

JESUS, THE FRIEND WHO SAVES

(John 8:2-11)

Our Lord Jesus is the greatest friend there is because He alone gave His life to save and redeem unworthy sinners (John 15:13; Matt. 9:10-13). As the famous hymn says, "*Jesus! What a Friend for sinners! Jesus! Lover of my soul; Friends may fail me, foes assail me, He, my Savior, makes me whole. Hallelujah! What a Savior! Hallelujah! What a Friend! Saving, helping, keeping, loving, He is with me to the end!*" One beautiful and powerful illustration of our Lord's character as a saving friend to sinners is His encounter with the adulterous woman in John 8. As we study this narrative, let's consider three vital principles on how we could imitate our Lord Jesus as He savingly engages people's hearts with the gospel.

1. *Renounce the evil of a* _____.

One major stumbling block to the gospel ministry of the church is the horrible evil of a judgmental spirit. This sin is characterized by a self-righteous attitude which condemns the sins of others while overlooking one's own sins. The vileness of this sin is displayed by the evil treatment of the Pharisees and the Scribes towards the adulterous woman whom they humiliated, condemned and used as a trap against Jesus (John 8:2-6). As bearers of the gospel of Christ, we should renounce every manifestation of a judgmental attitude by taking heed of the admonition of the Scriptures (Matt. 7:1-5; Rom. 2:1-4).

2. *Cultivate* _____ *towards people.*

Against the backdrop of the wicked conspiracy of the Pharisees and the scribes shines the beauty of the character of Christ (John 8:7-11). His attitude towards the woman and her accusers is marked by two amazing virtues: fearless conviction (Deut. 17:6-7) and gentle affection (Psalm 103:8-10; Matt. 9:36). Like Jesus, our unwavering commitment to God's Word should be complemented with our loving compassion towards the lost.

3. *Share the* _____.

Jesus' words to the adulterous woman are a powerful declaration of the heart of the Gospel (John 8:11). The order of His words is significant: the offer of gracious forgiveness comes first: "*Neither do I condemn you;*" then the call to a life of obedience and righteousness: "*Now go and leave your life of sin.*" In direct contrast to all other religions (*salvation by human works*) which say: "*I obey therefore I am accepted by God,*" we should share the Gospel of grace which declares: "*I am accepted in Christ, therefore I obey!*" The Gospel that saves teaches that God pronounces a guilty sinner who truly repents and trusts in Christ completely forgiven, no longer condemned and graciously accepted as a child of God because of what our Lord Jesus did on the Cross (1 Pet. 2:24; 3:18; Titus 2:14; Rom. 8:1-2, 33-34).
