Chapter 5

From The Manger to the Cross:

The Women in Jesus’ Life

by Kris Swiatocho

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**The Woman with No Stone Cast**

Read: John 8:1-11

Re-read: John 8:1-11

Write down key points. Ask yourself, “What does this passage say to me?”

Write down what you have learned. What does this passage reveal about God the Father, The Lord Jesus, or the Holy Spirit? What did you learn about the key character and their life in reference to Jesus’ life? Is God speaking to you to make some changes in your life?

Kris’ Thoughts:

“If anyone of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her.” The imagery is incredible. Imagine it’s early in the morning, the smell of dew is in the air, the birds are chirping and our Lord Jesus Christ is sitting, talking with and teaching those who wanted to listen. All of a sudden there’s a disruption—a noise. A bunch of men interrupt what would’ve been a peaceful time. They bring a woman with them whom they’d found to be committing adultery. They come to Jesus, with stones in their hands, ready to throw them at this woman for her sin. They make this woman stand in front of all these people while her sin is announced out loud.

Who was this woman? Had she been a local prostitute? Perhaps she was married and her husband left her alone? Perhaps she’d been abused? Maybe she was single and had fallen prey to the affections of married men who were providing for her? Maybe she was a sinful woman who preyed on married men? To be honest, I don’t know. Based on Scripture, she was more than likely a married woman who was committing adultery. But had she committed such a great sin to be brought in front of everyone? Had she done something worse than anyone else? Did she deserve this kind of treatment? Do we for our sins?

Jesus stopped and turned to hear these men say that in Moses’ law that this kind of sin was punishable by stoning. They asked Jesus what they should do, hoping to catch Him in a trap. But Jesus did something they weren’t expecting. As these men kept questioning Him as to what to do, Jesus bent down and wrote something in the sand. Then He stood back up only to say, “If anyone of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her.”

Can you imagine the looks on people’s faces? What? What did he say? That’s what I would’ve asked? Hey Jesus, this isn’t about my sin, this is about her sin? Look at her, at what she has done. Justice is mine! Jesus bent down again and wrote something else in the sand. This time, each man, from the oldest to the youngest walked away. What do you suppose these men started to think about? Can you imagine their faces? From anger and ridicule to embarrassment and shame. Here they had come to Jesus, not to only catch Him in error, but also to have this woman stoned.

And this precious woman; can you imagine her thoughts? By this time she was hunched over, perhaps kneeling. Did she think her death was near? Because to be honest folks, it didn’t look good. I’m sure this woman knew of others who’d been stoned. But there she stood bent over, listening to Christ. She could see Him writing something in the sand. She could hear His voice “If anyone of you is without sin, let Him be the first to throw a stone at her.”

What? Who is this person? She stayed low to the ground. He was bending down again, and she could hear the footsteps of these angry mean as they left. What was going on? Had her fear, her expectation of death changed? Was there hope, a chance of freedom?

Then an arm grabs her, not to pull her or hurt her, but to embrace her. Jesus would straighten her up. “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?“ I can only imagine this woman, as she wiped away her tears, looking around and seeing none of her accusers. “No one, sir” she said. Wow, no one! Then Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you.” Jesus then told her to go and leave her life of sin.

I can’t imagine what fear this woman must have felt. What was she thinking? Where was her family? Where were her friends? Did she enjoy her lifestyle? Or was she so young, she didn’t realize the consequences of her actions? Adultery breaks marriages apart. It destroys families. It destroys people. I understand adultery firsthand and how it can destroy.

I grew up with a father who was never satisfied with just my mother. When I was six years old, I found a letter written to my father from another woman. I gave the letter to my mother. This would begin the downward spiral of my parents’ marriage. This letter only confirmed what my mother already knew. Despite her efforts to save the marriage, my father was not interested and continued to commit adultery throughout my childhood. My mother, without a penny to her name and no education or future, but a childlike belief in Jesus Christ, left my father.

My father’s actions to this day have had consequences on each of my family members. However, because my mother remained committed to her belief in Jesus Christ, she prayed for a faithful, honest, and trustworthy man to come into her life. She prayed for a man who would be there for her—a man who loved Jesus Christ. Yes, my mother had made mistakes, but she asked for forgiveness and a new chance with a new husband. God rewarded her and they have been married for almost 30 years. My stepfather (Dad) would not only bring love, hope, and trust into our family, but a consistent walk with Jesus Christ.

So what was this woman thinking? How am I any different? Are my sins any different than hers? Should I be paraded up and down the street wearing a big sandwich sign, or perhaps wear on my chest the letter “S” for sin. Surely I deserve it. My past has many memories of relationships, especially in college, that weren’t God centered. Like partying with people I thought were my friends, or disobeying and disrespecting to my parents. Over the

years I’ve made many stupid and thoughtless comments to people that I love; comments that I can never take back. Comments that destroyed relationships that still to this day have not been reconciled even after many efforts.

Yes, I can relate to this woman. Some of my mistakes are long forgiven and forgotten while others haunt me to this day. Not because Christ hasn’t forgiven me, but because sin has consequences—consequences that can last a lifetime. But like this sad, lost woman, who desperately needs a Savior, God would forgive me too. God is writing something in the sand for me and for you.

What We Can Learn from the Woman with No Stone Cast:

1. Jesus will stand for me. This woman, who was at her end and ready to be stoned, stood before her accusers with only Jesus to defend her. Just like this woman, each of us, our homes, churches, and communities may be asked to stand before our accusers. Our accusers may be the principal from your kid’s school who won’t allow prayer, or your boss who has told you to not bring your Bible to work, or your town that has taken the “Ten Commandments” out of the courthouse. Are you ready to be defended by Jesus? Are you prepared?

“What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?”—Romans 8:31-32

Q: How has God defended you?

2. There are consequences of my sin. Although this woman did commit adultery, a sin with horrible consequences, Jesus’ blood was still shed for it. Sin in itself is equal in the eyes of God. All of it separates us from Him and is punishable by death. However, God’s Word does teach us that there’s a difference in the consequences of our sin. Just because Jesus told her to go and not sin doesn’t mean she didn’t have to live with the consequences of her sin. I’ll have the consequences of some of my sin with me forever. That’s the price I’m paying for making some bad choices. However, God has given provision to me—to still live a life with joy and hope. That even in the midst of the storms, the valleys, He’s there and He’s my rock.

“He said: ‘The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation. He is my stronghold, my refuge and my savior—from violent men you save me. I call to the Lord, who is worthy of praise, and I am saved from my enemies.’”—2 Samuel 22:2-4

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”—Romans 6:23

Q: What has been some of the consequences of your sin?

3. Jesus wants us not to judge. So many times I’ve judged others. I’m not saying that we don’t need to hold believers accountable, but many times I’ve made assumptions about people when I had no idea of the truth. Recently I took a trip to Memphis; I was in a store and saw a woman with dreadlocks, strange clothes, thick black eyeliner, and tons of jewelry. My first thought was she obviously doesn’t know the Lord. I also had decided not to try and talk with her, as I was sure she would not be receptive. As we were pushing our carts she noticed my cart was filled to the top with supplies. She asked me if I was going to have a party. I said, “no,” and realized God wanted me to talk with her. I shared with her I was in town to teach at a local church. She then piped up with enthusiasm and said her father was a pastor at church down the road and that she and her brother sing in the choir. I was like, huh? Boy had I been wrong in my judgment. We talked for some time only to realize that she knew a friend of mine living in the same city who not only went to her church, but this woman also cut her hair. To this day, this story haunts me as it reminds me to not judge. I’m so glad that Jesus set the example first.

Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. “Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”—Luke 6:36-38

Q: When have you judged others?

4. Jesus wants us to look at our own sin first. Jesus asked if anyone else had never sinned that he was more than welcome to cast the first stone at this woman. Wow, can you imagine the thoughts of these men? Even in their pharisaic lifestyles of rules, they had to admit they were sinners. However, here is the clincher. Jesus not only wants us to look at our sin first, but to turn from it. He wants us to make changes in our lives so that we can stop sinning. He wants us to grow to be more like Him. With this woman it was a simple comment: “Go and sin no more.” Sure that might seem easy for her, but we all know it’s not. But Christ still asks it of us each day. The only way to stay in Him is to stay in Him.

“Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, “Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,” when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.”—Luke 6:41-42

Q: What have you had to forgive others for in your life?

5. True forgiveness requires repentance, but it can also lead to hope and a future. Here this woman was, and no one was left to stone her. Did she jump up and say, “Whew, that was close, thanks a lot Jesus ... have a good day. Hey, I need to call Bob and Frank and....” No, she was silent, waiting for her judgment—waiting for her death. God knew in her heart she was remorseful, ashamed, and needed forgiveness. She needed a Savior, and He would save her by forgiving her for her sins. When she looked up, and her accusers were gone, and Jesus also was not condemning her, but instead had forgiven her, she accepted it and took His advice to go and sin no more. Even though this woman sinned (not only against herself, but so many others), there could still be a future that included change, hope, and a new life. I’m so thankful that God reminds me daily of this truth. It’s this truth that helps me to move forward each day.

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”—Jeremiah 29:11

“Know also that wisdom is sweet to your soul; if you find it, there is a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off.”—Proverbs 24:14

Q:Is there sin in your life that you keep repeating over and over?

6. Sin can be exhausting. Sometimes I get so tired of repeating the same sins over and over, and over. I mean, Lord, when will you take this from me? When will I get control over some of this? Don’t you think this woman was tired? Her body language suggests this, as she didn’t even defend herself. I would’ve said, “Jesus, it takes two to commit adultery. I was with Bob yesterday. He’s over there, and then Frank today. He’s standing right here. What are you going to do to them Jesus?” But she wasn’t like me. She stood there slumped over in shame, in fear, in remorse and perhaps exhaustion. Her sins had caught up with her and now it was the end. The sin had such a hold on her that it wiped out any energy she had to defend herself—sin can do that. It can take everything from us and more.

“Because of your wrath there is no health in my body; my bones have no soundness because of my sin.”—Psalm 38:3

“Therefore, this is what the Holy One of Israel says: “Because you have rejected this message, relied on oppression and depended on deceit, this sin will become for you like a high wall, cracked and bulging, that collapses suddenly, in an instant. It will break in pieces like pottery, shattered so mercilessly that among its pieces not a fragment will be found for taking coals from a hearth or scooping water out of a cistern.”—Isaiah 30:12-14

Q: Are there times in your life that you get tired of living due to sin?

7. God never gave up on her. He doesn’t give up on us, despite when we have given up, not only on ourselves, but even on those around us who never seem to get it. You know, those who you’ve been trying to reach for Christ for years; that co-worker who you’ve invited to church a hundred times. How about your daughter or son who’s on drugs again, or a sister or brother whose marriage is in trouble? We get to our end, and we have no more strength to deal with it. Thank God that He not only never gives up on us, but can give us the strength to not give up as well. Now, don’t get me wrong, sometimes we do need to set boundaries in some of our relationships, but we must never give up—never stop praying for them. I am so glad God never gave up on me.

“Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

—1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Q: When have you wanted to give up on someone that you have tried to reach for Christ?

8. God sometimes disciplines us. “Go and sin no more.” God wasn’t merely suggesting that she change her lifestyle, her choices, or her sin. He commanded her. I know when God disciplines me, He wants a better life for me. Like when our parents discipline us; it’s not to take things from us or make us feel bad, but to help us. We don’t always see the change as good. This is why we need to trust in others who have gone before us. We need to trust in the Savior who is already ahead of us.

“Know then in your heart that as a man disciplines his son, so the Lord your God disciplines you.”—Deuteronomy 8:5

“Blessed is the man whom God corrects; so do not despise the discipline of the Almighty.”—Job 5:17

Q: When has God had to discipline you?

9. God restored her. I’m so thankful that God not only forgave her, but He restored her. So often, we need to be reminded that God can restore us. He can give us new strength, new purpose, new vision, and a new life. And even when we forget to ask for it, because our heart is heavy laden, He gives it to us anyway.

“And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.”—1 Peter 5:10

Q: When has God restored you?

10. God had a purpose for her life. When God told her to go and sin no more, He gave her a new future. A future where she could share with others what Christ had done for her . . . a future where she could be a witness to others about Christ’s love for her and His provision for her. If God was finished with her, He would have just left her. He not only defended and protected her, but He redirected her with a new beginning—a beginning with purpose.

“Listen to advice and accept instruction, and in the end you will be wise. Many are the plans in a man’s heart, but it is the Lord’s purpose that prevails.”—Proverbs 19:20-21

Q: What has God brought you out of to give you a new future?

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