

## Lesson 8 [Chapter 8] "Drop the stone"

### **Remember:**

Last lesson, we looked at John chapter 7, where Jesus went to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles despite threats on His life. We saw how He taught openly in the Temple, declared Himself as the source of living water.

### **Lesson Goal:**

Learn what it means to judge others and why it is wrong. Understand that only God is able to judge people's hearts. Recognize that we need God's help to change our attitudes.

### **Lesson opener:**

Have you ever made a trap, perhaps to trick a friend, or catch an animal?

Here is an example: "A little boy once set a trap for his sister as a joke. He carefully balanced a cup of juice on the top of a slightly open door. He called his sister into the room so that when the door was pushed open the water would fall on her head. His trap worked flawlessly, except for one thing. It was not his sister that entered at the door; it was his mom! As you can guess, this story did not have a very happy ending.")

Today we are going to read how the Jews tried to trap Jesus.

### **Lesson Body:**



#### **The Adulterous Woman 8:1-12**

Now while Jesus was teaching, the Scribes and Pharisees (proud and haughty) came to where He was. They had carefully planned a trap for Jesus. These religious leaders brought what they thought would be a big problem for Jesus into the middle of this crowd; they thought He would be sure to make a mistake in front of everyone else. They hoped to trap Him and embarrass Him! But they obviously did not realize Who it was they were trying to trap. They brought to Him a sinful woman. She had directly broken

one of the Ten Commandments! Now they presented her and her terrible sin to Jesus to see what He would do. Whatever He did, they felt sure they had trapped Him!

The Law of Moses said to stone such a woman. Roman law, the law of the land which all the Jews hated, said that a person's life could not be taken without Roman permission. If Jesus said she was to go free, He would be contradicting the Law of Moses in the Bible. If He said she was to be stoned, He would be in trouble with the Roman authorities. This was the trap the religious leaders were trying to set for Jesus.

Wow! WWJD? What would Jesus do? Everyone in the crowd saw themselves in this woman. What would He do with her? What will He do with each of us when He confronts our sin, whatever that may be?

The first thing we see in our lesson was that Jesus dealt with the Scribes and Pharisees before He dealt with the woman. He stooped down and wrote in the sand. (*Demonstrate by stooping and writing with your finger on the floor.*) We do not know what He wrote. God did not choose to tell us. They continued asking Him what He was going to do with this sinful woman.

In Deuteronomy 17:7, it tells us that by Jewish law, the accusers were to throw the first stone. Jesus said that those without sin should cast the first stone! Wow! That sentence should put all of us out of the stone-throwing business for the rest of our lives! Even the Scribes and Pharisees left one by one! They knew how guilty they were in their hearts. Perhaps many were guilty of the same sin as evidence by how they left the scene. They had not trapped Jesus at all. They had just embarrassed themselves. Jesus cleared them out. Now comes the best part of the story.

Jesus was left with the woman and His followers. What He did with her would indicate what He would do with them and their sin and ultimately how He would deal with us and our sin. According to what Jesus had said about the sinless having the right to cast the first stone, He was the only one with the right to cast a stone at her; He is the only sinless one. But He did not do that. Instead, He called her by the same name that He used for His mother at Cana and the cross, "Woman." It was a word Jesus used with infinite tenderness. I am sure her face was greatly changed since she had first been brought to Jesus.

The Pharisees were cruel but now she was looking at Jesus, and she humbly answered His question. He asked, "Where are your accusers? Has no one condemned you?" She answered, "No one, Lord." She called Him Lord. She knew men, and she knew this was no ordinary man. It was the Lord. Jesus is the Lord, and He told her, "Neither do I condemn you." She humbled herself before Him and acknowledged Him as Lord, and He forgave her.

Jesus was not being easy on her sin, but He forgave her because of her repentant spirit, knowing that He would one day die for her sins. Forgiveness is free for us, but it cost Jesus everything to give it to us. He put Himself and His redeeming, atoning love between her and her sin. He would pay the great price for her sin, just as He paid the great price for our sin. He makes sure that His gracious forgiveness is not an excuse to sin.

He tells her to “go and sin no more.” She would not be sinless, but in response to God’s grace, she would offer Him an obedient life. She would no longer live in willful disobedience. She would confess any sins she was guilty of to her new Lord, Jesus Christ. We learn from her that our response to forgiveness should be obedience.

Verse 12:

“I am the light of the world...” [12] → Without Him everyone would remain in darkness, despair, and death. The Pharisees realized that by saying these words the Lord was indicating that He is the awaited Messiah, since the prophets had used the symbol of light when they spoke of Him.

### **Jesus Defends His Self-Witness 8:13-20** *[Skip for younger kids]*

The Pharisees retorted to Jesus’ astounding claim (8:13), “You are testifying about Yourself; Your testimony is not true.” They were ignoring Jesus’ many miracles, His amazing teaching, the witness of John the Baptist, and the many Old Testament prophecies that pointed to Jesus and rejecting Him based on the superficial reason that the law stipulated that to be valid in court, a claim had to be backed by two or three witnesses (Deut. 19:15).

People who do not want to follow Jesus come up with all sorts of superficial reasons for rejecting Him.

Jesus had said before, “If I testify about Myself, My testimony is not true.” In that context, He meant that if He acted independently of the Father, His witness would be invalid. But in that same context, He showed that the Father testified of Him through the witness of John the Baptist, Jesus’ works (miracles), and God’s Word. But here, the Pharisees are not raising honest questions. Rejecting the witness that they had been given, they were desperately looking for any excuse they could find to reject Jesus’ claims.

Jesus came from heaven and He was returning to heaven. That’s why He can claim to be the Light of the world. But the Pharisees were in the dark. They judged Jesus outwardly, according to the flesh. He did not judge people that way. When He judged people, He did it in truth because He depended on the Father who sent Him. Conceding

their point about two witnesses, Jesus claims that He has not only His own witness, but also that of the Father.

Then the Pharisees retorted (8:19), "Where is Your Father?" They were probably thinking of Jesus' human father. Jesus answers, "You know neither Me nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would know My Father also." The only way anyone can know the Father is through the Son (Luke 10:22). By refusing to follow Jesus, these religious leaders remained in spiritual darkness. But in their minds, they had "biblical reasons"! Unbelievers always come up with "reasons" why they don't follow Jesus.

### Conclusion

So, Jesus' astounding claim (8:12), draws a line and asks, "Which side are you on?" With the Pharisees, will you reject Jesus' claim for some superficial reason because you don't want the Light exposing your sin? Or will you follow Him by trusting Him as your Savior and obeying Him as your Lord? He is either a religious crackpot, or He is who He claimed to be. There is ample evidence that His witness is true, which means that you should follow Him.

### **Jesus Predicts His Departure 8:21-30** *[Skip for younger kids]*

#### The Doom of Unbelievers:

Here, the Lord tells them that He was going to leave, that in leaving them they would die in their sin rather than have life. When they are in trouble, they seek the help of the Messiah whom they have rejected and crucified. However, He will not be found according to their whims. They had rejected Him and gone after false messiahs who offer the wrath of God rather than eternal life.

They must make a decision about Him before it is too late. Jesus issues a warning to unbelievers.

Jesus has clearly asserted His divinity with the reference to Himself as "I AM" in verse 24. That is why they sought to kill Him.

It is only when "He is lifted up on the cross" they will realize that they have crucified the Lord of Glory. This reality will be revealed to them because of the signs that will occur during and after His crucifixion, as well as at His resurrection after that.

### **The Truth Shall Make You Free 8:31-36**

31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. 32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Jesus first spoke these words to those who claimed to believe Him but did not continue believing what Jesus has said nor walked in obedience to Him.

Jesus is talking about freedom from the guilt and enslaving power of sinful patterns of behavior. Without Jesus, we are unable to escape from the power of sin over our lives. Through faith in Him and following His teaching, we can have true freedom. This practical freedom from sin is one aspect of the Good News. Only Jesus' power can set us free from these habits.

Learning Aim: Children will identify specific habits (from a list) that trap them in sinful patterns.

Basic Supply List:

- Display the above verse on a board. 8:31-32
- One large black trash bag cut into about 5 long strips. These will be used as pretend ties that represent the bondage of sinful habits in our life.
- One pair of safety scissors for the children to cut the plastic strips off the volunteer.

Say "Today we are going to learn about freedom from sin.

Bondage of Sin: Ask for one volunteer to come to the front of the class and sit in a chair. Explain to the children that you are going to show that sinful habits can become traps in their lives.

Ask the children if they can explain what habits? Say, "A habit is something you do over-and-over and it becomes hard to stop. It's an action or thought you repeat many times and it becomes a pattern. Some habits are good and some are bad."

Show them the black trash bag strips and say that each one will represent those type of habits. Offer the following examples and carefully use plastic to tie up the volunteer's feet and hands.

- Making mean jokes about other children at school
- Telling made up stories so other kids will like you better
- Keeping secrets from your parents

Say, "These are not just bad things. They are habits that get easier each time you do them. Soon they become traps and you find it hard to not do those things. This is how sin becomes more powerful and takes charge of your life. The Bible says this is like becoming a slave with sin as your master."

Allow the children to suggest other habits that do the same thing. For each add another tie to the volunteer in the chair. Listen carefully to their ideas and affirm their efforts by saying, "That's a good suggestion, who else wants to try..." Use these extra examples if they are confused:

Arguing or yelling at your parents / Stealing / Eating more food than you need / Doing lazy work for chores or school / Playing video games without a time limit / etc.

Set You Free: Explain to the class that you need their help to set this person free. Ask for volunteers who can repeat the memory verse (or read from the display). Allow each child to say the verse and cut off one strip of the black plastic tie.

### **Abraham's Seed 8:37-59**

If you boast on account of your lineage from Abraham, then you need to promote yourselves and live in the same manner as he did. Abraham was not a murderer of an innocent person.

### **Lesson Delivery Idea:**

#### Stop judging others:

Have you ever seen someone doing something wrong and you pointed an accusing finger at them? I think most of us would have to admit that we have.

Remember, when you point your finger at someone, there are three fingers pointing back at you. Try it, point your finger at someone and then look at your hand. Three fingers are pointing back at you!

That is the point of Jesus' teaching in our lesson today. Not one of us is perfect and we should remember that when we want to point fingers or throw stones at someone else. I have a small stone for each of you. Take it home and put it somewhere that you will see when you think you might be tempted to point out someone else's faults.

Ask: Is it easier to see our own faults or those of someone else? Many times, we put other people down for things that we do, too! We do not see these things in ourselves, but we notice them in others. It is easier to put others down than to try to change ourselves.

But Jesus says that we should not be like this. He knows that we all have things in our life we need to work on. And we must focus on changing ourselves before we look at another person's weakness. We need to ask Him to forgive us and to help us live for Him.

Jesus has a word for people who judge others—hypocrite. A hypocrite is a person who says one thing but does another. If we say we love God and other people but then we put others down, we are being a hypocrite.

God knows what is in our heart. He knows the things that we need to change. He is waiting for us to ask Him to help. But if we only look at the wrongs of others, He cannot help us deal with our own sin!

Some people judged Jesus wrongly. They did not understand that He was really God's Son. They had a trial and judged Him guilty when He was innocent! They made a horrible mistake. They crucified Jesus on a cross.

However, this is not the end! Jesus died, but He died for a special reason. He died to pay the price for all the wrongs WE have done. He traded places with us! Then, He came back to life 3 days later!

If we believe in Jesus and ask Him to come into our hearts, He will clean out all our sins and make us pure. We do not have to worry about all the wrongs we have done. He has forgiven them. He will stay with us and help us live for God and do things His way. Then, one day, He will take us to heaven.

Review questions:

1. What does it mean to judge someone? (Answer: to think we are better than them and point out their faults)
2. What did Jesus say to the religious men when they brought a sinful woman to Him? (Answer: You can stone her if you have no sin)
3. What is a hypocrite? (Answer: Someone who says one thing but does another)
4. What should we do before we judge someone else? (Answer: look at our own faults and ask for God's help)

Prayer: Ask God to help us not to judge others this week. It will really take some practice to show love and kindness instead of judgment. Ask for help from God.

Application: Think about your friends at school. What if they were all putting down someone in your class? They might say something like, "He is dumb" or "nobody likes her." Remembering what Jesus said about judging others, you could tell your friends that we all have things to work on. Maybe instead of judging, they could be nice to them and help them.

Jesus was known for "hanging out" with people that nobody else would be around. Think of examples (Zaccheus, the woman at the well, Mary Magdalene, etc.). Because Jesus showed them love instead of condemning them, they experienced God's forgiveness and their lives were changed! We can do the same.

**Memory Verse: Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more." 8:11**



## **Lesson 9 [Chapter 9] "The man born blind"**