

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

“God’s Mercy Triumphs Over Judgment” Series: “The Gospel of John”
Text: John 7:53-8:1-11 Sub-texts: Exodus 23:1; John 1:17; James 2:13
Rev. Dave Sattler September 27, 2020 North Shore Alliance Church

I. INTRODUCTION: Review the Straw-Poll!

#1) What is your typical response to being accused?

- A. Deflect or blame.
- B. Confess and repent.
- C. Quietly walk away.

#2) Why makes it hard to extend mercy to others?

- A. I’m a rule-follower.
- B. People rarely give me a break so why should I give them one?
- C. I’m a good person and expect everyone to be like me.

#3) What bothers you most about hypocrites?

- A. Their blindness to self.
- B. Their condescending attitude toward others.
- C. That I am one.

#4) Justice is served when ... complete the sentence ...

- A. People are punished for what they’ve done.
- B. People are restored to lead a new life.

II. READ TEXT: John 7:53-8:11

- This story provides some deep insight into the thought and ministry of Jesus.
- I find this story forces me to look at how I’ve been disciplined, to assess my spiritual reflexes. Are they aligned with Jesus?

III. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the daily ministry schedule of Jesus? (7:53-8:2)
2. Describe the trap the religious leaders set to try and catch Jesus. (8:3-6a)

3. What is the dilemma Jesus is faced with?

On the one hand, if Jesus were to order her execution, this would snuff out the reputation for compassion for which Jesus and His movement was gaining notoriety. And, the call for a death sentence would enable the religious leaders to report Jesus to Roman authorities, for Jewish executions were banned without permission from Rome. In this way they may even be able garner the sway and power of Jesus to hassle Rome. On the other hand, stoning was the legal penalty for adultery, and if Jesus were to dismiss the guilty woman, they could accuse Him of turning a blind eye to sin and proper justice. And, try Him for treason: blatant disregard for Mosaic Law.

4. What do you think is the motivation behind the question the religious leaders pose to Jesus? (v5b)

5. How does Jesus respond to their question? (8:6b-8)
6. What do you think Jesus wrote in the dirt?
7. Discuss Jesus' famous response, Q: "Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." (v8) How does Jesus flip the script with these words?
8. Read John 1:17. Is it possible to be without sin and therefore worthy to judge? What's it mean to live the Jesus-way when it comes to judgment?
9. What happens to the woman's accusers? (8:9a)
10. Why do you think the older ones left first? (8:9b)
11. How does Jesus treat the accused woman? (8:10-11) Describe the delicate balance between glossing over her sin and harshly condemning her. Also read James 2:13.
12. How do you think the woman felt in this exchange with Jesus?

III. Application Questions

- 1. What might cause Christians to be judgmental? In actual practice or in reputation with non-Christians?***
- 2. How can we, with God's help, grow in self-awareness of our own sin and brokenness? And, how might this temper our attitude toward others?***
- 3. If you have ever felt condemned in church or by the church or church people, how does Jesus' response to the woman in this story sit with you?***
- 4. Discuss the correct balance between condemnation and turning a blind eye to sin. What are the pitfalls? How does this translate into our daily interactions with others?***
- 5. How can we (NSAC, your small group, your family/friend group) be a community that practices mercy — does not condemn people but helps set them free?***