



Introduction:

I think one of the strongest emotional feelings innate in every human is the sense of right and wrong. It is this sense that provokes us to follow and hold others accountable at some level to an unwritten rule or standard. And as much as we ascribe that everyone should do certain things or behave a certain way (even though we too fail to do those same things at times), aren't you glad that when you fail to uphold God's moral standard He doesn't pass swift judgment based on your disobedience? I know that as believers we are glad to be the recipients of God's grace, but are you glad when you see others receive God's grace?

Oftentimes, we tend to be forgetful and even ungrateful for the milestones of victory we have experienced on our journey with Christ, and it leads to a spirit of condemnation and judgment toward others. As believers we must not be ignorant of God's truth and grace (John 1:14, 17). As well, we must be aware of how God is operating today. He is offering His grace which reconciles anyone who will believe in Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:18-19; Colossians 1:20).

The Focus:

- **Every believer must be glad to see God's grace given to others. Why?**
 - **Because we have been shown grace.**
 - **Because it reflects the character of our Father.**
 - **Because it changes the lives of others.**

If we are going to be glad when we see God's grace, a question we must ask is, "what is grace?" If we are to be glad, as Barnabas was glad when he saw Gentiles turn to faith in Antioch (Acts 11:23), we have to understand God's grace. Grace is God refraining from giving us what we deserve (1 Thessalonians 1:10; 5:9). If we are offered grace in place of what we deserve, what does God's Word tell us we all deserve (Romans 2:5; 5:9; 6:23a; Colossians 3:6, 8; Revelation 20:15)?

Pastor Dan taught from John 8:1-11. Full of self-righteousness and condemnation, the scribes and Pharisees brought before Christ a woman they had caught in the act of adultery (John 8:3-4). Their initial behavior was like that of the man who couldn't see the wooden beam in his eye, yet could see the piece of straw in another's eye (Matthew 7:3-5). They were so focused on her wrong that they forgot the shortcomings and sins in their own life. And as Christ always did, He didn't get caught up in the ruckus of the people.

It seems that the religious crowd desired to accuse the woman, as well as to find an opportunity to condemn Christ if He answered incorrectly regarding the law of Moses concerning this matter (Deuteronomy 22:22; Leviticus 20:10; John 8:3-6). But Christ, understanding their heart and motive sought to bring their hypocrisy to the surface (John 8:7-9). Christ sought to free the woman from her sin, rather than to judge and condemn (John

8:11). As believers, we ought to understand God's grace and rejoice in seeing it given to others as Christ gave it to us (Ephesians 2:8-9; 4:32).

We should also be glad to see God's grace given to others because it reflects the character of God. In the same way that Moses was mediator for Israel (Exodus 34:9), Christ is our mediator (1 Timothy 2:5). According to Exodus 34:9, it is upon God's grace that he pardons sin. Isn't it funny that Moses, the author of the law, sought God on behalf of Israel for His grace and mercy? But here in the record of John, the ones who copied the law and the ones who taught the law sought judgment unto death (John 8:3-6). Aren't you glad we have a God who desires to forgive, who is delighted to forgive (Micah 7:18)? Remember, as our life may be the only connection to God that people encounter (2 Corinthians 3:2), our life should reflect the character of God (Exodus 34:6-7; Psalm 103:8; Luke 6:36; Romans 11:32).

If we reflect God's character, demonstrating grace and mercy to others, the desire would be to see lives changed. God's grace and mercy demonstrated by Christ with the woman left her changed (John 8:11). Jesus' purpose in coming to earth was not to condemn, but to liberate people from the penalty and power of sin (John 3:17). If you have a lapse in memory regarding your own life and what was given to you by Christ's grace and mercy, remember Paul. Paul beat Christians, falsely imprisoned them, and voiced opposition that often resulted in a believer's death (Acts 7:58-8:1). And Paul said, "*I obtained mercy,*" and because of it his life was forever changed (1 Timothy 1:13, 16). As believers, we need to decide to be glad to see God's grace given to others.

Response to the Sermon:

Because we are created in the image of God and God is just, we have an innate sense of justice (Romans 3:26); however, as God's image bearers we are also called to love mercy and walk humbly (Micah 6:8; Titus 2:11-12). As a believer, what will put you in the mindset you need in order to be glad when you see God's grace demonstrated to others (Colossians 1:12; 2 Thessalonians 2:13)? As Christ often did, prior to being tempted by the religious leaders (John 11:6), what do you think He may have been doing in the Mount of Olives before teaching at the temple the next morning (John 8:1-2; Matthew 14:23; Mark 6:46; Luke 9:28)? Paul prayed that we would grow and mature in our faith. But what has to develop in us that allows us to judge circumstances and situations justly and without hypocrisy (Philippians 1:9-11)? If you find yourself not rejoicing or being glad at God's demonstration of grace to others, you might ask God to examine your heart (Psalm 139:23-24).

Bible Study Thoughts & Questions:

Just like Jonah was called to witness to Nineveh (Jonah 1:1-2), we are called to be ambassadors of Christ to the world (2 Corinthians 5:20). If we like Jonah refuse to be God's herald and run "*from the presence of the LORD,*" (Jonah 1:3, 10) God's truth will never free others from the bondage of sin (2 Corinthians 4:3-7).

Just as Jonah and the other mariners were judged because of Jonah's disobedience by the raging sea (Jonah 1:4-15), what awaits those who are disobedient toward God (Romans 2:5, 8; 13:4; Colossians 3:5-8; Revelation 20:15)?

When we tell others of God's grace that we were given and we reflect God's character of grace and mercy, what should be the result (Jonah 3:4-5)?

What qualities of God's character did Jonah have knowledge of that we ought to be demonstrating in our daily life (Jonah 4:2)?

Application Questions:

Are you glad to see God's grace extended to others (Micah 7:18)? If it brings God joy to free and forgive others from sin, why would a believer get satisfaction out of condemning others? If God desired to give Israel "*the spirit of grace and of supplications,*" (Zechariah 12:10) and we are partakers of that same spirit (Ephesians 3:6; 2 Timothy 1:7; Romans 8:15), and God did not send Christ into the world to condemn it or the people in it, then what spirit is it that condemns (Revelation 12:10)?

The scribes and Pharisees were ignorant of God's heart. We too can become pharisaical in our relationship with others. Oftentimes, what is the reason that we manifest a judgmental and hypocritical attitude (John 8:3-5; Galatians 3:1-3)?

Why as a boss, a supervisor, a parent (anyone in authority over others) is it good to show mercy and grace when you are in the right to condemn (John 8:10-11)?

As believers we are called to be holy, separate, and blameless (Colossians 1:22), but sometimes we can confuse the soul of a person with their works. According to Ephesians 5:11, what are we to separate ourselves from?

In John 8:3-11 we see two divergent approaches to sin. One is by accusation unto death (John 8:3-7; Deuteronomy 22:22; Leviticus 20:10), the other by reconciliation unto life (John 8:8-11; 2 Corinthians 3:6, 17). What are we called to as Christ's ambassadors (2 Corinthians 5:18-20)?

Prayer:

- Pray to God being thankful for His grace and mercy (Micah 7:18; Ephesians 2:8-9).
- Pray that you would have the heart of Christ to forgive others because of the forgiveness He has given you (Ephesians 4:32).
- Pray that you would fulfill your call to be an ambassador of Christ, telling others of His marvelous grace (2 Peter 3:9; Acts 20:24).
- Pray that you would make a daily commitment to continue to follow God's grace (Acts 13:43).