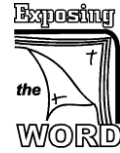




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16- The Test of the Adulterous Woman 8:1-11

One thing that even a casual observer of the events of Jesus' life would notice is the escalating hostility of the Jewish leaders to Him. He confronts their traditions and their self-made portions of the Jewish religion. Had God chosen Israel to reveal Himself to mankind through? Absolutely, but many things that had crept in under the guise of following God were not of God.

I- No Place to Lay His Head:

The last verse of John 7 tells us *And every man went unto his own house. John 7:53* Then we find the dispatch of Jesus from the feast of tabernacles according to *Joh 8:1 Jesus went unto the mount of Olives.*

The implication here seems to be that Jesus was unlike many who had their home while He had none. Remember the words of Jesus in *Matthew 8:20 And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.*

II- Temple Teaching:

If the chronology is correct in our understanding of John these events are the day after the feast of tabernacles.

John 8:2 And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. Jesus going to the temple and teaching is often spoken of by the gospel writers. (See Luke 21:37-38)

He arrives early in the temple. This is the same word used for when the women arrived early at the tomb.

One of the things that in all probability gave rise to the increasing anger was not the

holiness that the priest and scribes claimed to be protecting but the fact that Jesus drew the crowds to Himself. The best of men are prone to jealousy if not guarded.

The sitting down to teach could also have been perceived as Him taking authority unto Himself. I remind us again of the words of the guards that were sent to arrest Him. *John 7:46 The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.*

Notice a couple of verses that show how His teaching was perceived.

Matthew 7:29 For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Mark 1:21-22 And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the 48abbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught. 22 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

III- The Attempted Trap:

While He was teaching in the temple that morning the scribes and Pharisees attempt to trap Jesus with what many see is a staged event.

John 8:3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst.

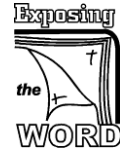
They bring a woman who had been caught in adultery. This was a crime that was punishable by stoning to death. They had not been successful in taking Him the day previous and now sought to have something in which to condemn Him.



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John 8:4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. **5** Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? **6** This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him.

They remind Jesus what Moses had taught in **Leviticus 20:10** *And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.*

The first problem we have is that this crowd conveniently forgot to bring the man. The last time I checked it takes two to commit adultery.

Most of the times this would have not been a public spectacle but the purpose was to pain Jesus in a corner so she was brought with anticipation of public action.

IV- Jesus Response:

These scribes and Pharisee are playing in the big leagues and Jesus knew what pitch was coming before it was thrown, if you will allow a baseball analogy.

John 8:6b *But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. 7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. 8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.*

One thing that verifies the Messiah in my heart is His foreknowledge and another is His godly wisdom. Remember what is said in **John 2:24-25** *But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, 25 And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.*

We live in a day today when some of the jokes and comments made on TV and in public would have made a sailor blush in other days past.

These men seemed to be not the least bit embarrassed at what they were accusing this woman of. Jesus appears to be the only one who showed embarrassment over the woman's sins.

He begins to write. Many, without a biblical base, speculate about what He wrote. Some say He wrote their specific sins. Not that He could not have but this is probably not accurate. The fact is we do not know what He wrote.

They would not go away so when He was silent they pressed on with their plot. He then speaks and tells them he who is without sin cast the first stone. Most of the times the witness of the crime for which someone was deemed to be worthy of death would have to be the one who cast the first stone.

V- Conviction of Sin:

What happened here next is remarkable but at the same time true. Many times people accuse others of the things they are guilty of or at least harbor in their hearts.

John 8:9 *And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.*

There are two significance things that seem to jump out at us here. First, their conscience convicted them of their sins. Second, the oldest were convicted first. This was probably because the longer we live the more sin we seem to accumulate.

This second stooping and writing gave these who were the accusers a change to move away.



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Jesus told us on other occasions such as, *Mat 7:3-5 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? 4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? 5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.*

These stood by and when confronted with their own conscience saw that they were guilty of sins as well. To their credit, at this time at least, they did the right thing.

Now this woman stood, without her accusers before Jesus. Before the one who knew all truth about her. Before the one who certainly could have thrown the first stone because of His holy perfection. What would He do or say.

By the way they were not the only ones in the temple. It was the accusers of the woman who had fled away. Jesus addressed the people again in *John 8:12* immediately after these events. Tenny said:

“The interview may not have been private, but it was not encumbered by the presence of tormenting enemies. In it Jesus’ method of judging sin can be contrasted with that of His foes. They brought the woman in as a captive; He questioned her as a free person. They regarded her as an accessory to their convenience; He respected her as a human being. They saw only the blackness of her past—“the very act”; He thought in terms of her future—“sin no more.” They were eager to stone her; He was ready to save her.” (*JOHN The Gospel of Belief* p 141-42)

VI- The Acquitter:

Would it not have been a frightful thing to stand before Christ? Or maybe I should ask won't it be a frightful thing to stand before Him.

Jesus stands and asks the woman a question. Notice

John 8:10 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

The case here was not dismissed because she was found not guilty but in one sense because all were found guilty. She was released because no one was left who accused her of anything.

John 8:11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

The words Jesus told her about going and sinning no more if fact admit that she was guilty.

There are a lot of lessons that we can learn from this story.

- 1- Jesus knew the intent and hearts of all those involved in this situation. He also knows our heart and motives.
- 2- We need to constantly seek to know our own hearts before God. Notice what *1 John 3:18-21* says *My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. 19 And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. 20 For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. 21 Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.*

Jesus knew the hearts of those who were attempting to trap Him in their snare. His foresight and wisdom attests to and verifies Him as Messiah.