

God Sent His Son To Offer Forgiveness

1 John 1:9

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

This is our second message from our Christmas series titled, “God Sent His Son To:” **And today we are going to see that “Sent His Son to Offer Forgiveness” to a lost and dying world. Forgiveness is the most basic Christian quality. Without forgiveness, we could not have Christianity, as we know it. Without forgiveness, we would all be doomed to an eternity as condemned sinners without hope of any kind.** Therefore, it is imperative that we understand that “God sent His Son to offer forgiveness.” I am convinced a proper understanding of *forgiveness* will transform our relationship with *God*, with *others*, and with *ourselves*.

The meaning of the word “forgiveness” is: “to dismiss, to release, to leave or abandon.” **We hear of a judge that has “dismissed” the charges against a defendant.** That person is then *forgiven* of any wrong done. In biblical terms, forgiveness is “the loving, voluntary cancellation of a debt.”

It is a sad fact, but I am convinced that many, if not most people (both Christians as well as non-Christians) think of God as a spiritual cop, rather than the Savior He wants to be. If we are really honest most of us see God up in heaven with a *nightstick*, just kind of pacing back and forth, thinking about us. Or He’s got a *flashlight*, moving into the darker parts of our lives to give us a sin citation. The problem with this idea is when we view God as that type of *judge* we tend to distance ourselves from Him.

I want to draw today’ study from John 8. Verses 1-11 tell us, “Jesus returned to the Mount of Olives but early the next morning He was back again at the temple. A crowd soon gathered and He sat down and taught them.” The Bible tells us everywhere Jesus went there was a crowd. People wanted to hear Him teach, people wanted to be around Him, they wanted to see Him. Therefore, the crowd only adds to the melodrama of everything that is happening here.

Verse 3 says, “As He was speaking the teachers of religious law

and the Pharisees brought a woman they had caught in the act of adultery and they put her in front of the crowd.” **So as Jesus is teaching in the temple, the religious leaders and Pharisees walk in and literally throw this woman down in front of him, who had been caught in the act of adultery.** Now there is not doubt that she was guilty because verse 4 says that she “was taken in the very act.”

Now you need to understand something right here, the religious leaders who brought this woman to Jesus were not concerned about justice or purity. As a matter of fact, this woman was a *meaningless object*, she was a *pawn*. She was *bait* to catch a *bigger fish*. And she was a *well chosen bait* too because Jesus had a reputation among the Pharisees of being the champion of women.

Look again at verse 4, “Teacher, they said to Jesus. This woman was caught in the very act of adultery. The Law of Moses says to stone her. What did you say? They were trying to trap Him into something they could use against Him.” **Notice the word “trap” because this is really the backbone of this event.** If He says “No,” He loses; if He says, “Yes,” He loses. That is the “trap.” **The Law of Moses says to stone her.** If He says, “No,” He violates *Mosaic Law*. **We know the Law of Moses was the Law of God.** On the other hand, if He says, “Yes” He violates *Roman law*. **We know if He violates the Romans law He opens himself up for jail.** So either way - if He says, “Yes” He loses, if He says, “No,” He loses.

In the minds of those religious leaders there was no way they could lose. But why are they so mad at Jesus in the first place? Because Jesus was going against their *religious traditions*. **Through the years I have found out that it is much easier to go against the Word of God than it is to go against religious tradition!** Why? Because the average church member does not really know what the Bible teaches, but they know what old “Bro. So and So” taught, they know what *Grand Paw* and *Daddy* believed. **And, listen, if you say something over and over long enough in church pretty soon people will start thinking it is true.** That is the reason I challenge each of you to take the Bible and challenge what you hear from this pulpit.

Therefore, the tension is rising as these religious leaders wait for Jesus to answer. But the Bible says in verse 6, “Jesus stooped down and wrote in the dust with His finger.” The Bible does not tell us what

He wrote. I have heard preachers preach that He wrote the sins of those standing there. All of that sounds good, but we really don't know.

Verse 7 gives us this insight, "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 stone." **Jesus did the one thing that the religious leaders and the Pharisees never anticipated - the fact that Jesus always put people before practices.** They had not yet realized that Jesus taught us to *love* one another, not to *law* one another. His brilliant response broke the dilemma. **Yet at the same time He held up Jewish morality because He did not say that what she did was right.** He did not break the Romans law either. He simply gave the woman's accusers the right to throw the first stone!

Why do you think no one threw? He gave the command, "Those of you without sin, throw the first stone." In the presence of *Perfection* all of us know we are filled with *imperfection*. The truth of the matter is this, in spite of all that we might have *accomplished*, or all that we might have *attained*, or all that we might have *dreamed*, *none of us are without sin!*

Look at verse 8 again, "He stooped down again and wrote in the dust." **Why would He write in the dirt a second time?** We really do not know, but it is possible that Jesus turned His attention to the ground to keep from adding to the shame the people were already feeling.

The result is in verse 9, "When the accusers heard this they slipped away one by one beginning with the oldest (maybe those who were most aware of their own sin) until only Jesus was left in the middle of the crowd with the woman." **As they walked away what they were doing in reality was admitting their sins.** It is possible that, for the first time in their lives, they saw themselves for what they really were. Ladies and gentlemen, it is an amazing revelation to realize that your *religion* leaves you *unchanged* and *lost*.

Verse 10 continues, "When Jesus stood up again and said to her, Woman, where are your accusers? Didn't even one of them condemn you?" The word "woman" here is a *word of affection*. **This is the same word that Jesus used when He addressed His mother.** I want you to get the picture of what is happening here. There is no doubt that this

woman had been called a lot of things, but none of them were names of affection. **Imagine how this woman must have felt when she heard the kindness in Jesus' voice.** And maybe for the first time in her life she sensed that there was actually someone who cared for her.

In verse 11 “She answered, No one. Sir. (to the question of who’s left to condemn you) Then Jesus said, neither do I condemn you.” Jesus made this statement in John 3:17, “For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.” **Listen to me very carefully, when you come to Jesus He does not assume the role of judge but Savior.** Friend - listen and get this - ***the only one who was qualified to throw the first stone didn't even pick one up.*** Glory to God!!

He was also the only One qualified to pronounce her, “Not guilty.” **Why?** ***Because in a little while He was going to go to the cross and He was going to take all of her sin with Him as a payment for what she had done wrong,*** so He could say to her, “Not guilty.”

Then He says these incredible five words, “Go and sin no more.” **The amazing truth here is that Jesus accepts the woman but without approving of the sin.** Notice that He did not bring up the subject of *adultery*. He did not give a scathing lecture on *morality*. He looks into her heart and says, “Go and sin no more.” He says, “You’re forgiven. Now, go act like it.”

The Bible does not tell us what happened to her. We don’t know if she went back to her way of living. We don’t know if that *infidelity* turned into *devotion*. **We don’t know if her lust was transformed to love.** We don’t know if her *sin* became a *sincere desire* to follow Jesus. Have you ever wondered why we are not told? Because it is none of our business.

What did God send His Son to do?

First of all. He came to replace guilt with grace. Someone has rightly said, “Grace is the unconditional love with forgiveness that God gives to us that we don’t deserve and we can’t earn.” **Grace is a totally free gift.** It is *undeserved favor*.

Therefore, Jesus came to this earth to take all of our *guilt*, and all of our *sin*, upon Himself and take it to the cross. Forgiveness is a balm of healing to the soul and a constant reminder of God's grace freely distributed to all who will receive it.

Second. He came to replace *shame* with *salvation*. I John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Listen and get this - Looking back on past failures only hinders spiritual growth. Romans 8:1-2 says, "There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death."

The moment we trust Christ as Savior, we are given immunity from punishment. The issue is settled: **Our case is closed and God will not open the files of our guilt again.** As the courts of earth honor the principle of *double jeopardy*, so *heaven will not judge twice those whose sins have been punished in Christ Jesus.* We will not be tried again for the sins He bore in our place on the cross. Romans 5:1-2 puts it this way, "Having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." **The forgiveness that Christ offers is comprehensive.** It is **complete and final** - not just until the next inevitable sin. That is why we have been told in Romans 4:7-8, "Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." **Child of God, when you received Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, God charged all of your sins to the cross of Christ, and covered them in the blood of the Lamb.** Therefore, the accountability of the judgment seat of Christ will be about **rewards of service** gained or lost. **Punishment will not be the issue.**

Does that mean we are no longer accountable for our wrongs? Absolutely not. We are still subject to *natural* and *legal* consequences. **We can still risk our reputation, health, and relationships by careless, unprincipled living.** But we will not lose heaven.

The easiest way to explain salvation is with the word "adoption." In an adoption someone **born outside of a family** is legally **brought into that family** and **loved as one of their own.** That is

what a Christian is.

The people who work with adoption agencies will tell you that all of the *cute babies*, all of the *pretty children* will be adopted first and the *plain* and the *not-so-cute* and the *not-so-pretty children* are left for last. But *that is not the way God operates when we are adopted into His family*. He takes us just like we are - the *good*, *bad*, and the *ugly*. **When God adopted me into His royal family He never looked at the *color of my skin*. He never looked at all of the *ugly scars* that sin had left on my life. He never considered my *bloodline*, if I was from the right or the wrong side of the tracks.**

You see, when I said, “Lord Jesus, I need You and I want You to come into my life, forgive me of my sins, and make me a Christian.” He just said, “Ok.” **I didn’t have to memorize a lot of Bible verses. I didn’t have to make a bunch of promises about being good and never sinning again. He just said, “Yes.”**

But why? Why would Jesus be so willing to *save me* and *adopt me* into His family? The answer is found in Ephesians 1:5 says, “His unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into His own family by bringing us to Himself through Jesus Christ. And this gave Him great pleasure.” It gives Him great pleasure to give salvation for our shame.

I am appalled at the amount of *resentment*, *bigotry*, *discrimination*, and *lack of love* there is in so many of our churches, when Jesus has told us that the hallmark of the church is to love one another. Child of God, God never called you to change people, *just to love them!* If there is a message that I want to say to all of us in this building today is this – “Drop the rocks.”

God sent His Son to this earth to offer forgiveness. If you have never received Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, why not today?

Every one please stand for prayer.

Father,

Thank you for forgiveness. Thank you for the kind of love and grace that takes us like we are and makes us what You want us to be. Give me the faith and grace to look at other through the eyes of love,

and give me the courage to drop the rocks. In Jesus' name. Amen.