



From His Hands
MINISTRIES

The Women in Christ's Life: The Woman with No Stone Cast
by Kris Swiatocho

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EDITOR'S NOTE: The following article is part of the The Women in Christ's Life Series..

My mother is only one example of a woman who has impacted my life as a result of her relationship with Christ. Throughout this series, I want to share with you about some of the other women who have impacted my life solely because of their relationship with Jesus. I believe as I share that you, too, will connect with them and discover for yourself how God has always had a plan for you, is working it out in your life and will never leave you.

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 8:1-11

"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 and teaching those who wanted to listen. All of a sudden there's a disruption, a noise. A bunch of men interrupt what would have been a peaceful time. They bring a woman with them who they had found to be committing adultery. They come to Jesus, with a 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 had being 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's law that this kind of sin was punishable by stoning. They asked Jesus what should they do, hoping to catch him in a trap. But Jesus did something they weren't expecting. As these men kept questioning Jesus 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 is what I would have 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 think these men had started to think about? Can you imagine their faces? From anger and ridicule to embarrassment and shame. Here they had come to Jesus to not only catch Jesus in error, but also to have this woman stoned.



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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 am sure this woman knew of others who had 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 men 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. 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? A woman of sin, of a past, of pain and mistakes? 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 in college that weren't God centered. Partying with people I thought were my friends. Disobedience and disrespect to my parents. Over the years I have 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 need a Savior, God would forgive me too. God is writing something in the sand for me and for you.

What I Have Learned 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, communities may be asked to stand before our accusers. Our accusers may be the principal from your kid's school who won't let you have prayer or your boss who has told you to not bring your Bible to work, or your town who have 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

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 is a difference in consequences of our sin. Just because Jesus told her to go and not sin does not mean she didn't have to live with the consequences of her sin. I will have the consequences of some of my sin with me forever. That is the price I am 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 is there and is 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

3. Jesus wants us not to judge.

So many times I have judged others. I am not saying that we don't need to hold believers accountable, but many times I have 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, tons of jewelry. My first thought was she obviously doesn't know the Lord. I also had decided to not 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 judgement. 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 am 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

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 as 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 ask 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

5. True forgiveness requires repentance but can also lead to hope and a future. Here this woman was and no one was still around 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 judgement. 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 am so thankful that God reminds me daily of this truth. It is 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

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 have said, "Jesus, it takes two to commit adultery. I was with Bob yesterday. He is over there, and then Frank today, He is 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 so much hold on her that it wiped out any energy 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

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 have been trying to reach for Christ for years. That co-worker who you have invited to church a hundred times. How about your daughter or son who is on drugs again? 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, we do need to sometimes 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



8. God sometimes disciplines us.

"Go and sin no more." God wasn't suggesting that she change her lifestyle, her choices, her sin. He told her. I know when God disciplines me it is out of wanting a better life for me. Like when our parents discipline us; it is 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

9. God restored her.

I am so thankful that God not only forgave her, but He restored her. So much 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

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 her, 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

Each day I bend over in shame and disgust with my sin. Struggles that I had thought I had overcome only to see them pop up again. During all of this, each day, each hour, each minute, Christ is waiting to pull me back up, look me in the eye, wipe away my tears and somehow make me understand that he died for me - for my sins today, yesterday and the even the ones from 20 years ago that I have a tendency to bring back up. He has forgiven me. But with this forgiveness, like this woman, there needs to be a turning away from the sin. I am thankful of the strength God has given me over the years to turn from so many of my sins, drawing closer and closer to being like Him.

So where did the woman go? What is she doing? I don't know. But with Christ as her Savior, her friend, her father, it doesn't matter because He had a plan for her life just like he does with you and me. It is up to us to go to Him for that plan to be worked out. Through him all things are possible, even despite the bad choices we have made in our lives. God can use it all for His glory.

Although I didn't deserve it, he died for me. What did he write in the sand? Maybe it was her name, their names, my name or perhaps your name.

Kris Swiatocho is the President and Director of TheSinglesNetwork.org Ministries and FromHisHands.com Ministries. Kris has served in ministry in various capacities for the last 20 years. An accomplished trainer and mentor, Kris has a heart to reach and grow leaders so they will in turn reach and grow others. She is currently working on her third Bible study, From the Manger to the Cross: The Men in Jesus' Life. Her second Bible study, From the Manger to the Cross: The Women in Jesus' Life, was published last fall and is available on her websites. Her first book, Singles and Relationships: A 31-



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Day Experiment, was co-authored with Dick Purnell of Single Life Resources.

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FromHisHands.com Ministries is Kris's speaking ministry. If you've ever heard her speak, you know that Kris is the kind of speaker who keeps the crowd captivated, shares great information and motivates people to make a difference in the lives of those around them! She speaks to all church audiences on everything from "first impression" ministry to women's topics to singles and young adults. She can speak on a Sunday morning, at a woman's retreat or for a single adults conference. Bring Kris to your church today!

Singles and Relationships by Kris Swiatocho and Dick Purnell

Many singles are Christians who wonder if God will ever bring a mate their way or if they should just stop focusing on a future with a marriage partner and live the single life to the fullest. Kris Swiatocho and Dick Purnell offer solid biblical answers for singles in this newest title in Dick's popular 31-Day Experiment Bible study.