

"I don't condemn you!"

John 8:4-11

Introduction: show some of the trophies the boys have. Today I want to introduce you to a person who is a "trophy of God's grace." Grace is a bible-word that means unearned privilege. "Judgment" is getting what you deserve. "Grace" is getting far better than you deserve.

The person in today's Bible passage is an unnamed woman who made a mistake. She had intimate relations with a man who was not her husband. She, and the man, committed adultery. The Seventh Commandment says, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." There's no "wiggle room" there. No escape clause or loop-hole. But, there are pressures in life. There's loneliness, and jealousy, and anger, and disappointment. There's temptation. So, this couple created a loop-hole in the seventh commandment where none existed. We are spared the details of their intimate encounter, but the details of the consequences (and there are ALWAYS consequences) are picked up in John 8:4...

John 8:4-11

"Teacher," they said to Jesus, "this woman was caught in the very act of adultery. [5] The law of Moses says to stone her. What do you say?"

[6] They were trying to trap him into saying something they could use against him, but Jesus stooped down and wrote in the dust with his finger. [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 stones!" [8] Then he stooped down again and wrote in the dust.

[9] When the accusers heard this, they slipped away one by one, beginning with the oldest, until only Jesus was left in the middle of the crowd with the woman. [10] Then Jesus stood up again and said to her, "Where are your accusers? Didn't even one of them condemn you?"

[11] "No, Lord," she said.

And Jesus said, "Neither do I. Go and sin no more."

Today I'd like to make six quick observations about this passage and then encourage you to become a trophy of God's grace, coming to terms with Jesus' amazing claim in this passage: "I don't condemn you!"

A. We always get caught.

v. 4, "Teacher," they said to Jesus, "this woman was caught in the very act of adultery."

There is no discussion of “why” she did it. Maybe she was in love, or confused, or needed money, or just did it without thinking.

Numbers 32:23, “...You may be sure that your sin will find you out.”

B. Human judgment is limited.

v. 5 “The law of Moses says to stone her. What do you say?”

They are right. She was guilty and should have been stoned to death. *Leviticus 20:10, “If a man commits adultery with another man’s wife, both the man and the woman must be put to death.”* But, where’s the man? A BIG part of their problem is their unequal application of justice, and that is our problem too. ILLY: Every call a referee makes is questioned by one side or the other.

v6-9, They were trying to trap him into saying something they could use against him, but Jesus stooped down and wrote in the dust with his finger. 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 stones!” Then he stooped down again and wrote in the dust.

When the accusers heard this, they slipped away one by one, beginning with the oldest, until only Jesus was left in the middle of the crowd with the woman.

And so are we when we’re eager to judge without grace.

Matthew 7:1-2, “Stop judging others, and you will not be judged. For others will treat you as you treat them. Whatever measure you use in judging others, it will be used to measure how you are judged.”

C. All of us stand in need of the mercy of Christ.

v. 9-10 When the accusers heard this, they slipped away one by one, beginning with the oldest, until only Jesus was left in the middle of the crowd with the woman. Then Jesus stood up again and said to her, “Where are your accusers? Didn’t even one of them condemn you?”

As she stood there, so we each stand before Christ today, in need of mercy.

GOOD NEWS: *Hebrews 4:16, “So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it.”* The mercy of Christ is freely available to each of us!

D. Christ Forgives.

v. 10-11 Then Jesus stood up again and said to her, "Where are your accusers? Didn't even one of them condemn you?"

"No, Lord," she said.

And Jesus said, "Neither do I. Go and sin no more."

FORGIVENESS says, "where you're going is more important than where you've been."

John 3:17, "God did not send his Son into the world to condemn it, but to save it."

E. Christ Demands Holiness.

v. 11, and Jesus said, "...go and sin no more."

Some people might look at this story and see some kind of weird spiritual loop-hole to sin. They might think you can sin all you want and then come to Jesus and get all the grace and mercy you want. No personal responsibility. No pressure to live a holy life. Just do what you want and enjoy all the forgiveness you can get from Christ, or so they think. To some people, Jesus is only a faucet for forgiveness. You go to Christ, turn Him on until your sins are forgiven, then turn Him back off and do your own thing.

The Bible cautions us very clearly about this dangerous kind of thinking...

Romans 6:1-2, "Well then, should we keep on sinning so that God can show us more and more kindness and forgiveness? Of course not! Since we have died to sin, how can we continue to live in it?"

This woman, an unnamed trophy of God's grace, what do you think? Do you think she went right back to bed with that man? After experiencing this episode of grace do you think her life would have been changed to the core? I think so. I think a person who experiences the full grace and power of forgiveness in their lives is a truly changed person. Their desire for continuing in sin is replaced by a desire to live for Christ.

There are still temptations to face. There are still times of anger, loneliness, and disappointment. But, because we are changed fundamentally by grace, because the love of God now has influence in our lives...we do not so eagerly chase after temptation.

Instead, we pursue holiness.

The word "holiness" simply means "to be different." The difference in a Christian's life is that he or she chooses to yield to the influence of God in their life.

Let me put it as clearly as I can: the best way you can show that you are a Christian is to chase after holiness. If you desire to please God in your behavior, speech, and conduct, then that shows me that you have been changed by the power of God.

If you do not care about the things of God then Christ has not yet invaded your personality.

Let me close the service by asking you an important question: "Are you a trophy of God's grace?" I mean, have you invited Jesus Christ to forgive your sin? And, out of gratitude to God for His forgiveness, are you daily submitting your life to Christ?

A closing prayer ... "Dear Lord, we ask you to treat us as kindly as You did this woman. Help us to receive Your Grace and respond with whole-hearted submission to Your influence in our lives. In Jesus name, amen."