

II. MANIFESTATIONS OF CHRIST'S POWER IN PUBLIC MINISTRY John 8

A. THE INCIDENT OF THE WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY (8:1-11)

1. This incident took place the next day after the Feast of Tabernacles was over. As many left Jerusalem Jesus went to the Mount of Olives and early the next morning He went to the temple again to teach (1,2).
2. Notice while Jesus was teaching the Scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who was caught in the act of adultery and set her before them. Then they quoted the law and used this case to accuse the Lord Jesus by getting Him to contradict the Law of Moses and discredit Him (3-5). If Jesus let her go free He would be opposing the law, if He condemned her, this would turn away those following Him and seeking forgiveness. Apparently these accusers kept on insisting upon an answer (6).
3. As the Jewish leaders insisted upon an answer Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground as though He had not heard them (6). No one knows for sure what Jesus wrote, but it could have been the names of the woman's accusers.
4. When they continued to press the Lord Jesus for an answer, He simply stated that the penalty of the law should be carried out but it should be done by those who had committed no sin (7). The law required accusers to cast the first stones at those who were condemned. Herein the Lord Jesus reinforced the principle that those who judge others should deal with their own sin first (Matt. 7:1-5).

Notice this verse is often cited to excuse sin. Some reason since everyone has done some sinful things this means they cannot be blamed for their own sin, but this verse points out rather that all men stand guilty and condemned before a Holy God even though they have never been caught in their sins.

5. Verse eight says Jesus stooped down a second time and wrote on the ground. No one knows what He wrote, but it could have been the particular sins beside their names. At any rate the woman's accusers being convicted left one by one beginning with the eldest. Herein is a principle, the older a person is the more he has sinned and the more aware he becomes of his sinfulness. Oftentimes, when a person gets saved, he becomes so pharisaical and legalistic condemning others not realizing the depth of his own sin. While he might not be guilty in one point as another is, he is guilty in another point.
6. When the woman's accusers had departed Jesus stood up and asked the woman where were her accusers and was there no one to condemn her. She replied "no man Lord." The word Lord can also mean sir and probably should be rendered as such here (10,11). Then Jesus pardoned the woman and instructed her to go and sin no more. This is the injunction and standard for all those who are saved (I Jn. 2:1,2). Notice what an

illustration we have here of law and grace (Jn. 1:17).

B. THE DEBATE BETWEEN THE LORD JESUS AND THE UNBELIEVING JEWS (8:12-59)

1. Addressed the issue of light and darkness (8:12-20).

- a. Jesus declared Himself to be the light of the world - the only Righteous One in a sin-darkened world and those who followed Him would have the light of life or the righteousness providing eternal life (12).
- b. When the Pharisees challenged Jesus of bearing witness of Himself (using the law which required two witnesses), He cited Himself and His Father as witnesses (13-18).
- c. The Pharisees then chided the Lord Jesus about His Father and He declared that they didn't know Him or His Father (19,20).

2. Addressed the issue of life and death (8:21-32).

- a. Jesus stated He was going away once again and that they could not come but would die in their sins (21). Compare Jn. 7:34
- b. Notice the Jews misunderstood what He meant (22). The Lord Jesus then pointed out that those who rejected Him and lived in their sins would die in their sins (23,24).
- c. It is evident that the Jewish leaders were blinded by sin and condemned (25-27).
- d. Jesus then intimated that His own death and resurrection would provide proof that He was who He claimed to be (28, 29).

Notice salvation through faith in Jesus is a life and death issue. We either follow Him and walk in the light and possess eternal life or we reject Him, walk in darkness and experience eternal death.

- e. In verses 30 -32 we notice some of the Jews who heard Jesus believed on Him and He declared that they would know the truth and it would set them free.

3. Addressed the issue of freedom and bondage (8:33-47)

- a. The word "they" in verse 33 no doubt refers to other unbelieving Jews. These Jews claimed to be children of Abraham and free but Jesus pointed out while they were the seed of Abraham they were in bondage to sin (34-37).

- b. Jesus then pointed out if they were Abraham’s children they would do his works or believe the truth. To this they railed an accusation against the Lord Jesus (38-41).
 - c. The Jews had said that God was their Father (41). The Lord Jesus stated that the devil was their father because they did not believe the truth. (42-47).
4. Addressed the issue of honor and dishonor (8:48-59).
- a. The unbelieving Jewish leaders then began to attack the Lord Jesus personally by calling Him a Samaritan (half-breed) with a devil (or demon) (48).
 - b. Jesus replied that He was honoring the Father and they were dishonoring Him (49). Notice what Jesus had said earlier (Jn. 5:23).
 - c. When Jesus stated those who kept His saying would never die, the Jews cited Abraham as proof that Jesus had a demon (50-53).
 - d. Jesus then spoke of how Abraham saw His day and rejoiced. They asked how could He have known Abraham being less than fifty years old. To this He declared His eternal existence. And the unbelieving Jews sought to stone Him (54-59).

QUESTIONS WHICH APPLY TO OUR LIVES

1. How may we apply the incident of verses 3-11 with Matthew 7:12?

2. What does it mean to walk in darkness (8:12)? _____

3. What does it mean to die in one’s sin (8:21, 24)? _____

4. According to verse 34 what is the thing that enslaves people?

5. What is the worst sin a person can commit today? _____
6. How can you and I walk in the light? _____
7. In what way do people misapply the incident of 8:3-11 as it is contrasted with other passages such

as I. Cor. 5:4; 6:1-6? _____

8. What evidence do genuine believers exhibit according to verses 31,32? _____

9. What is the sin Jesus is referring to in verses 21 and 24? (compare 16-7-9) _____

10. What do you think Abraham saw which many people are blind about today - 8;56? _____

EXPOSITORY NOTES

- 8:4 Notice the word “master” is literally “teacher”. This is how the Scribes and Pharisees referred to Jesus and it was an expression of sarcasm rather than a recognition of His Lordship.
- 8:6 The verb “said” is an imperfect tense and means they repeatedly prodded the Lord Jesus for an answer to entrap and condemn Him. This is borne out in verse seven.
- 8:7 Notice according to the law the witnesses of a crime had to be at least two in number and these had to be the first ones to cast stones at those condemned to death (Dt. 17:2-7).
- 8:6,8 These verses say that Jesus wrote on the ground. There are a couple of historical manuscripts which state that Jesus wrote the sins of each of these accusers (an Armenian Ms of the Gospels and Jerome’s version). These are no doubt interpretations of what Jesus did but they certainly do offer an explanation for what followed.
- 8:21 Notice the “sins” is singular “sin” and no doubt refers to the sin of unbelief.
- 8:28 The words “lifted up” here refer to Jesus’ crucifixion. This expression can be compared to what Jesus said in John 3:14.
- 8:44 The words “of his own” refer to the devil’s nature and character. The devil lies because he is by nature a liar and he murders because he is a murderer.
- 8:58 Notice Jesus’ declaration here identified Him as possessing the attribute of eternality. Only God is eternal. If Jesus is eternal (and He is) then He must be God. This was blasphemous to the Pharisees and consequently they took up stones to kill Him.

