



The Scandal of Mercy | John 8:1-11

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March 11, 2018

By showing compassion to a guilty sinner, Jesus Christ offered a foretaste of the gospel, and reminded us of the greatness of His mercy and the hope He gives to believers to walk in newness of life.

God is just and holy. He promised judgment for sinners. And yet, He described Himself as "...merciful, gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness..." (Exodus 34:6-7).

How is it possible for those who defiantly break God's law to find mercy and be loved by a holy Creator?

[[Addressing the Textual Challenge of John 7:53 – 8:11: How do we respond to brackets and footnotes?]]

The Background of Roman Law and Jewish Rules Behind John 8:3-5

Where was the man in this accusation of adultery?

Jesus upheld God's law while sparing a guilty woman from execution (8:6-8).

What happened here is a foretaste of the gospel. Only Jesus – the sinless one – had the power to stand in condemnation of this woman. Instead, He held out forgiveness.

In holding out forgiveness, and commanding the adulteress to cease from her sinning, Jesus was urging the woman to repent and find hope in Him.

Questions to Consider

- 1.** What was the last instance you recall when you did something wrong and hoped that you would be shown mercy?
- 2.** What are some Bible verses that clearly describe God's hatred of sin and promise to judge those who break His law? What are some verses that hold out hope for law-breakers?
- 3.** Describe some of the historical and archaeological evidence that serves to give us confidence in the preservation and reliability of the Word of God.
- 4.** What was the trap that the religious leaders were setting for Jesus? Is there any significance to the absence of a man accused in this adultery?
- 5.** How does this passage offer a foretaste of the gospel?
- 6.** Read Romans 6:1-2. How should forgiveness through the gospel transform our approach to sin?