

# Scandalous Grace

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Date: 20 November 2022

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[ 0 : 00 ] Once again, we are turning to the Gospel of John. We're now entering to chapter 8, a very familiar passage to anyone who's familiar with the Gospel of John. It's the only place where this particular story is told in all the Gospels, so it's unique to John, and it fits so wonderfully here.

Father, as we come to your Word, we come humbly asking that you would fill us with the Holy Ghost and fire, so that we might hear your Word, but also that we might do it.

That we might go into our homes and communities and workplaces and schools, and wherever we go, we might go, representing your kingdom, representing the King. That we might look like Him a bit more, and we might surrender ourselves to His will. Not our will be done, but His will be done.

So, Father, come now. Use your unworthy servant to grant him that Holy Ghost and fire to preach, so that your people might hear from you in the power of your Spirit and the authority of your Word, because you are present.

Hear us. Hear our cry, O Lord, in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Let's begin, beginning really at verse 53 of chapter 7.

[ 1 : 22 ] They went each to their own house. So they left this, they left the temple area after, well, at this point in the feast. But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

Early in the morning, He came again to the temple. All the people came to Him, and He sat down and taught them. The scribes and Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery. Placing her in the midst, they said to Him, Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such a woman.

So what do you say? So what do you say? This they said to test Him, that they might have some charge to bring against Him. Jesus bent down and wrote with His finger on the ground.

And as they continued to ask Him, they kept saying, you know, what do you want? What do you think? What do you say? He stood up and said to them, let Him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.

[ 2 : 33 ] And once more, He bent down and wrote on the ground. 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 stood up, said to her, woman, where are they?

Has no one condemned you? She said, no one, Lord. Jesus said, neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on, sin no more.

That is the word of the Lord. Please be seated. Once again, thank you, praise team, for leading us so wonderfully.

I remember when living in Washington, D.C., I think we were living in Virginia at the time before we moved into the city itself. I was doing Bible studies in the city.

[ 3 : 37 ] I think it was kind of evening, a little dark a little bit. I remember turning off of New York Avenue. Very busy stretch. Not kind of fast moving.

I remember turning off of New York Avenue onto a one-way street. But I was going the wrong way. Had my entire family in the van.

And the street was multi-laned. Kind of like one of those Bruce Willis movies. The one he did in D.C. with the computer stuff. It was like multiple lanes coming right at me.

Well, the light had changed. And I remember the cars were far enough down the road so I could see them. There's four lanes of vehicles coming this way.

And I'm white-knuckled at the steering wheel going, oh my gosh, what did I do? That was a confrontation with my wrong.

[ 4 : 45 ] By God's grace, I was able to make a fast U-turn in a minivan to only surpassed by Angelina Jolie in the movie Mr. and Mrs. Smith, by the way. I moved that thing.

What did you think would have happened if I had said, they're the ones going the wrong way? Yeah.

I wouldn't be here now. Neither would my family. Jesus confronts us with our sin. And when he does, he brings life so we can make a U-turn and follow him.

And it doesn't just do this once. Sure, that's that big moment where you are finally brought to faith for the first time. Yes, yes. But he doesn't stop there.

All throughout your life, Jesus will be confronting you with your sin. So you can make a U-turn. Repent and follow him.

[ 5 : 53 ] But here's the question. Are you fighting against grace? Or are you receiving and giving grace? This is a wonderful passage.

It's a very familiar story. It comes between the two ceremonies that, remember I told you about two ceremonies that took place in the Feast of Booths. There was a ceremony of water drawing, which we looked at a lot.

And then there's also a ceremony of light, which is coming after this. So this situation right here comes in, right here in the middle. Jesus is the living water and he's the light of the world.

And this passage, I think, connects to both of those ends. Some question whether it really belongs here in the gospel. I believe it's authentic because, again, it looks just like Jesus.

It's in keeping with his holy, loving character. And again, it connects us to the living water. And I think it will connect us to Jesus as light of the world, too.

[ 6 : 56 ] I got basically, I think, three points or so. First of all, I want you to notice that without Jesus, we fight against grace. That's down to verse six in particular.

You know, our Lord continues to teach God's word publicly. He knows they want to kill him and he doesn't care. He's not afraid of them.

And he continues to teach the word of God publicly. And most of his life, therefore, was actually spent in his adulthood, spent preaching and teaching.

Not doing miracles. Miracles he did. But Jesus was ultimately a preacher and teacher of the word of God. That's why it's so important that the church gives itself to the preaching and teaching ministry. That we all teach God's word. We all share God's word. We have a message and a new way of living that goes against the grain of our natural lives and our culture.

[ 8 : 00 ] So we must renew our minds and therefore our hearts by learning from Jesus, his word, constantly. Now, the Jewish leaders were not interested in Jesus' teaching.

They didn't care about the truth. They just wanted to get rid of Jesus. So they do something heinous. They trap a woman and use her as a pawn against Jesus.

They say she was caught in the very act of adultery. She doesn't deny this, by the way. Was she married or single? I think she was single.

But if she was caught in the very act, then she would not have been alone. Hard to commit adultery by yourself. A man would have been with her.

The question I got is, where is he? Where is he? It seems he was let go. Was he one of them?

[ 9 : 04 ] In the crowd, was he one of them? Was he maybe even a Pharisee or some religious leader? I don't know. But we have to ask the questions, don't we? Because we're thinking people.

The woman is single out to use against Jesus. She was the most vulnerable in that culture. To them, she was just a tool.

She needed grace and mercy here, but instead she is despised, used, and abused by those who reject Jesus. You see, when you reject Jesus, it becomes easier to use people.

People become a means to your end. Here is their test of Jesus. Here's their test. Should we obey the law of Moses and stone her?

First of all, there was no law that said only the woman was to die. Leviticus 20.10 says, if a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress should surely be put to death.

[ 10 : 10 ] But why was this a test? Now keep in mind, test here is trying to cause someone to make a mistake.

Test here is a trap. Okay? Why was this a test? Because Jesus had already presented himself as merciful and someone who they believed was willing to break the law of God.

Remember, he healed on the Sabbath. So they saw him as a lawbreaker and they saw his mercy towards sinners. So they're trying to get him to break the law.

Keep in mind also, that's one thing. By letting her go, by the way. That's what it is. By just saying, oh, just be merciful, be loving, be kind.

They're thinking they're going to get him that way. But there was one other thing too. You remember, why did the Jewish people of that day have to go to the Romans?

[11:22] Why did they have to go to Pontius Pilate to put Jesus to death? Because the Jews didn't have the right of capital punishment. They were an occupied people and the Romans reserved the right to put people to death for themselves.

It was their way of holding power over the ones they conquered. So they had to go to Pontius Pilate to get him to put Jesus to death.

So here in this passage, they know they don't have the right of capital punishment. If Jesus says stone her and they do it, when the Romans show up, and they were going to show up because they're in Jerusalem and there's a garrison, there's guards everywhere.

When they show up causing this disturbance, they would have said, he did it. He told us to do it. So Jesus is in a very interesting position.

If he says, let her go, he'll look like he's light on law and order. If he says, kill her because she's guilty, then the Romans could come in and take him away.

[12:29] Grace was not on their mind. They were fighting against it. Second thing I want you to know is that Jesus actually confronts the graceless. Those who don't have grace, he confronts them.

We don't know what our Lord wrote on the ground. You know, this is verse 60, verse 9. We don't know what he wrote on the ground. Some suggest he wrote down the various sins of the men who had the stones.

That makes sense to me, but I can't prove it. When Jesus says, let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her, and then he starts writing down their sins, hey, that would have been something.

But we don't know for sure what he did. We don't know. But what we do know is that he appealed to their individual conscience.

God has put an autonomic spiritual nervous system in every human being called a conscience. Something in us as his image bearers that reacts to what is right and wrong.

[13:36] We all have it. Now, here's the thing. That system can be strengthened by a healthy diet of God's law and God's word, or it can be lessened by denial of it.

It can even be numbed by philosophies and lifestyles that run away from God as far as possible. You see that in Romans 1, actually.

If you go to Romans 1 and read the entire chapter, you'll find out that when Paul says, people denied God's existence, even though something inside of us deep down says there's got to be something bigger than us that made everything, but we deny his existence.

And what he says in three verses, verse 24, verse 26, and verse 30, 28, he says this. When people deny God, when they thumb their nose and they say no to him, the Bible says, and God gave them up.

Three times in that passage, God gives people up. And then they do things with their bodies and with their lives that are horrible and run away from God and run as far away from him as possible.

[15:00] And it's all the way down to, don't just stop and read the whole chapter. He shows you all kinds of behavior happen when people deny God.

And they continue to deny him. And he says, he gives them up. That's why it's good to use the law of God when witnessing. For God's law is designed to confront us with our sin, to lead us to that place where we say, I'm guilty.

It's me. It's me. It's me, oh Lord. Standing in the need of prayer. Standing in the need of grace. That's what the law is meant to do.

It's a good thing to use when you're witnessing to people. That's what happened to these men. They experienced conviction. They were confronted with their own stuff.

You know, this is genius, by the way. Divine genius. Because Jesus didn't tell them to just let her go.

[16:13] He never said let her go at all. As a matter of fact, he said the very opposite. He said stoner.

But he included some very key words. If you are without sin, who among you is without sin? Let him cast the first stone.

Wow. Go ahead. You can stoner if you want. But only if you're without sin. The older ones, notice the text.

Why did John say this? I mean, the Bible is not written. Words are not just thrown out for the sake of throwing words out. This is the word of God. He says the older ones left first.

The older ones dropped their stones and hung their heads and walked away. I think because the older ones had lived longer with their sin. And see, the older you get, the more you realize you don't have it all together.

[17:18] That should be true. It certainly should be true for us as believers in Christ that the older we get in Jesus, the more we realize, man, I thought I was pretty good.

Because you begin to realize that there are things that you glossed over, that you tolerated. Jerry Bridges wrote a book called—oh, I forgot the title.

Oh, gosh. I forgot the title. Respectable sins. Respectable sins. Because there's some things that we just tolerate in our lives. And Bridges was saying, yeah, we think they're respectable.

We don't think about it. And the older I get, the more I realize that ain't respectable. The older ones drop their stones and they leave in their guilt.

But sometimes the younger, the more optimistic about themselves and their abilities. The older you get, you realize. Jesus' question to her is telling.

[18:19] Do you catch it? He stood up, and this is verse 10 and 11. He stood up to her. He said, woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you? She said, no one, Lord.

It's like when he got down on the ground and started writing, he took his eyes off of them altogether. He forgot about them. He just started writing. I'm sorry, Hebrew, left, right to left.

He started writing and writing. He just ignored those guys, you know? He just kept writing. It was a crowd of them, so he had a lot to write, I guess.

And so he's writing and writing. And then it's like the little looked up woman. Where are they? Where'd they go? Weren't they here a minute ago?

Where are they? Where are they? The self-righteous cannot stand in the presence of Jesus.

[19:18] So let me ask you, are you willing to admit your sin? I mean, we're good at pointing out other people's sins and telling them how bad they are. But here's the thing. Are you willing to admit your sin?

Are you willing to listen to your conscience and more the word of God when you're convicted? Or are you busy throwing stones at others but are unable to look at your own heart and your own part in whatever the dispute may be?

Are you willing to put down your stones and receive and give grace and mercy?

Here's the big part. I want to spend the rest of my time here. Jesus gives grace to sinners.

The gospel has just been said. No one likes to be called a sinner, though. See, maybe we just don't. That is not a word we like to use.

[20:26] Let's face it. It means you have done something wrong. It means you have done something wrong to God, actually. R.C. Sproul, the late R.C. Sproul called sin cosmic treason.

Treason in every country I know of is punishable by death. And sin in the Bible is more than what you do. It's how you think, how you love, as well as how you live.

So no one escapes discharge. There's none righteous, the Bible says. No, not one. She was caught in adultery. She was a victim, most definitely.

But she was still wrong. Too often today we treat victims as if they are not sinners. I'm not sin. Can't deny what was done to them.

But no one, no one is without sin. No one. I'm assuming they didn't burst into the bedroom and find him.

[21:32] Likely they got her coming out of the man's home. Or maybe he left her house. Then he knocked on the door and took her out of her own home.

But we have to ask ourselves, why did they engage in adultery? Especially knowing the penalty if caught. You see, in our culture, there is no penalty.

The law won't get you. Now, maybe an angry lover might get you. But the law won't bother you if you commit adultery. We got presidents who've done that. Then the law doesn't go after them. No. Why would they do that? Why would they take such a risk? I mean, if you know you... I mean, is it... Was that really worth it?

Think about that. Was that really worth the danger of being put to death? They idolized their relationship.

[ 22 : 33 ] They told themselves they were getting something that they needed and couldn't find it anywhere else. Doesn't our God, our good God, want us to be happy?

I'm talking about us today now. I'm sure they felt the same. Nothing new under the sun, y'all. Likely she or both of them believed they were in love.

And of course, love is all we need. Love is everything. Did he tell her he was going to divorce his wife and marry her?

Tim Keller is interesting here in his book, Counterfeit Gods. He says, an idolatrous attachment can lead you to break any promise, rationalize, and any indiscretion.

Or betray any other allegiance in order to hold on to it. It may drive you to violate all good and proper boundaries.

[ 23 : 35 ] To practice idolatry is to be a slave. This is what's happening here, saints. Why would you risk your life for this?

Idolatry. We saw it last week when the Pharisee Nicodemus confronted the other Pharisees for breaking the law in regard to Jesus. They were condemning, they were accusing and condemning him, having never ever sat down with him and heard his side of anything.

They so idolatry. They so idolatrised their hope for Israel to be free that they were willing to violate their own law on justice to get rid of Jesus.

Because he didn't fit their expectations. Hmm. This story or something like it is being played out in churches across this nation all the time.

Especially in the area of sexuality and sexual expression. If you do not find your significance, your satisfaction and security in Jesus, you will violate even your own conscience.

[ 24 : 51 ] Let alone the word of God to satisfy your spiritual thirst any way you can. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. I think John put this story here to show us that.

We need living water. The timing of their catching her is suspicious too, isn't it? As Jesus gives grace to sinners.

I believe some of the guys knew this was happening all along. I mean, how did they catch her at that moment? I mean, really?

Somebody had to have been following. It didn't just happen. They didn't just happen to be walking down the street. Oh, look at what she's doing. Grab her. Let's go take her to Jesus. Come on. This was a setup.

They knew. They had to have known this was going on all the time. And they did nothing. And then when they decided they wanted to trap Jesus, they needed a scapegoat.

[ 25 : 53 ] They needed somebody they can put up and get him. And they went after what they knew was likely already going on. They didn't bring the man.

Again, I think he was one of the men in the crowd personally. I don't know. But he came out of a home and they let him go. Who knows?

Maybe even paid him off. I don't know. And then they go in. Now, she wasn't forced to do this. Don't keep in mind. Watch this. She wasn't forced to do this. But she was targeted.

So, she's a victim as well as a perpetrator. Is this a me too moment? This is what makes grace so scandalous to us.

Sinners don't deserve grace. We are guilty. We say we need justice. We got to be hard on crime and law and order.

[ 26 : 51 ] Got to live, right? We want justice because if you don't give them justice, people will never do right. Christ's grace changes people.

Justice? Justice? Not so much. Justice creates people who are fearful of getting caught again. And that's a good thing, by the way.

Amen to that. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. But justice doesn't change people's hearts. Laws don't change people. Just laws are good, right?

And provide deterrence against evil. But laws don't make people want to do right. That's why we still have racism after Jim Crow laws were abolished and equal opportunity legally granted almost 60 years ago.

And yet, we still have racism. Why are we surprised? Why? Christians should never be surprised by that. We should be the very ones saying, yep, we still got it.

[ 27 : 53 ] We should be the very ones yelling, yep, it's still here. And I meet people all the time who think, really? No. I mean, Christians, how can you be a—the Bible?

What? You think laws change people's hearts? It just made them fearful of getting caught. That's all it did.

If you were raised by a racist, that person didn't change because the laws change. If you have racism in your heart, that didn't change because the laws change.

You needed grace. You need living water. I need living water. That's why we're going to have abortion. And even though Roe v. Wade has been struck down federally, we're still going to have people getting abortions and lots of abortions are still going to happen.

Less, I pray. Less, I pray. But it's still going to happen. Why? Laws don't change hearts. Fear.

[ 28 : 54 ] Fear governs people. Way too often. But we'll say people who get abortions and abortion providers, they don't deserve grace.

Races don't deserve grace. People who gossip don't deserve grace. You in this room don't deserve grace because no one deserves grace. The grace of God I'm talking about.

No one deserves grace. This is what grace is all about. We get what we don't deserve from God in Christ. That's the beauty of God's divine grace.

His unearned, undeserved, unmerited favor to people who are guilty. The kindness of God to those who are wretched.

That's the beauty of grace. Now here's the thing. It's so easy when we're doing Bible study to focus on the people and forget about God.

[ 30 : 02 ] How many studies focus on this dear woman and how she had been exploited? And that's real. But we missed the point. God, in particular Jesus, is always the hero of the story.

What this text does is it tells us something very fundamental and powerful about Jesus. Jesus welcomes sinners. Isn't that why they hated him? In Luke 15 too, and the Pharisees and scribes grumbled saying, this man receives sinners and eats with them.

That's one reason they hated him. Because he welcomes sinners. When we own our sin, we find a welcome with Jesus. This woman was forced to own her sin.

Jesus acknowledges her sin. This is, what is his word to her? What does Jesus say to her? Neither do I condemn you.

Go, watch this, and from now on sin no more. Do you catch it? He didn't excuse her sin because she was a victim.

[ 31 : 13 ] Our culture tries to do that. It says you can't hold the victim responsible for any wrong they might have done. Now, I believe in some cases that might be true. But Jesus held her responsible.

Because like I said before, victims are still sinners. Victims need the gospel. They need the healing that only God can give.

Because without the gospel, the victim will end up becoming turned inward and bitter and broken. And that will destroy them even further than what people have done to them.

Only living water can revive the victim. Oh, justice done for them will be helpful. But it won't touch their hearts.

They need the gospel. If you've been a victim, you need grace. You need to go to the living water. And it may mean, it may mean, if you haven't met Jesus before, it will mean falling down and saying, Hey, I had nothing to do with my victimization, but I'm still a sinner.

[ 32 : 23 ] I'm still broken. I'm still a rebel against you. And this woman needed, she didn't need some do-gooders coming around saying, Oh, it's not your fault.

Well, that's all right. But you got to go further and saying, hold it. But I know a man who can fix your brokenness. But you got to own your sin.

You're going to have to own your own sin. Jesus called her out a little bit, gently, but he did call her out.

Stop this sinful behavior. And neither does he condemn her. Ooh, he doesn't condemn her. Blows my mind. Paul will later say in Romans 8, 1 and 2, There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

For the law of the spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. No condemnation in Christ. Hallelujah.

[ 33 : 28 ] Hallelujah. He forgives her. He gave her power. If she trusts him to stop finding her significance, satisfaction, and security in men who are not her husband.

That's what he was setting her free here. Beautiful. Beautiful. She could find all what she needed in him now. She could find all that she needed in the one who refused to condemn her and would not abandon her like that schlep of a boyfriend.

The safest place for a sinner is with Jesus. Amen. Amen. Remember that. Amen. Amen. With Jesus.

With you. You fell. You messed up. The safest place for you is at the feet of Jesus. Confessing. I blew it, Lord. People.

God bless us. But we can be hard on each other. I mean, really. David expressed this in 2 Samuel 24. He had sinned against God by counting the people.

[ 34 : 40 ] He made Joab, his military commander, count the people. Now, since Joab was the military commander, he likely was counting the fighting men in particular. David's conscience struck him, though.

But God sent a prophet to him and said, I know you feel you're repentant, but there's still a price. Because you disobeyed me before. You're the leader of the people.

You disobeyed me here. And so he gave David three choices, all with threes in it. He says, who gets to choose? Like choosing your own switch when you were a kid.

He says, three years of famine in the land, three months of fleeing from your enemies, or three days of pestilence in the land. Here's what David said in 2 Samuel 24, 14.

Then David said to Gad, Gad's the prophet, I am in great distress. Let us fall into the hand of the Lord, for his mercy is great.

[ 35 : 37 ] But let me not fall into the hand of man. God's mercy is great.

People will hold a grudge. And bitterness will eat them alive, and they will try to destroy you. But they're destroying themselves.

And the Bible says, Hebrew says, be careful that a root of bitterness will not spring up, we're talking about within the church, and defile many. Bitterness creates a dark cloud.

God, that's how people are. We all need living water. The bitter person needs living water. People are hard, but that's why David said, don't let me fall in their hands.

Lord, I trust you. Even if I'm being disciplined by God, David said, it was better for me to be in his hands than to fall into the hands of people. Shouldn't Christians be people of mercy?

[ 36 : 50 ] If we say God is our father, and we say Jesus is our elder brother, should we be people of grace and mercy and forgiveness and kindness?

Shouldn't that be us? Like Elder read this morning, he does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.

For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him. Jesus could have stoned her. They didn't have the right, but Jesus had the right to stone her. He was the only one who was without sin in that crowd. Now hold it, hold it, hold it. Mr. Moderator, point of order.

[ 37 : 56 ] I'm Presbyterian, forgive me. This is unjust. This scene is unjust. It's likely the woman was single.

That means the man was married. What about his wife? What about his wife? Ladies, ladies, help me out here. Pastor Kevin, come.

Your husband gets caught in adultery. Pastor Kevin shows up and says, oh, forgive. We're just going to forgive him, honey. Forgive him. And I'm not going to condemn him.

No church discipline. We just want to sweep this under the rug. You know, we just, you know. Ladies, you would look at me with, I mean, if looks could kill.

You can't, you can't. How you going to let him, you going to let her go? You going to let that tramp get away from? Oh, no, you not. She's like, I'll deal with him later.

[ 38 : 56 ] But you're going to deal with her now. You're not letting her go away. There's no way. Hold it. I can see, I can see ladies now. Listen. She sinned against me.

And my marriage. She didn't sin against you. And Jesus would have said, yes, she did. Because who is Jesus?

The son of God. God in human flesh. She had broken his law. They would say, they would say on another occasion, when Jesus told the man, pick up your bed and walk because your sins are forgiven.

They would have said, who is he that thinks he can forgive sins? See, this is it. Jesus is the one that can forgive her sins because he is the God against whom she had sinned.

David said against you and you only have her sinned in Psalm 51. Listen, that's, here it is, Jesus. Yes, it's unjust in the sense of human justice.

[ 40 : 04 ] But that's what grace is. Grace, you don't get what you deserve. She has sinned against the God of heaven.

Jesus is basically saying, drop your stones. For I am the rock that will be struck for her sins. I will provide the living water so her dry soul can live.

I will be put to death so that she can live. I will suffer the penalty for her sins so that she will not. Jesus covers her shameful disgrace with his loving and accepting grace.

That transforms you. Go now and sin no more. Not that she would ever, never, ever sin, but leave her lifestyle of sin. That's what grace does. It sets us free from the bondage of sin and death.

It gives us a choice now. We can choose the God's good. We can choose to follow Jesus. We can present Romans 6. Go back and read Romans 6 for yourself. We can present our bodies to God.

[ 41 : 11 ] We can present the members of our bodies to God as instruments of righteousness. That includes your mouth, by the way, and your keyboard. Now, can you imagine what it was like for this woman, let's wrap this up, to live in this town later?

With these folk, people would look at her with disgust. She had a scarlet letter on her, a big A, for adulteress, just like in the book, whispered behind her back.

Maybe a brave few would actually approach her with their accusations, but I bet you there's most gossip behind her back. They wouldn't confront her. They wanted to keep her enslaved to her past. Come on, this is just human nature. You know, this is what happens today, so I'm assuming we're not different than them. What would have helped her? She held unto Jesus' words.

Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on, sin no more. Neither do I. It would have been a struggle at times, but she would have kept, but if she kept drinking the living water of significant satisfaction and security, she would have had joy in the midst of the fire.

[ 42 : 33 ] God is able to forget our past so that we can live in the present and go into the future. Through Jesus, God throws our sins into the depths of the sea, and he puts up a sign on the shore that reads, no fishing.

Stay out the water. Don't go looking for your past. Don't go grieving. Don't go diving into your past and holding your past against you.

No, listen to Jesus. Neither do I condemn you. Whatever was done to you or whatever you have done, Jesus says to those who trust in him, neither do I condemn you.

Go now and sin no more. This is the best Thanksgiving news I could ever want to hear. If you're not thankful for this, then I want to plead with you, surrender to Jesus and get to know him.

He forgives sinners. He forgives messed up people full of shame and guilt. He cleanses. He changes. Amen.

[ 43 : 45 ] Father, bless your word to our hearts. Help us to not sit in judgment of your word, but sit under your word. May your word find us and may we be set free and hear Jesus saying, dear, neither do I condemn you.

Go and sin no more. In his name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.