get Jesus. These guys been trying to get him. They argue with him at every step of the way. They try to, they're trying to kill him. They're setting up traps to try to kill him. This is his chance. Let's knock them dead. Let's embarrass them. Let's go negative.

Let's hit under the belt. Let's get them where it's right. Let's tell them what the truth is. But Jesus simply stoops down and writes in the sand and ignores them. And when he stands up, he says, hey, if you haven't done anything wrong, why don't you throw the first rock?

You're the first guy to throw one here ought to be the guy that hadn't done anything. He didn't point out their sins. He didn't get angry. He didn't lose control. He simply told them, throw the first rock.

So I don't know if I can help you see what I see happening here in this story. But if you would look at this, there was religion trying to hurt people. And some of you came this morning and you've been hurt.

[22 : 21] And sometimes it comes out in little things you say or little things you do. And you got kind of a bitter attitude because you feel like church people put you down or church people hurt you or some pastor did you wrong and you're kind of hurt.

And I'd like to talk to you about responding correctly. I'd like to talk to you about responding correctly. Quit attacking. Quit arguing. Quit accusing. Quit fighting.

Quit fighting and respond correctly. That's how Jesus handled it. If there's anything I'll see in this lesson, Jesus handled both sides right. He wasn't mean to the woman taken in adultery, but he wasn't mean to the other crowd.

Some of us are like, we ought to have a better church for the unchurched and we ought to tell all those other people how bad church is. No, church is really good. Let's just be honest. Thank God for churches that preach the Bible.

Thank God for churches that stand against sin. Thank God for churches that preach what the truth is. Thank God for them. You don't have to attack on either side. I'd like to take you to a third thing.

[23 : 21] If I could, go with me to verse 10. Go with me to verse 10 if you would. And look what the Bible says in verse 10. When Jesus had lifted up himself and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers?

Hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee. Go and sin no more. How do you respond correctly to grace and mercy?

How many of you in this room have received grace and mercy? Say amen. How many of you have received grace and mercy? Think about it. Think about who you were. Think about who you were before Jesus. Think about where you were.

It is so easy for us to be the Pharisee in this story. Because the great majority of us would say, Well, they didn't catch me in the very act. They didn't grab me in bed.

And nobody really knows what a bad guy I am because I'm not like them. And somehow, we don't think we're sinners. We watch the news and we see about sinners. We see about guys driving their vehicles into a store to steal the store, trying to haul off ATM machines, shooting people, raping people.

[24 : 24] And we're like, Now those guys are sinners but we're not that bad off. Isn't that really the Pharisee in the story here? Say amen or do something? That's the Pharisee in the story right here.

That's the Pharisee. I'd like to say, Boy, that's not me. How do you respond correctly? The first thing was that she was told to go and sin no more. Let me just talk to you about something.

You got saved. How many of you know that you're born again and God's made a difference in your life? Say amen. Then you are to go and sin no more.

We are a holy people. Say amen right there. Hey, he is the light and we walk in the light and those who love him they walk in light and not in darkness. Can you say amen right there?

There ought to be a sense in this room of I hate sin. We have a new nature. We don't want to live like we did before. We don't want to go back where we were. Can you imagine that prostitute?

[25 : 20] Excuse me. Maybe she wasn't a prostitute. Maybe she was a young girl with her boyfriend before they were married. I don't know what kind of lady this was but she was caught in the very act. Maybe she just slipped in sin like you did.

But you know what? Sin embarrassed her. And I'll bet you after she met Jesus I'll bet you when he said okay I don't condemn you either. Go and sin no more. I doubt she said I'm headed back to the pig pen.

I'm going to go find my bed again. I'm going to go see if I can find my partner. I think she was like glory to God. New life. I'm not who I used to be. Changed all in an instance.

I'm a new creature in Jesus Christ. Is that true or not? Amen? We are new creatures. We don't want to go back and live like we did. We realize that sin hurt us and hurts those we love.

So we consider sin our enemy. I'll bet you that that lady every time she heard the word adultery from then on shuddered just a tad. I know what adultery does to you.

[26 : 24] I know how adultery will embarrass you. I know how adultery will bring you to the end of yourself. And you know our sin ought to shake us. It ought to make us remember. By the way and don't forget where you came from.

One of the smartest moves you could do is remember who you were till Jesus saved you. It'll help keep you humble to remember who you were before Jesus came. But we have new life. I want you to read with me Colossians 3 1 through 4.

We preach through that. We've been through that whole book. But do you know who you are today? Go and sin no more. Colossians 3 verses 1 through 4. Go and sin no more.

Do you know that how many of you can say I am risen with Christ? How many of you can say man I was dead in sin. I belonged on the way that rode to hell. That's who I was. But I am risen with Christ.

Can you say amen if that's true? How many of you say man I was dead in sin and my life was headed nowhere. And by the way let me say this. You don't have to be one of those bad guys. See here's the sad part.

[27 : 23] You're sitting there thinking well I never really was that bad off. Yes you were. It was a tad hard for me because I was raised in a godly home. And I never tasted alcohol.

Never. My dad hated alcohol with everything in his fiber. So I grew up hating alcohol because it nearly destroyed my daddy. It did destroy my daddy's family. It did destroy my daddy's dad.

So I grew up hating alcohol. Never did that. I grew up and the only lady I've ever been with is Betty my wife for all these years. So I grew you know I mean I went to church.

I've been to church so many times that I could get my three times in a week if I skipped the rest of the year. Because I've been in church all my life. And that could make me think boy I'm a pretty good guy. But every good thing I did was worthless till Jesus saved me.

Everybody in this room needs to realize man Jesus saved me when I didn't deserve to be saved. Can you say amen right there? I didn't deserve to be saved. This woman he says go and sin no more.

[28 : 23] I think maybe in our minds we're kind of like well she ought not bless God. We don't do that stuff. You Pharisee. You Pharisee. By the way the Pharisees were slinking out like skunks scared and cowardly because they knew they were guilty too.

Before it's over not one man stands in there because everybody was as guilty as the girl taken in adultery. Say amen. And by the way if you'd have heard their testimony their testimony would have been I was raised in a godly home and never have done nothing wrong.

You remember the young rich young ruler that came and wanted to follow Jesus? And he said hey what must I do? And Jesus said keep all the commandments he's done that all my life. These were good guys but good guys finish last and go to hell.

Only saved guys go to heaven. Say amen. So look at me look at with me at Colossians 3 this is our attitude we're born again go and sin no more the Bible says if you then be risen with Christ since you've saved and saved since you realized you were a sinner since you realized you deserve to go to hell since Jesus raised you from the dead since he gave you new life let me tell you some characteristics that ought to be in your life ready?

Seek those things which are above you don't have to go back to the sewer you can go to the banquet hall you don't have to think about wickedness where you came from go and sin no more you are saved and on your way to heaven seek those things which are above look what else it says where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God when they were dragging that lady towards Jesus I'll bet you she was like please take me anywhere but there but once she found out who he was and found out what he was like I'll bet you she said take me back there he loved me he forgave me and he saved me did you know if you're a born again person you ought to be seeking him look what it says set your affection that means you on purpose say man I'm in love with the things of Jesus I'm in love with the things of God I want his will to be done and not my will set your affection on things above and not on things on this earth so it's a whole hey go and sin no more we're new creatures we're new creatures we do live a different life we don't want what we had before look if you would verse 3 for you are dead see you were dead and now you're dead again at first you were dead to God and you didn't have a relationship with God and the last thing you wanted was to be in his presence and the last thing you wanted because he is all bright light and you were all dark dark and you were like

[30 : 57] I don't want to be around Jesus if I get around Jesus he'll see what a dirty scumbag I am but now that's not true anymore because you are light because Jesus forgave you and wiped away all that darkness out of your life and he says hey you're dead by the way you're dead to that old way you lived and now your life is hid with Christ in God verse 4 when Christ who is our life shall appear then shall we appear with him in glory so how do you how do you respond correctly to grace and mercy I say that because if you've been born again don't you dare lock away thinking you have an excuse to do wrong or live an unholy life somewhere along the way man grace ought to be the most wonderful news we've ever heard but grace was never the idea that I'm saved now I can live any way I want I'm saved now and sin doesn't matter anymore oh no I'm saved now I don't want what used to happen before

I'm a new creature all the old things I used to want are not what I want now Jesus has done a work in me in 2nd Corinthians 5 17 it says therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature old things are passed away behold all things have become new the grace that freed me from sin made a new creature out of me and gave me new desires made a new creature out of me and gave me new desires 2nd Peter chapter 2 verse 22 once you've tasted of his goodness how could you want to go back to the pig pen for a Jewish guy the nastiest thing you could have was a pig pigs and by the way I grew up on a farm they're not the sweet cuddly little pet that some of you might have in your house they are nasty they like mud they like eating what the other one hog can poop it out and the other the hog will eat it you say no they won't oh yeah they will

I watched them and Jesus Peter makes a comment he says guys go with me 2nd Peter go there show that to them 2nd Peter chapter 2 verse 22 Jesus says Peter says as it happened according to the true proverb the dog is returned to his vomit again and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire do you understand what happened now listen to me please you've got to get this one change your life if you'll hear it if you take a pig and you pull him out of the pig pen and you're going to take him to the county fair and you wash him and clean him up and put talcum powder on him and oil him up and make him smell as pretty as you want you can put a bow in his hair but you better watch him he'll lay down he'll mess and lay in his mess I mean he's a hog he's a pig he's scum and that's what he is and by the way as soon as you get him home to county fair he's going to go glory to God there comes my pig pen again and he goes running straight for that mud hole and throws himself in it here's what happens when you got saved when you got saved hey he didn't listen you got to get this he didn't take you out of the pig pen and give you a bath and put perfume on you and put a bow in you he changed you you're a new creature you're no longer a pig you're a sheep and sheep don't want to go to the pig pen say man pigs may be nasty like that but sheep aren't nasty like that

Peter said boy look at them they go back to where they came from how do you respond to grace grace took the nasty pig you were and turned you into a brand new animal a brand new person with completely new desires grace much more abounds when sin abounds I want you to know that grace is fantastic in Romans chapter 5 and verse 20 moreover the law entered that the offense might abound but when sin abounded grace did much more abound whenever bad let me just say no matter how bad you have been and no matter how bad you are now he keeps on loving you how many of you have messed up pretty bad since you got saved and if you're honest you'd be saying man I'm pretty embarrassed about some of the junk I've done since I got saved would you say amen is anybody here like that besides me you know I got saved when I was 8 years old you know I did all my sinning after I got saved I mean I didn't do a whole lot of it before I was 7 or 8 years old I'll just be honest with you I didn't do a lot of cussing before I was 7 or 8 and I didn't do a lot of other junk that I've done

I didn't cheat on a lot of tests I didn't just anything you want I didn't steal from the local store like I did when I was a little older than that you know you know I was a bad guy after that not before and guess what he said well Austin where your sin abounds my grace is much more abundant today I live under grace woman where are your accusers go and sin no more but some of us love Romans 5 20 and knowing that man our God's a good God and we can keep on sinning and it's okay no that's not our attitude that's not our attitude look at Romans chapter 6 and verse 1 if you would look at Rome we live grateful lives because of his love he loved us and that makes us want to serve him we know we're not under condemnation but look at Romans 6 1 what shall we say then shall we continue in sin that grace may abound God forbid I'm a new creature I don't want to go back look at me talk to me just a second how many of you really think that lady after she got caught in adultery after those men dragged her down the street and after those men brought her into the temple the holiest building in their community and threw her at Jesus feet how many of y'all think when she got up after everybody left she was like going back to the pig pen how many of y'all believe that

[36 : 48] I don't believe that at all I believe she's like man I got a new chance on life and that's what happened with you we're not under condemnation Romans chapter 8 and verse 1 there's therefore now no condemnation and then we're in Christ Jesus walk not out of the flesh but out of the spirit that's us we're not under condemnation in Jesus we have new life let me explain this one last verse to you before I give you a few things to think about watch this if you're really saved there's this love Jesus even said this he said guess who loves me the most the one I forgave the most amen some of us maybe don't love enough because we're we really thought we was pretty good we're like Jesus alright I'll admit I'm a sinner but not much everybody else in this church they're really bad but I'm pretty good I'm really good I'm really pretty good no no no no no no no you stink you stunk you don't stink anymore but you stunk just as bad as the worst hey Mr. Pharisee well the oldest guy figured out what he was doing and he left the room and by the way you were quick to follow weren't you young Pharisee cocky you wouldn't leave until the old man left but you sinned now look at what he says he said there's no condemnation no condemnation to us that we're in Christ and we're not going to have that but we are dead we don't want to live in sin anymore and the love of Christ constrains us 2 Corinthians 5 14 the Bible says for the love of Christ constrains us do you know what happens do you know what the strongest power

God has on your life is he loves you he loves you he loves you you say I messed up yesterday he loves you I messed up today he loves you I'm going to mess up tomorrow he loves you and he loves you when you're good and he loves you when you're bad and he loves you and he loves you and he loves you and you were caught in adultery and he said go and sin no more I love you how in the world could you take such wonderful love the word here is it forces us man love that's a lot better than guilt and manipulation that's a lot better than threat our God loves us how do you respond to grace and mercy go and sin no more what would you do if you've been taken in the act how many of you have been caught how many of you have been taken in the act embarrassed publicly humiliated has sin grabbed you and destroyed your life well you can come to Jesus you can come to Jesus that day that lady probably thought they let him go but I'll be dead in a few minutes those Pharisees grabbed her and drug her down the street and they roughed her up and threw her to his feet and just knew it was over but when you come to Jesus you come to grace and mercy if you'll just trust him religion may have condemned you but Jesus stands ready to forgive you and transform you know that coming to him means you want to be rescued come and live an entirely new life

Jesus entered that room all he was going to do was teach he's a loving kind Bible teacher he just wanted to show him about Jesus he wasn't even standing up he just sat down they gathered around him and he began to teach truth and all of a sudden they burst into the room and threw this lady down and like you deal with her she's wicked we caught her in the very act well we're going to learn a lot now we're going to learn a lot how would God in human flesh respond to filthy wicked women caught in sin and thrown at his feet he doesn't say a word they said hey big man the law says kill her what do you got to say he just acts like he didn't hear him and he stoops down and he begins to write in the sand and they keep yelling at him and finally stands up and says well the one of you that has no sin first one of you will recognize you have no sin you go ahead and throw a rock and little by little their consciousness began to eat at him and the oldest guys began to leave first and the young guys were left and now the crowd's sitting around you can hear there's hushed silence not anybody's even breathing what's going to happen now Jesus stands and the woman's still standing there trembling and scared to death everybody that accused her is gone the crowd is watching

Jesus stands and he says lady who's the people accusing you I'm not an accuser the devil's an accuser I'm a savior I'm not an accuser I'm a savior and he says go and sin no more there's two groups of people I want to talk to some of you today you're like that lady and you need to realize that you've sinned and failed God and you need to be at his feet right now you need to say I know I've sinned against the holy God and I need salvation and I'm ready to trust Jesus because he did it all for me you can be saved today there's another crowd in this room that you still hold on to bitterness because of what you've seen that church people do and you want to fight with the Pharisees you want to fight with the Pharisees why don't you today say I'm not in a fight with the Pharisees I'm not fighting with the church of Jesus Christ I'm not fighting with other Christians I just want to love Jesus and love people for the honor and the glory of our God Father I love you

I thank you for the privilege of serving you I pray that your name would be honored and glorified I pray you'd save those that aren't saved today and I pray dear God that you would help those that are saved to have the right spirit even towards legalistic pharisaical persons today that we could learn from Jesus I pray for those that aren't saved God you convict them give them the courage today to say I'm a dirty sinner and I deserve hell but I want to be saved you have been listening to Austin Gardner pastor of Vision Baptist Church for contact information location service times or more audio and video recordings log on to www.visionbaptist.comogender.com it is