

The Adulterous Woman

John 8:1-12

MEMORY VERSE

JOHN 8:12

Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

A two liter bottle and three clothespins.

As many small prizes (sticker, erasers, pencils, etc.) as the number of children in your class.

As many sheets of paper and pencils as the number of children in your class and a red marker. Prior to class prepare these sheets with four columns. On the far left list the fruit of the Spirit. Leave the three right hand columns empty except for three headings, "Always," "Sometimes," and "Never." Have a space at the top of the sheet for the child's name.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

London Bridge

Have two of your students hold hands and hold them up over their heads to create a "bridge." Have the remainder of your children form a single file line and cross under the "bridge" while singing "London Bridge":

London Bridge is falling down,
Falling down, falling down.
London Bridge is falling down,
My fair lady.

Take the key and lock her up,
Lock her up, lock her up.

Take the key and lock her up,
My fair lady.

When you get to the “Take the key” verse have your “bridge” drop their hands around the child underneath, holding the captive until the end of the song. This game can be continued to give many children a chance to be both “bridge” and “captive.”

Explain to your class that in today’s lesson you will be learning about a trap that some people tried to set for Jesus, but it didn’t work. In fact Jesus not only turned the trap around on those who set it for Him, but also freed someone else from the trap of sin in their life.

LESSON TIME!

Have you ever made a trap, perhaps to trick a friend, or catch an animal? (Give a personal account of a trap you or someone you know set. Here’s an example: “My little boy once set a trap for his sister as a joke. He carefully balanced a cup of water on the top of a slightly open door. He called his sister into the room so that when the door was pushed open the water would fall on her head. His trap worked flawlessly, except for one thing. It wasn’t his sister that entered at the door, but his mom! As you can guess, this story didn’t have a very happy ending.”)

Today we’re going to read how some people tried to trap Jesus.

JOHN 8:1-6

But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

Now early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him; and He sat down and taught them.

Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a

woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst,

they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act.

"Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?"

This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear.

Let's picture this scene like it happened in that day. In those days the teacher sat cross-legged on the floor and his students stood around him. (Note: you can sit on the floor and have the class stand around you if you want.) Now while Jesus was teaching, the Scribes and Pharisees (proud and haughty religious leaders, who were jealous and angry with Jesus) came to where He was. They burst in upon His quiet teaching and they didn't come alone. They had carefully planned a trap for Jesus. (If the class starts to get restless, go ahead and stand and have them sit again.)

These religious leaders brought into the middle of this crowd such a dilemma for Jesus, they thought He would be sure to make a mistake in front of everyone else. They hoped to trap Him and embarrass Him right in front of everyone! But they obviously didn't realize Who it was they were trying to trap.

They brought to Him a sinful woman. Now we know we are all sinful, but they brought a woman they had caught in what they knew would be a very big deal. She had directly broken one of the Ten Commandments! Now they presented her and her terrible sin to Jesus to see what He would do. Whatever He did, they felt sure they'd trapped Him!

The woman had committed adultery. Adultery means to break the vows of marriage by acting like you are married with someone other than your wife or husband. It's wrong. God calls it sin and in the Law of Moses it said an adulterer was to be stoned to death. That's how seriously God takes the breaking of a marriage vow. He says to cleave only to your own husband or wife. Those vows are to be for a lifetime.

This woman had been involved in this particular sin of adultery. They dragged her to Jesus in front of all His students there in the temple. This was their trap. The Law of Moses said to stone such a woman. Roman law, which was the law of the land that all the Jews hated, said that a person's life could not be taken without Roman permission. If Jesus said she was to go free, He would be contradicting the Law of Moses in the Bible. If He said she was to be stoned, He would be in trouble with the Roman authorities. This was the trap the religious leaders were trying to set for Jesus.

Wow! WWJD? What would Jesus do? Not only were the Scribes and Pharisees watching all this, but also the students of Jesus and those listening to Him. They watched closely and carefully to see what Jesus would do with the sinful woman. You see, they knew that they were sinners, too. Maybe not caught in adultery, but they were aware of their sinful selves just as we are. Who here has never sinned? If you say you haven't, we'd like to hang around you for just one day, or just one hour and I think we'd gather enough evidence to prove you are a sinner, too!

So here the crowd was watching. They knew that however Jesus dealt with her is the way He would deal with them. Those who had put their faith in Jesus saw this picture. The sinful was standing before the sinless; the impure before the pure. Everyone in the crowd saw themselves in this woman. What will He do with her? What will He do with each of us when He confronts our sin, whatever that may be?

The “Sin” Game

Set up a two liter bottle and a chair. Have each child stand on the chair over the two liter bottle, trying to drop a clothes pin (the round kind that are approximately as thick as the opening to the bottle) into the opening (this should be next to impossible). Explain that whoever gets a clothes pin into the bottle will win a prize. After each child gets a turn to try, explain that according to the rules of the game no one wins. But to show each child what grace is they will all win a prize anyway. Hand out a small prize to each child as a demonstration of grace.

If a child does get a clothes pin into the bottle, award him the privilege of passing out small prizes to the class.

The first thing we see was that He dealt with the Scribes and Pharisees before He dealt with the woman. What did He do in verse six? He stooped down and wrote in the sand. (Demonstrate by stooping and writing with your finger on the floor.) We don't know what He wrote. God didn't choose to tell us

His attitude in writing on the ground helps us understand a little more. He had just been rudely interrupted. A woman was now in their midst who was being brutally humiliated by the Scribes and Pharisees' actions. Jesus knew they had no legal right to drag her into public gaze. They blurted out her story, not with concern for justice, but to use her to try to trap Jesus. What did He do by stooping and writing? He was communicating to them how rude they were being. They continued asking Him what He was going to do with this sinful woman.

JOHN 8:7-9

So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first."

And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground.

Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

In Deuteronomy 17:7 it tells us that by Jewish law the accusers were to throw the first stone. Jesus said that those without sin should cast the first stone! Wow! That sentence should put all of us out of the stone-throwing business for the rest of our lives! Even the Scribes and Pharisees left one by one! They knew how guilty they were in their hearts. Perhaps many were guilty of the same sin as evidence by how they left the scene. They hadn't trapped God at all. They had just embarrassed themselves. Jesus cleared them out. Now comes the best part of the story.

JOHN 8:9-11

Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?"

She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more."

Jesus is left with the woman and His students. The students are still watching closely. What He does with her will indicate what He would do with them and their sin and with us and our sin. According to what Jesus had said about the sinless having the right to cast the first stone, He was the only one with the right to cast a

stone at her; He is the sinless one. But He didn't do that. Instead, He called her by the same name that He used for His mother at Cana and the cross, "Woman." It was a word Jesus used with infinite tenderness. I'm sure her face was greatly changed since she had first been brought to Jesus.

The Pharisees were cruel and she was probably angry and defiant in their hands. But now she was looking at Jesus and she humbly answered His question. He asked, "Where are your accusers? Has no one condemned you?" She answered, "No one, Lord." She called Him Lord. She knew men and she knew this was no ordinary man, but the Lord. He is the Lord and He told her, "Neither do I condemn you." He forgave her! She humbled herself before Him and acknowledged Him as Lord and He forgave her.

Jesus wasn't being easy on sin here, but in her repentant humility, He forgave her knowing that to forgive her meant that He had to one day die for her sins. Forgiveness is free for us but it cost Jesus everything to give it to us. He put Himself and His redeeming, atoning love between her and her sin. He would pay the great price for her sin, just as He paid the great price for our sin. He makes sure that His gracious forgiveness is not an excuse to sin.

He tells her to "go and sin no more." She won't be sinless, but in response to God's grace she will offer Him an obedient life. She will no longer live in willful disobedience. She will bring her life into obedience and when she does sin, she'll confess to her Lord and continue on. We learn from her that **our response to forgiveness should be obedience.**

JOHN 8:12

Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

This is one of the most wondrous verses in the entire Bible. He says, “I am the light of the world.” The light is available to everyone in the whole world. How the world needs light! How the world needs Jesus! Jesus comes and illumines the hearts of man, and those of us who acknowledge Him as Lord, like the adulterous woman, will find **our response to forgiveness should be obedience**.

“Follow” in this verse means to believe on Him and to receive Him. To trust Him and make Him Lord, just like the woman in our story **our response to forgiveness should be obedience**. He gives us the light of life. His light will be in us. The light will proceed from us. We will be a center of light. God’s very character will shine forth from us as we respond to His forgiveness with obedience.

The crowd listening to Jesus, aware of their own sin as they took note of the accused woman, must have been so moved by His grace. That meant there would be grace shown to them as they repented for their sin. They couldn’t help but respond to God’s gracious forgiveness with obedience. We see from this picture of Jesus in Scripture that He has grace for our repentant hearts, too.

When we look at our own sin and see it as God does and then turn from it, He graciously forgives us. Then **our response to forgiveness should be obedience**. We “go and sin no more” as Jesus said. We enjoy His light around us and in us.

Our Sin Account

Set up an accounting sheet on the class board. Explain to the children that in business people keep an account of things to see if they have money or if they owe a debt to someone. There is also an accounting of our sins. We are all in debt because of our sin. On a left column list the fruit of the Spirit. On three left columns list the words “always”, “sometimes”, and “never”.

Explain to your children that unless each item is listed as “always”, there is a debt of sin. After explaining this, take a red marker and write across the board, “PAID IN FULL BY JESUS.” Explain that Jesus forgives and has paid the cost for our sins on the cross. And then He produces the fruit of the Spirit in our lives.

He paid the price for our sin. Have you thanked Him for that today? Our heavenly accounting books showed that we owed a great debt because of our sin. When we asked Jesus to forgive us and rule our lives, He stamped “Paid” on our account. We no longer owe payment for our sin. We are no longer condemned because Jesus paid it all for us. When we stand before God, He’ll look and say “Your account is paid, enter into My rest.”

Wow! That’s what we have in Jesus **our response to forgiveness should be obedience**. Let’s thank Him for paying for our sins.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of thanksgiving for Jesus’ full payment for sin. If there are any children who have not received the gift of salvation, be sure and give them the opportunity to respond.