

Casting the First Stone
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Introduction: What is God like?

- A. Everything we do should be rooted in the character of God. **(1 Pt 1:15-16)**
 - 1. The entirety of God's revelation can be expressed in terms of His character. **(Mt 22:37-40)**
 - 2. When we really understand God, it will be seen in how we think and act towards others.
- B. God's laws are never contrary to His nature. **(Deut 6:23-24)**
 - 1. In the old covenant God's laws were regulating a theocracy. Both religion and civil government were one.
 - 2. God's laws concerning capital punishment are misunderstood by many today.
 - 3. Today all governments should seek moral laws and enforce those laws based upon the place God has given them. **(Rom 13:4)**
 - 4. Unfortunately any moral and good law that God gives will be powerless and even perverted when evil men are in charge!

I. Understanding the background of John 8:1-11

- A. There were religious leaders that were actively seeking to murder Jesus. **(Jn 7:1-2)**
 - 1. He knew that they eventually would but it was to happen at the right time. **(Jn 7:6-7)**
 - 2. Why did men seek to kill Jesus? Jesus said: "because I testify of it that its works are evil." The words of Jesus receive the same response today! **(Jn 17:14)**
 - 3. These men were liars and deceivers. What they denied everyone else could plainly see! **(Jn 7:19-20; 25-26)**
 - 4. Where did they get such a heart? They learned it from example! **(Mt 23:15, 23)**
- B. These men were looking to trap and discredit Jesus.
 - 1. They tried to fool and outwit the creator of the universe! He knew they were feigning a true desire to have a question answered. **(Mt 22:18; Lk 20:23)**
 - 2. Jesus often took these evil efforts and sought in love to open their hearts! **(Lk 10:25-29)**
 - 3. These enemies quickly learned not to ask questions!

II. The sin of the woman

- A. The woman was accused of adultery. **(Jn 8:3-4)**
 - 1. This is a sin that God has strongly spoken out against. **(Ex 20:14; Lev 18:20)**
 - 2. The violation of the trust in the marriage relationship is most hurtful. Societies that accept and tolerate this destroy homes and in time the nation itself.
 - 3. God's wrath has always been powerfully expressed against such a sin. Adultery is used figurative to describe unfaithfulness to God. **(Jer 3:8-9)**
- B. God seeks the repentance of one in adultery.
 - 1. One can repent and be forgiven and still face the consequences of civil law.

2. Jesus pointed out that harlots were more likely to repent and be forgiven than these hard hearted opponents. (Mt 21:31-32)
3. Even when one is confronted in sin, God has always sought their repentance.

III. The sin of the woman's Accusers

- A. They were hypocrites of the first order. (Jn 8:3-6)
 1. How were they able to do this? How could such "timing" have happened?
 2. Why would they bring this woman to Jesus at the temple in front of a crowd?
- B. They almost completely ignored what God's law taught.
 1. If they had caught the woman "in the act of adultery," they would have also known the identity of the woman's male counterpart. Both the adulterer and the adulteress should be put to death (Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:23-24).
 2. Why bring her to Jesus? He was not a priest under the law!
- C. They treated this woman like trash. What did God want? (Mt 7:12)
 1. This is not just about self-interest. Even a selfish person is challenged to think.
 2. The pain of recent memories helped Israel. (Ex 22:21; 23:9)
 3. How we handle and remember our hurts is crucial to how we treat others.
 4. If Israel could remember the unmerited mercy they received because they daily gave thanks to God, then they would treat others with mercy.
 5. We cannot be a Christian without a grateful heart that has been broken and healed. (Mt 5:3-4)
- D. Jesus was able to get to the hearts of these accusers! (Jn 8:7-9)
 1. In what way would they need to "be without sin?"
 2. Jesus did not say that there was not a place for stones to be cast.
 3. Imagine these guilty men laying hands on the woman and beginning her execution! (Deut 17:6-7)

IV. Jesus instructions to the woman

- A. He did not condone her sin but urged her to repent and live for God! (Jn 8:10-11)
 1. Some pervert this passage to have a "live and let live" approach to life.
 2. Some try to keep Jesus' words from being taught and applied! "Since we all make mistakes, let us not be too strict in the application of God's law on adultery or any other sin."
- B. Why was Jesus hated? Why are Christians hated today? (Jn 3:19-21)
 1. When God's moral standards are lived and taught many will oppose you!
 2. Teachers have always arisen among God's people to allow men to live in sin and proclaim fellowship with God. (Jer 7:8-10)
- C. We must be a loving people in justice and mercy calling the world to repentance!
 1. How should we handle those moving towards sin that are among us?
 2. Are you and I defensive and belligerent when we are warned or rebuked?
 3. Are we uncaring and hard hearted towards others in sin?

Conclusion: May we always be a merciful people seeking the repentance of others.