

Date: _____



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

Signs on Believers' Highway, Lesson 41

Lesson Title: Woman Caught in Sin

Take Home Point: Jesus is the judge who pardons.

Warm-Up:

In his book, *The Prince and the Pauper*, author Mark Twain weaves a story about two boys whose appearance is so similar that they are mistaken for each other. But one is no ordinary boy. He is the Prince of Wales, heir to the throne of England. Servants respond to his slightest whim, and he grows up believing he is due the service of all and that he serves no one but himself. But for a period of four weeks, chance circumstances result in his living as one born in the lowest London slum, while his look-alike is treated with all the deference given a member of the royal family in the 16th century. The young prince learns what it is like to be unloved and served by no one. When he is restored to his rightful position and crowned king, he always remembers what he experienced and rules his country with a consideration of others.

Read: John 3:17-18a, 7:37-8:11

Observation (What happened?):

Why did the Pharisees bring the woman to Jesus?

What marvelous words of grace does Jesus give the woman after everyone else left?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

Since the law of Moses was clear, why did Jesus answer the Jewish leaders as he did?

Why do you think the older men left first?

Insight:

Isn't it interesting that the teachers and Pharisees brought only the woman to Jesus for their purposes? Doesn't adultery take two? Where was the man? Why didn't they bring him, too? This circumstance raises some questions. Were they trying to protect the man involved because of his position? Was the woman a threat to them as what we would call a "whistleblower"? Did one of the Pharisees have a vendetta against her for a reason? Or perhaps it was simply that in a male-dominated culture, she was of no worth and disposable. Of course, we can't answer these questions, but they should reinforce a lesson most of us have learned sometime in our lives – the circumstances we see may not be the whole truth. Judgment comes easily on the surface, but perhaps what we judge is not as simple as it appears. The woman certainly knew more of the story. How do you think she felt through all this? Fear, shame, outrage, disgust, sorrow, anxiety, guilt? I don't think she had many positive thoughts or emotions. Until Jesus spoke. How do you think she felt after his words of kindness and pardon? Her response isn't recorded, but I know how I feel when Jesus pardons me!

Application (What does it mean to me?):

What in your life has Jesus pardoned? How do you respond to his forgiveness?

Who do you know that needs your pardon? What are you going to do about it?

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