

Is There Any Hope Left Behind? The Restoration

(Part 2)

“Then each went to his own home. But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. At dawn He appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around Him, and He sat down to teach them. The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group and said to Jesus, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. In the Law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?” They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing Him. But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with His finger. When they kept on questioning Him, He straightened up and said to them, “If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her.” Again, He stooped down and wrote on the ground. At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, “woman, where are they? Has no-one condemned you?” “No-one sir,” she said. “Then neither do I condemn you,” Jesus declared. “Go now and leave your life of sin” (John 7:53-8:11)

What if you are in front of a king facing a big charge against you? A charge that is proven by witnesses or you has been caught during the act. You stand the king guilty not only on the eyes of the people but even in your own eyes? And not only that you are guilty but you deserve judgement and punishment. But, in spite of that you are forgiven. And what will be the impact of your forgiveness to your life?

We tackled in the previous part the above passage from the gospel of John, and we asked if there is any hope left behind in dealing with the accusing attitude of the Pharisees against the woman who was caught in the act of adultery. Today, the same question will be addressed to the woman: Is there any hope left behind? The answer is YES.

In the early manuscript of John’s Gospel, if you go back to the history of the Bible, you will find that the above passages are not originally included but were only added later. It is believed that the said event is difficult to understand and difficult to accept the genuine reason of Jesus to forgive such woman, or to by pass such a sin so easily.

Apostle Paul in his letter to the Galatians people, he wrote: *“If, while we seek to be justified in Christ, it becomes evident that we ourselves are sinners, does that mean that Christ promotes sin?” The answer is “Absolutely not.”* At the time of Jesus, the punishment for adultery cases were so severe that what Jesus did would not be explained to the people and they would stumble about such behaviour that they would say, “so then Christ promotes sin!”

In the above passage, Jesus did not deal with the sin only but he dealt with the sinners, with the whole crowd, and the society as well. And His decision to forgive and not to condemn the woman came in regard to:

1) The crowd: For Jesus, the woman’s case was not a special case compared with the whole crowd that gathered around Him. They were all sinners. *“As it is written: There is no-one righteous, not even one.” (Romans 3:23)* The crowd could have either the same sin or other

type of sins, but for sure they were not better than the woman. Jesus never promoted or gave merit for sin. And we need not be proud of being a sinner or for doing sin, *“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 6:23)*

2) The Teachers of the Law and the Pharisees: Although they came to trap Jesus, He is still a faithful teacher and what He did was in order to open their eyes about the following facts:

- a) One exposed sin does not mean it is the only sin, or we seldom find other’s sin. Most sins are hidden, but each will appear on time and for a purpose.
- b) Jesus has the authority over them all, and this is clear when we read *“those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older one first.”* Jesus did not do much to show His power over them but with few words He took full control over the situation.
- c) Jesus showed the crowd that judgement belongs to Him: *“Moreover, the Father judges no-one, but has entrusted all the judgement to the Son.” (John 5:22)* When the crowd left the woman, Jesus asked: *“Woman, where are they?”* *“No-one, Sir,”* she answered. No one condemned her.

3) The Woman: There were times that Jesus pronounced woes to some people and condemnation to certain towns and cities. But here, with this woman He offered forgiveness. Why? *First*, she was helpless, she has no power, she has nothing to say, and she cannot even defend herself. *Second*, the gravity of the situation humbled her, and her silence was read by Jesus as an act of repentance. She was surrendering everything and she was for sure longing for the forgiveness. And although she was standing in body, her spirit was kneeling down before Jesus, and Jesus knew all of what was in her heart. But if a guilty person, his head was under a guillotine or a sharp sword waiting to be decapitated or beheaded for a sin he was condemned and only waiting for death, what would be his response if somebody forgave him, if somebody gave him a new chance and a new life? Will he not be restored? Will he not become a new creation? Will he not follow that person who forgave him all his life? Will he not call that person my master? That had happened to this woman. After she had been forgiven, some of the commentaries agreed that the same woman was the one who anointed Jesus with the expensive perfume.

Many did not understand the restoration power of Jesus’ forgiveness to the woman in this event of the Bible. The fear from the idea that Christ promoted sin was behind the reluctance to put up the passage earlier in the Gospel. But the above analysis will enlighten us to appreciate Jesus’ behaviour. Probably, He did not do the same if the woman was arrogant and defiant.

My Dear and Beloved: Is there any hope left behind? Yes, Jesus never promotes sin. But He restores people in their ways. Watch and enjoy how He is restoring the crowd, the Pharisees, the teachers of the law, and the woman. Step back and give chance to Jesus to deal with sinner in His special way. Take heed and God bless you.

My Prayer: *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross of my sins to give me eternal life. Lord I realize now very well how your ways is higher than my ways. Lord teach to be more patient, discerning and tactful as you are, this is my prayer in Jesus name Amen.*