

HER FAITH – ✕ – HIS POWER

WOMEN WHO TRUSTED GOD
AND CHANGED HISTORY



The woman accused of adultery– John 8:1-11

The story of the woman accused of adultery in John 8 is an unnerving yet tender scene. It describes the point where law and grace collide, where shame meets mercy. And where the heart of Jesus is revealed in a way that still speaks to us today.

The Jews' Accusation

Early one morning, Jesus was teaching in the temple courts when the Pharisees and religious leaders interrupted him by dragging a woman into the center of the large crowd. They accused her of “being caught in the act of adultery.” They reminded Jesus that the law required such a person to be stoned, and they were eager to see how Jesus would react.

Their motives and actions were far from pure. John tells us they were using this woman to trap Jesus. Women were often devalued and treated as second-class citizens in the ancient Jewish world. So it is no surprise that the Pharisees treated her as a pawn for their own self-righteous game and not as a person with any value.

In reality, the Jewish law prescribed that both the man and the woman who committed adultery should be stoned. But the Jewish leaders brought only the woman. Where was the man? And how did they “catch her in the act”? These unanswered questions show us this was more than a legal trap. It was a human tragedy.

Jesus' Response

Rather than pointing out these inconsistencies or responding directly to their accusation, Jesus did something unexpected. He stooped down and wrote on the ground with his finger. In this moment charged with tension, Jesus physically lowered himself and refused to meet his accusers on their level of self-righteousness.

What did he write in the dirt? We are never told. And that may be intentional. Because the focus was not on the words in the dust, but the power within his posture and his measured response. When pressed for an answer, he replied, “Let any one of you who is without sin throw the first stone.”

One by one, the stunned accusers dropped their stones and left. The rocks thudded against the ground, breaking the silence as the accusers turned and walked away. Jesus was left alone with the woman. For the first time, she was seen, not as an object of shame and sin, but as a person of worth and value.

Jesus looked at her and asked, “Where are they? Has no one accused you?” She responded, “No one, Sir.” To which Jesus replied, “Then neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more.” Notice the order – Jesus offers mercy first, then forgiveness, and then a vision of a bright future.

God's Response to Us

Jesus' response did not dismiss the Jewish law. It reminded them and us of the heart behind it. The law was never intended to be a weapon of self-righteousness. It was meant to be a mirror, revealing our own sinfulness and need for mercy. Whether you identify with the woman, or the leaders, or the crowd, this story has much to teach us about God's love.

We all Need God's Mercy – The Pharisees acted like they were superior to the woman. But Jesus' words exposed their sin. Before we pick up stones, whether gossip, judgment, or criticism, we should remember that we all need mercy.

Jesus Sees the Person, Not Just the Sin – Jesus saw this woman as more than her past sin and failures. He looked beyond that to see her as someone made in God's image. He sees us the same way and asks us to see others the same way.

Grace Empowers Change – Jesus didn't give her a handy power phrase like "Go and try harder." He said, "Go and sin no more." True transformation happens as we encounter the person of Jesus and allow his power to reshape our lives.

The image of Jesus stooping down should remind us that he meets us where we are. He doesn't require that we change to meet him. He just wants us to come to him in our need and pain so that he can empower us with his grace and mercy.



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