



Encounters with Jesus – The Woman Caught in Adultery

Date: Sunday 13th February

Speaker: Rosie McNeil (City Centre), Andrew McNeil (South Site)

Key Verses: John 8:1-11

Talk Summary:

We see three principles in this encounter with Jesus. No condemnation, no distraction, no confusion.

No condemnation:

In this story the teachers and Pharisees were trying to catch Jesus out and humiliate the lady in the process. They set a trap. If Jesus had answered that the woman was to be stoned, He would have been breaking the Roman law. But if He answered to let the woman go, then He would have been breaking the Jewish law.

Each story in John's Gospel paints a picture of Jesus which helps us come to a place of belief and trust in God. John 3:17 shows that Jesus mission is to save, not condemn. The word 'saved' here in John's gospel is the word Sozo. It means saved, healed and restored, delivered. It's a holistic word.

Jesus pauses and writes on the ground, then he looks up at the crowd and says "Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." The reality was that her sin was obvious - but in fact everyone's sin is obvious to God. Jesus is the only person who was qualified to cast the first stone. He has every right to condemn, yet he doesn't.

In his death on the cross Jesus takes on every death penalty required by the law so that none of us have to die. We can become fully alive to God because Jesus took our place.

Jesus confronts the Pharisee in each of us. The parts of us that feel superior or judgemental. Jesus also comforts the failure in each of us. Jesus speaks to the shame, failure, brokenness, mistakes and hurt we've caused ourselves and the hurt we've caused others. Our repentance and his forgiveness is how his sozo/saving work takes hold.

No distraction:

In v9 only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. We need to get comfortable being away from the crowds and being alone with Jesus. That's where we encounter him. Jesus modelled this in his relationship with his Father. Over time we get better at recognising the voice of Jesus. We know the kinds of things he says, we understand his thought and wisdom. Here are 5 ways that help.

- Scripture: God's word is God's best way of direct messaging you. Jesus will never contradict what he's said in the bible because he's the living word of God (Psalm 119:105).
- Spirit: Our spirits are made alive to God and we can know God speaking in our hearts and conscience.
- Saints: Valuing and learning from others who authentically follow Jesus is another way to recognise his voice (Proverbs 12:15).
- Sense: We use the mind that God has given us to think carefully, and biblically about the choices we face.
- Signs: God can work through circumstance and events in our life. Even the tough ones when we have a response to trust Jesus (Romans 8:28).

No confusion:

Jesus brings us clarity. Clarity that were deeply loved by God and clarity about how to live (v10-11).

Jesus didn't avoid a direct conversation about the woman's situation. If we are willing to listen, Jesus wants to remove our confusion and give us life clarity on all the things that matter. Sex, money, people, power, identity, our past and our future, forgiveness and faithfulness, courage and compassion.

As a Church we want to embody two things that we see in the life of Jesus. A radicle welcome and a commitment to radicle discipleship.

Resources

If you want some background on the reliability of the Biblical texts see:

<https://www.bethinking.org/is-the-bible-reliable>

<https://biblearchaeologyreport.com/2019/02/15/the-earliest-new-testament-manuscripts/>

<https://carm.org/about-the-bible/manuscript-evidence-for-superior-new-testament-reliability/>

Worship

Worship is not just singing, it is thanking God for who he is and what he has done and is lived out through a life of trusting obedience. Discussing this together is an act of worship.

(Small group worship resources can be found at bvc.so/sgworship)

- What are you thankful for this week?
- Where has God been at work in your life?
- When have you taken risks in faith and obedience this week?

If you have a time of singing you can skip the above questions but please do ask this question each week:

- What has God been speaking to you about this week? *(Go around the group quickly don't spend a long time on it)*

Discussion Questions (choose some which are most relevant to your group)

- What struck you from the passage we read?
- What are you learning about recognising the voice of Jesus?
- Consider the list: Scripture, spirit, saints, sense and signs. What else would you add to that list. Any insights from the headings above?

- How can we follow Jesus' example and express "radical welcome and radical discipleship" through our Church?

Witness - *How would you share what you have learned with a non-church friend?*

We want to be investing in authentic relationships with those who don't know Jesus yet and inviting them to anything where they might meet other Christians and Jesus. Pick one of the below each week:

- How would you share what you have learned with a non-church friend?
- What church events coming up would your friends appreciate an invitation to?
 - Upcoming Events (go to bvc.so/whats-on for details)
 - Your Kingdom Come Conference – 26th February
 - Encounter Night – 26th February