

June 5th, 2016

NEITHER DO I CONDEMN YOU

John 7:53-8:11

You'll notice that this morning's passage is surrounded by brackets, and footnoted with something like "The earliest manuscripts do not include 7:53-8:11." Trustworthy conservative scholars¹ have analyzed this text, comparing all the different copies that we still have in existence, and the overwhelming consensus, not by liberals, but by conservatives, is that this passage is "...not part of the original Gospel of John, at least not this portion of John."² There are multiple reasons that are given for this belief.³

Yet by the providence of God here this passage is in our Bibles, at the very least as a footnote. So what do we do with this passage?

1. First we don't lose our confidence in the inerrancy of the Scriptures. The Bible teaches that "All Scripture is breathed out by God." (2 Tim. 3:16). Meaning, in the original manuscripts, *not the copies*, there were no errors, for God superintended human agents to invincibly ensure every word was

¹ e.g. D.A. Carson, Bruce Metzger, Leon Morris, Andreas Kostenberger, Herman Ridderbos, etc. cf. <http://www.desiringgod.org/messages/neither-do-i-condemn-you--3> accessed Jun 4th, 2016

² R.C. Sproul, *St. Andrew's Expository Commentary: John*, (Orlando, FL,: Reformation Trust Publishing, 2009), pg. 149

³ 1. The story is missing from all the Greek manuscripts of John before the fifth century.

2. All the earliest church fathers omit this passage in commenting on John and pass directly from John 7:52 to John 8:12.

3. In fact, the text flows very nicely from 7:52-8:12 if you leave out the story and just read the passage as though the story were not there.

4. No Easter church father cites the passage before the tenth century when dealing with this Gospel.

5. When the story starts to appear in manuscript copies of the Gospel of John, it shows up in three different places other than here (after 7:36; 7:44; and 21:25), and in one manuscript of Luke, it shows up after 21:38.

6. Its style and vocabulary is more unlike the rest of John's Gospel than any other paragraph in the Gospel

<http://www.desiringgod.org/messages/neither-do-i-condemn-you--3> accessed June 4th, 2016

according to God's desire. God has not promised us that all the copies would be without error.

2. From the thousands of copies of the NT that we have (thousands more than any other work of antiquity) "...more than ninety-nine percent is in agreement in all the families of the copies; it is in less than one percent of the texts in the Bible that variant readings are found. No major doctrine of the Christian church is affected by those variant readings."⁴
3. Although there is consensus that this text does not belong here, R.C. Sproul points out that there is also a consensus that this "...account is authentic, apostolic, and should be contained in any edition of the New Testament."⁵ I would just add that although there is a consensus, there isn't unanimity.⁶ Nor can it be proven by necessity that this passage was simply added to later manuscripts.⁷
4. There are multiple similar passages in all four gospel accounts that would support the truths that are found in this passage.⁸ The doctrines found here are in abundance in other Scriptures.

⁴ R.C. Sproul, *St. Andrew's Expository Commentary: John*, (Orlando, FL,: Reformation Trust Publishing, 2009), pg. 148-149

⁵ *ibid*, pg. 149

⁶ cf. *The Reformation Heritage KJV Study Bible*, Ed. Joel Beeke, (Grand Rapids, MI,: Reformation Heritage Books, 2014), pg. 1525

⁷ John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: John 1-11*, (Chicago, IL,: Moody Publishers, 2006), pg. 324

⁸ Parallel passages that would support the truths in this passage:

On judging righteously: John 7:24; 8:15;

On the legalism of the Pharisees: Luke 18:9-14

On the Pharisees setting a trap for Jesus: Matthew 12:10; 16:1; 19:3; 22:34-40; Mark 3:2; 8:11; 10:2; 12:13-17; Luke 6:7; 10:25; 11:53-54; 20:20-40

Of Jesus forgiving scandalous sinners: Levi the tax collector, Mary Magdalene the former demon possessed woman; Peter the denier, the thief on the cross (not to mention OT saints, Lot who committed incest with his daughters, David the adulterer and murderer, Solomon who even turned to other gods, etc.)

Of Jesus not coming to condemn but to save: John 3:17; 12:47

Of Jesus having the ability to forgive sinners: Matthew 9:1-8

5. Finally, the glory of Jesus Christ is very clearly on display in this passage. His glory and voice can be heard⁹ when He proclaims “Neither do I condemn you.” And therefore we ought to teach it exalts the kind heart of Christ in forgiving sinners.

Introduction

The setting for our passage isn't crystal clear. This event may have taken place the day after the feast of booths, or it may taken place during passion week. In either case, the main players in our passage are a guilty adulteress, the scribes, the Pharisees and Jesus Christ Himself. It is the intent of these religious hypocrites to use the law, not so much as a means to condemn a guilty woman, but rather to accuse God. Oh the patience of Christ against such sinners! The very creation stands up and seeks to accuse the Creator of the universe. Men who depended upon Christ for their next breath, sought to have Christ destroyed. On the other hand we have this adulteress, who by all accounts is deserving of the very death penalty these hypocrites are suggesting. And she finds herself standing before the Judge of all the universe, who by accounts could require her very life.

What we need to see from this passage is that this is how we are brought before Christ: as adulteresses. Caught in the very act. This is how Scripture labels the human race, as adulteresses who have exchanged the glory of their heavenly husband and have whored themselves away to the lewdness and baseness of this present world. **James 4:4** “You adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.” Adultery is the highest level of treason that a husband or wife can do towards their spouse. And God has ordained it as such that we would see the true nature of sin. Sin is spiritual adultery. God made us to love and adore and treasure Him, as a wife is supposed to do with her husband. Each sin declares to His face: “No God, You're not a good husband, I want another lover.”

⁹ “My sheep hear my voice...” John 10:27

Before any of us ever become Christians, we stand before Christ as adulteresses. Guilty. Caught in the act. Deserving of death. And Christ affirms this. Nothing is denied. That is the setting for this adulteress, and for us. Yet when she is drug before Jesus, no doubt terrified, not knowing whether she will survive the day, hears this Man whom no one ever spoke like. “Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.” And instantly her adulteress garbs were exchanged for a wedding gown. Death exchanged for life. Everlasting misery exchanged for everlasting happiness. Lewdness exchanged for holiness. All because of the words of eternal life spoken to her soul: “Neither do I condemn you...”

Doctrine

If Jesus doesn't condemn us, than no one in the universe can ever lay a charge against us

Jesus: laborer of souls

[53] They went each to his own house, [1] but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

After Jesus' opponents dispute with Him, they go home to their comforts, to their meals, to their beds. Jesus had no home. Did you ever consider that before? During Jesus earthly ministry, He had no home. “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” (**Matthew 8:20**) But oh how He labored for souls. I suspect that He went to the Mount of Olives to pray as we see in other accounts (**Luke 5:16; Matthew 14:23; Mark 1:35**). This was His pattern of ministry. Preach, pray, preach, pray. His very food was to do the Father's will, (**John 4:34**) which was to grant eternal life (**John 12:50**). And so His whole life was consumed with only this.

[2] Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him, and he sat down and taught them.

“Early in the morning...” Jesus came and taught. I doubt that Jesus ever slept in. Not because sleeping in is a sin in itself, but because He lived to preach the gospel to ruined sinners. In Mark’s gospel we read of the people coming out to Jesus at one point saying to Him: “Everyone is looking for you.” And he said to them, “Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out.” (**Mark 1:38**) Preaching is what drove Jesus from town to town. Preaching is what drove Jesus from His sleep early in the morning (v.2), so that He could feed people the words of life.

At the end of v.2 we see that though there was much hostility against Jesus, all within earshot of His teaching, came to Him as He sat and taught. So consider this scene. Here Jesus is, and a multitude of people flock to Him. He sits down, and begins to teach. This very act was infuriating to the authorities for at least two reasons. 1) Jesus wasn’t taught by them (**John 7:15**). 2) He sat and taught the people which was a position that was reserved for the learned Rabbis. Something must be done.

Enter the scribes and Pharisees

v.3-4 The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst [4] they said to him, “Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery.

These scribes and Pharisees consisted of two distinct groups. The scribes were basically the Jewish theologians¹⁰ considered to be experts in interpreting the OT. The Pharisees were a religious party that was seeking to recover strict

¹⁰ R.C. Sproul, *St. Andrew’s Expository Commentary: John*, (Orlando, FL,: Reformation Trust Publishing, 2009), pg. 149

adherence to the law. Their name meant “separated one.”¹¹ I point this out now because, there is an irony in that the so-called experts and so-called zealots of the law now come against Jesus to challenge His right to teach.

So here Jesus is teaching with the crowd around Him, and these religious authorities interrupt with their white knuckles around the arms of this woman placing her right in the middle of his classroom. And then they have the gall to call him “Teacher.” How duplicitous! At the feast of booths they accused Him of deceiving (**John 7:47**), and now they seek to flatter Him with grand titles.

But right away we are meant to notice something: ‘where is the man?’ Adultery is a two person sin. And yet only the woman is brought before Jesus. Perhaps he fled the scene too quickly for them to catch him. But this seems unlikely since she was caught in the very act.¹² And yet only the woman was brought. Speculations abound as to why only the woman was brought,¹³ but what our author wants us to know from the beginning that these men were not seeking justice at all! Why would they bring this case before Jesus since they had no intention on recognizing Him as an authority? Jesus wasn’t part of the Sanhedrin. Jesus wasn’t on the *in* with the high priest. Nor was this a difficult case since the woman was caught in the very act.¹⁴ What was going on? They continue...

[5] Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?”

The scribes and the Pharisees were absolutely correct on this point. **Leviticus 20:10** says “If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.” (cf. **Deut. 22:22**) The

¹¹ *ibid*

¹² At the very least his identity was probably known and therefore could have been found easily enough.

¹³ Perhaps they had a bias against women in particular. Perhaps they didn’t want to shame the man because he was a friend of theirs.

¹⁴ Valuable insight from John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: John 1-11*, (Chicago, IL, : Moody Publishers, 2006), pg. 326

death penalty is what was prescribed for adultery. Certainly this sentence couldn't be more offensive to our perverted American culture. But that is because our culture has deified man and emasculated God. Consider that every sin attempts to undeify God. Sin says "I'm wiser than what Your wisdom says should be done." Sin says "I know better than what You have commanded." Sin says "I'm more loving than You because if I were God I wouldn't forbid such things." Sin says "I'm more righteous than you because I wouldn't punish such things." Every sin is a direct attack against the God's very person.¹⁵ Every sin is the attempted murder of God in the heart of man. Have you thought about sin that way? Sin is so exceedingly evil because it accuses God of wrong doing. That is why the penalty for every sin, whether it be adultery or the thought of foolishness is death.¹⁶ "The wages of sin is death." (Romans 6:23) It would be just for God to have prescribed the death penalty for every sin under OT law. But He reserved it for those sins that were especially corrosive to human society.

So here are these scribes and Pharisees challenging Jesus with this adulteress woman and this law from the OT, and they are saying "What say you?"

The impossible dilemma

v. 6a This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him.

Now it's crystal clear that these hypocrites weren't interesting in law-keeping, but rather in destroying Christ. And this plan that they had was masterfully evil. It seemed that no matter what answer Jesus gave, He would be ensnared by His words. If Jesus were to say "No don't stone her," they would have accused him of being an enemy to the law of Moses,¹⁷ and therefore He couldn't claim to be

¹⁵ cf. James 2:10-11

¹⁶ Proverbs 24:9

¹⁷ Matthew Henry, *A Commentary on the Whole Bible, Vol. 5: Matthew to John*, (Iowa Falls, IA,: World Bible Publishers), pg. 981

the Messiah. If Jesus were to say “stone her” at least two more problems would have arisen: 1) They could have reported him to the Romans for trying to usurp their authority. The Jews weren’t allowed to execute their people apart from Roman law (John 18:31) 2) Were Jesus to agree in stoning her, they would have accused Him of contradicting Himself for He had already showed much compassion to ruined sinners. What will Jesus do? This is a massive problem. Unsolvably by any human measure. These hypocrites were chomping at the bit to uncover Him as a fraud and now they believe that they have presented Jesus with a dilemma that could not be solved.

v. 6b Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground.

There is much speculation about what Jesus wrote on the ground here, but if we can’t know what He wrote, I think it’s unhelpful to speculate. However, Jesus’ actions are not without meaning. So imagine the scene, here these ravenous wolves believe they have Jesus in this unsolvable problem, and He ignores their question and bends over and starts doodling in the dust. What would that communicate to you? It would communicate to me, that Jesus considered them unworthy of being answered. They weren’t after justice, but were using the law for the highest form of injustice. The law is summed up in two commands: to love God and to love our neighbor, and here they were using it to destroy their neighbor and to destroy God. Such wickedness was worthy of being given the silent treatment.

The impossible dilemma answered by infinite wisdom

[7] And as they continued to ask him,¹⁸ he stood up and said to them, “Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.”

¹⁸ Whatever He was writing here didn’t convince them to shut up, which is why I think the greater meaning was not so much in what He was writing but rather in Him ignoring their question. I hold the same view in the second time He bent down to write in v.8 Whatever he was writing didn’t seem to be the reason for them leaving, since v.9 says "But when they heard it," not "But when they saw his writing"

In trying to trap Christ, they were the ones who were now trapped. His answer comes from Deuteronomy 17:6-7 where the witnesses of these crimes were to be the first ones to put the accused to death. But Jesus adds “Let him who is without sin...be the first to throw stones.” Jesus did not mean that sinless perfection was required in order to punish the guilty. The state is to bear the sword of punishment (Romans 13) just as the church is to exercise church discipline (Matthew 18) irrespective of the fact that both the state and the church are full of sinners. **The point is that Jesus knew that these men were guilty of the same thing that she was.**¹⁹ In other words, He was saying “If you are yourselves not adulterers or fornicators, then by all means, proceed.”

Only Christ could have unlocked the horns of this dilemma. He shows Himself to be righteous by upholding the law, and at the same time ensures that the woman is shown mercy. In trying to accuse Christ, they were forced to accuse themselves. Jesus took his feet out of the trap and put their feet in it.²⁰ Oh consider His answer.²¹ He doesn't flinch at the thought that every sin deserves death, and at the same time demonstrates His kind rescuing heart. Christ is the only one in whom righteousness and peace kiss (Psalm 85:10)

The accusers leave accused

[8] And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground. [9] But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him.

Jesus let His words hang. And His words hit their hearts so hard that they were forced to leave. John MacArthur says here “Ironically, those who came to

¹⁹ Romans 2:1 “Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things.” Additionally consider that in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus expounded the sin of adultery to include even lustful thoughts (Matthew 5:28)

²⁰ Psalm 57:6 “They set a net for my steps; my soul was bowed down. They dug a pit in my way, but they have fallen into it themselves.”

²¹ Proverbs 21:30 “No wisdom, no understanding, no counsel can avail against the LORD.”

put Jesus to shame left ashamed; those who came to condemn the woman went away condemned.”²² The verse says “...beginning with the older ones.” Generally speaking, the longer you live, the more of a sinner you know yourself to be. The older men that come to our prayer meeting on Friday mornings generally pray against their sins the most. The older you get, the less pretensions you have left to hide behind.²³

Consider the bondage of sin that is on display in their departure. Here Christ’s words struck their very hearts. They knew themselves to be guilty, but they did not repent. They cared more about saving face than about saving their souls. Oh the deceitfulness and bondage of sin. Unbelievers can know they are guilty and can hear words that wreck their hearts and still refuse to come to Christ. Oh the need for the new birth! Oh the need for sovereign grace to invade the soul. Saints we must be in earnest prayer for God to breath on those dry dead bones so that they may live. Our evangelism will count for nothing if the Spirit of Christ doesn’t bring the new birth.²⁴

The righteous Jesus and the guilty adulteress remain

[10] Jesus stood up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?”

Imagine for a moment, the terror the woman felt when she heard Jesus uphold the law! He just said that she should be stoned. Humanly speaking, the only thing that rescued her was the utter hypocrisy of her accusers. But this was by Christ’s design. Dear congregation, we should feel the terror of our sin. This

²² John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: John 1-11*, (Chicago, IL,: Moody Publishers, 2006), pg. 329

²³ It is a grace of God when He shows the young their sin. This doesn’t mean that young people are less sinners, it means they are more ignorant of their sins, and haven’t lived long enough to have all their wicked deeds be stacked up.

²⁴ Isaiah 37:3 “They said to him, “Thus says Hezekiah, ‘This day is a day of distress, of rebuke, and of disgrace; children have come to the point of birth, and there is no strength to bring them forth.’”

adulteress is you and me. Before Christ saved us, we stood before Him accused. If you are an unbeliever, you are currently accused before Him. Caught in the very act. Every sin is spiritual adultery against God. Where will you hide from Him whose eyes roam to and fro over all the earth?²⁵

The gravity of this moment can not be understated. If this moment doesn't strike fear in your heart, you're not quite seeing it right. This adulteress woman has now fallen into the hands of the Living God. She was now face to face with the only Man who had the right to cast the first stone. Jesus Christ was without sin! He would have been perfectly just to cast the first stone and every stone, and all of heaven would have applauded at justice being done. She deserved to be condemned. Sinner, you deserve to be condemned. We all do. We have committed a thousand adulteries in our lives. Every sin is a treason against the great glory of the LORD. And God sees every single one of them. **Hebrews 4:13** "And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account." Here this woman now stood before the one whom she truly had to give an account to: Jesus Christ. How terrifying it is for sinners to fall into the hands of the Living God.²⁶ There is nothing that could be conceived that would be more terrifying than that.

And yet it is Jesus who is pursuing her pardon. "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"

[II] She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more."

"Neither do I condemn you!?" The men who left could not condemn her because they would be condemning themselves. But Jesus had every right to condemn her, and yet He doesn't. Why? Christian, Jesus had every right to

²⁵ 2 Chronicles 16:9 "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him."

²⁶ Hebrews 10:31

condemn you, and send you to hell, but He spoke to your heart “Neither do I condemn you...” Why? Oh the answer to that *why* is the reason we will be praising Christ in heaven for billions of numberless ages. “Neither do I condemn you” will be the anthem of heaven. “Neither do I condemn you” makes the angels scratch their angelic heads in astonishment.²⁷ “Neither do I condemn you” is what makes our Chinese brothers and sisters continue to exist in the under ground church under constant threat of government raids. “Neither do I condemn you” is why Algerian Christians risk their lives to evangelize in a country where evangelism is illegal. “Neither do I condemn you” are words that have shaped the entire history of the world. “Neither do I condemn you” is a more precious sentence than “let there be light” because it means that “your sins are forgiven.” And having sins forgiven by a holy God is more precious than a thousand worlds. That’s what Jesus was granting this woman. Not just relief from a death sentence, but relief from the wrath of God and entrance into eternal life. Salvation came to this woman. In some places Jesus told His patients “Your sins are forgiven...go in peace.” (**Luke 7:48-49**) Here He says “Neither do I condemn you; go...sin no more.” Both mean the same thing. Jesus altered the course of this condemned woman’s destiny forever. He acted in perfect accord with what Father sent Him to do. **John 3:17** For God did **not** send his Son into the world **to condemn the world**, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

Jesus came the first time not to condemn, but to save. And these words He speaks to all converted sinners “Neither do I you; go, and from now on sin no more.” I will handle the second part of this verse in our application.

²⁷ cf. 1 Peter 1:12

Application

Our Doctrine: If Jesus doesn't condemn us, than no one in the universe can ever lay a charge against us

When Jesus speaks these words to our ruined hearts, it is the final answer in the court room of God and is the final answer to all claims on our soul. Just as Pontius Pilate answered the chief priests "What I have written, I have written"²⁸, so Jesus answers all our accusers "What I have spoken, I have spoken." "Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us." (**Romans 8:33-34**)

Beloved these words give you your greatest weaponry against the world the flesh and the devil. Martin Luther knew this. He constantly battled accusations from Satan throughout His whole life. The movie captured his answer well when He preached to his congregation. He said "When the Devil throws your sins in your face and declares that you deserve death and hell, tell him this, "I admit that I deserve death and hell, but what of it? For I know one who suffered and made satisfaction in my behalf. His name is Jesus Christ, Son of God. Where He is, there I shall be also"²⁹

Our Duty: 1) Don't throw stones 2) Go and sin no more

Don't throw stones

Do we throw stones at our brothers or sisters? Not literal stones, but verbal stones. Do we **focus on the faults** of those whom Christ died for, not

²⁸ John 19:22

²⁹ Revelation 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, **for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down**, who accuses them day and night before our God.

recognizing the hypocrisy that we are guilty of? He who is without *that* sin, cast the first stone. Of course this doesn't mean that church discipline never needs to take place. But it should only take place out of necessity and with broken hearts.³⁰ If you are at odds with a fellow Christian *especially*, how are you any different than these hypocrites? 'Well you don't understand, they did such and such, I have a right to be angry.' This is how Jesus would answer that objection "But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment..." (Matthew 5:22) Are you angry with your brother or sister? Are you all too ready to throw verbal stones at them? Don't you realize that this is how Satan attacks the church, through the stone throwing of Christians? If he can't attack our doctrine, he will attack our practice and incite us devour one another. Beloved, ought we not rather deal with each other how Christ deals with us? Don't you see that Jesus looks more upon our graces than He does upon our sin and weaknesses? Just look at Hebrews 11, the great hall of faith. All the saints that are listed there, you would get the impression that none of them ever sinned. Noah was remembered as an heir of righteousness, not half-naked and drunk in his tent. Abraham was remembered as looking forward to the city who has no foundations, not as the husband who tried to save his own skin by telling others his wife was his sister. Sarah was remembered for considering God to be faithful, though she laughed at God's promise. And on and on. This is how Christ views us. How do you view your brothers and sister? As one whom Jesus says "Neither do I condemn you" or are you picking up stones?

Go and sin no more

When Jesus forgives the chief of sinners, he doesn't endorse a lifestyle of sin. It is true that Christ receives more fame for saving the most ruined sinner, because He shows Himself to do what no other man could do. He heals

³⁰ Galatians 6:1-4 "Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a *spirit of gentleness*. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. *Bear one another's burdens*, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself."

incurable wounds, and this magnifies His glory. But He requires that we do not turn back to our adulteries. He tells the woman, like He tells us “go, and from now on sin no more.” He doesn’t mean that we must walk in sinless perfection. That’s impossible until glory, and anyone who would claim otherwise is empty of truth. “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” (1 John 1:8) What Jesus means is ‘Stop practicing that sin which you have been saved from.’ Or as the Apostle said “What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?” (Romans 6:1-2) To continue in sin would be the same as a serial adulterer to find love and marry a woman, and then continue in his adulteries. If Christ has saved you, don’t spurn His love. Walk in the truth. This is what He commands of all His saints. And it is only false professors who continue to walk in the darkness. 1 John 1:6 “If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.” So we must ask: where does the power for a holy life come from?

Our Delight: “Neither do I condemn you, Father will condemn me in your stead.”

There is still a major obstacle to this text, and it is the biggest obstacle in the universe. The problem comes with Jesus not condemning this woman. The problem comes when you and I are not condemned. God is not righteous if sin is not punished. And if God is not righteous, we can place no hope in any of His promises for us. Unrighteous gods are no gods at all. When Jesus said “Neither do I condemn you,” He said that knowing that it would cost Him the ultimate condemnation. Again consider the words of John 3:17 “For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved **through him.**” What does it mean to be saved through Christ? It means to be **saved through His condemnation.** The only way anyone is going to heaven is if someone is condemned for their sins. So when Jesus told the woman “Neither do I condemn you” He was saying at the same time “I’ll be

condemned for you. I'm going to die for that adultery. I'm going to have to be hung between two thieves for that adultery. I'll despised by all the nation for your adultery. Crucified and tortured for that adultery. It's going to please the Father to crush me for that adultery." Jesus became the chief of sinners on the cross by imputation. Meaning every sin that every saint has ever committed was credited to His account—that's imputation—and He was condemned for it on the cross. He became a curse, cut off from the land of the living, and damned by God. He became the greatest sinner by imputation, so that He could declare to us "Neither do I condemn you!" That is the gospel. That is the good news. And that is your holy fuel to go and sin no more. Christ was condemned that you might be set free. Christ was crushed that you might be made whole. Christ suffered infinite misery, so that you would inherit everlasting happiness.

Benediction: Psalm 121:5-8

The LORD is your keeper;
 the LORD is your shade on your right hand.
 The sun shall not strike you by day,
 nor the moon by night.
 The LORD will keep you from all evil;
 he will keep your life.
 The LORD will keep
 your going out and your coming in
 from this time forth and forevermore.

Communion: If Jesus doesn't condemn us, than no one in the universe can ever lay a charge against us

God has ordained that we would have tokens that would remind us that we are no longer under condemnation. You see we can so easily forget that we have been purchased. We can so easily forget that we are no longer under the

sentence of condemnation. Christians are often defeated because they forget Jesus' words that they heard at the beginning "Neither do I condemn you." The Apostle puts it like this: "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." (**Romans 8:1**) Communion, the Lord's table is a physical token of that truth. And we have a mysterious and special union with Christ when we look upon and take these tokens once again. "This is my body condemned for you so that you would not be condemned. This is my blood poured out for you so that you would not be poured out." Jesus would have us to hear that these tokens are the final answer to any remaining charge against us. They are tokens from His kind heart telling us that if He doesn't condemn us, no one in the universe can ever lay a charge against us.