

The Gospel of John

Chapter 8

Introduction:

- A. The seventh chapter ended with an internal discussion by our Lord's enemies about Him.
- B. This chapter opens with a contested passage not in many Bibles, the Pericope Adulterae.
- C. Our Lord's exchanges with the Jews will expose their rebellion and resistance to any truth.
- D. Though some will even believe on Him in some way of mental assent, He will expose them.
- E. The chapter will end with them taking up stones to kill Him for His declarations of truth.

Outline:

- 1-11 The woman taken in adultery
- 12-20 Jesus is light of the world
- 21-29 Ruin of unbelievers for sin
- 30-37 Liberty or bondage to sin
- 38-47 God or Satan as their father
- 48-50 Response to Jews' blasphemy
- 51-59 Abraham was a true believer

Simple Summary of the Pericope Adulterae Controversy

A. *Introduction to the controversy.*

1. Read John 8:1-11 and consider the story that most scholars consider to be a late addition, with them varying on whether John wrote, whether it ever occurred, or whether it is right.
2. Do you love? – *Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.*
3. Do you love? – *But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground.*
4. Do you love? – *He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.*
5. Do you love? – *Being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one.*
6. Do you love? – *Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?*
7. Do you love? – *Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.*
8. If we cannot trust John 7:53-8:11, then what can we trust? If we doubt, what do we have?
9. Man shall live by every word of God (Luke 4:4). He protects such believers (Pr 30:5-6).
10. We have a more sure word of prophecy that we ought to take heed to (II Peter 1:16-21).

B. *What is the controversy?*

1. The Latin phrase was used by Jerome, and it means the passage of the adulterous woman.
2. Most scholars and textual critics deny John 7:53 – 8:11 is inspired scripture of the Bible.
3. The author of the verses, depending on the scholar or critic, was the apostle John or not.
4. The event of these verses, depending on the scholar or critic, either happened or did not.
5. Therefore, most modern English versions identify the verses as questionable or spurious.
6. Therefore, to preach the verses authoritatively is considered imprudent by many pastors.
7. This is in stark contrast to the English Hexapla, in which all six translations included it.
8. Before all English translations included it, 85% of Greek and most Latin manuscripts did.

C. *Why the controversy?*

1. The main reason is because their favorite Greek manuscripts, **B** and *Aleph*, do not have it.
2. No one read Vaticanus until Tischendorf in 1843; he did not find Sinaiticus until 1859.
3. Dean Burgon saw the two manuscripts as false witnesses of a fabricated text (Mat 26:60)!
4. Another reason is because they and/or some of the church fathers did not understand it.
5. Other minor reasons are an interruption to John's flow and the language is too unique.
6. They adore Greek manuscripts where it is often missing and ignore other evidence for it.
7. Dean Burgon had a great explanation based on the old church's lectionary for Pentecost.
8. Oldest does not mean best in light of II Cor 2:17 and II Thess 2:2 or the Pope's library.

D. *What do Greek versions do?*

1. The *Textus Receptus* (Stephens, 1550) has it complete without question or comment.
2. The *Traditional, Majority, Byzantine, Ecclesiastical, Constantinople, Antiocheian, Syrian*, or majority text has it complete without question or comment (appreciate names).
3. The adored Greek Alexandrian manuscripts, **B** (1843) and *Aleph* (1859), do not have it.
4. Westcott and Hort (1881) put the passage in double brackets, very strongly criticizing it.
5. Nestle-Aland 23rd (1957) omitted the passage totally without brackets or double brackets.
6. Bible Society's 3rd (1976) put the passage in double brackets, very strongly criticizing it.
7. Very brief explanation of Greek versions ... https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_New_Testament.

E. *What do other English translations do?*

1. English Revised Version (1881) ... bracketed without meaning of them or explanation.
2. American Standard Version (1901) ... bracketed with footnote, "*Most of the ancient*"
3. Revised Standard Version (1952) ... footnote, "*The most ancient authorities omit*"
4. New American Standard (1960) ... bracketed with footnote, "*7:53–8:11 is not found*"
5. New American Standard (1960) ... bracketed with footnote, "*Later mss add the*"
6. New World Translation (1961) ... omitted in text, but in footnote, "*Manuscripts*"
7. Good News Bible or TEV (1966) ... bracketed with footnote, "*Many manuscripts*"
8. The Jerusalem Bible (1966; Catholic) ... footnote, "*The author of this passage is not*"
9. The Living Bible (1971) ... footnote, "*Most ancient manuscripts omit John 7:53-8:11.*"
10. New International Version (1978) ... separated by lines with footnote, "*The earliest*"
11. New Revised Standard (1989) ... double bracketed with footnote, "*The most ancient*"
12. English Standard Version (2001) ... bracketed with footnote, "*Some manuscripts*"
13. Holman Christian Standard (2004) ... bracketed with footnote, "*Other mss omit*"
14. Hermie & Friends (2004) ... footnote, "*Some early Greek manuscripts do not*"
15. Original Scofield Bible (1917) ... footnote, "*John 7.53-8.11 is not found in some of*"
16. Confraternity New Testament (1941; Catholic) ... footnote, "*Ver. 53-11. This*"
17. New Scofield Reference Bible (1967) ... footnote, "*(7:53) Although 7:53-8:11 is*"

F. *What do we do with the controversy?*

1. We believe we have God's inspired words preserved in the King James Version, which we prove to our total satisfaction with four internal spiritual arguments of the Bible itself, and this confidence by itself is enough to make the entire controversy a moot point for us.
2. We reject any men and their efforts to cast doubts or questions about scripture (Gen 3:1).
3. We reason, as God providentially confirmed the 66-book canon, so He confirmed its text.
4. We ignore the pericope controversy, or we laugh about it, depending on knowledge of it.

5. We trust John 7:53 – 8:11 as much as we trust Genesis 1:1; John 1:1; or any other verse.
6. We see how scholars, textual critics, and translators hate truth and are ignorant of the Bible by I Sam 13:1; II Sam 21:19; II Chr 22:2; Mark 1:2; Gal 3:16; I Pet 3:21; etc., etc.
7. We hold absolute trust in word-level preservation like Jesus and Paul used the scriptures.
8. We trust believing scholars over faithless skeptics e.g. Burgon, Hills, Waite, Jones, etc.
9. We trust the KJV by scriptural evidence ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/proving-the-kjv.pdf>.
10. Textual proof ... http://standardbearers.net/uploads/Which_Version_is_the_Bible_Dr_Floyd_Nolen_Jones_PhD_ThD.pdf.
11. Word-level trust by one-word arguments ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/one-word-arguments-titus.pdf>.

G. *Is there external evidence for the passage?*

1. The *Textus Receptus* (Stephens, 1550) has it complete without question or comment.
2. The Traditional, Majority, Byzantine, Ecclesiastical, Constantinople, Antiocheian, Syrian, or majority text has it complete without question or comment (appreciate names).
3. Remember that “most ancient” to textual critics is merely fourth century for B and Aleph.
4. 100’s ... it was in The Harmonies of Tatian (about 160) and Ammonius (about 230).
5. 200’s ... an instruction manual for bishops referred to the Lord’s example of clemency.
6. 300’s ... Jerome put it in the Latin Vulgate from “many Greek and Latin manuscripts.”
7. 400’s ... Augustine used the passage extensively and referred to others using it as well.
8. The pericope was well known, confirmed as scripture and read on St. Pelagia’s day, October 8 in the lectionary of the ancient Greek church, the guardians of Koine Greek.
9. Some early manuscripts e.g. L and Delta have a distinct blank space where it belongs.
10. 1998 ... a recent comparison of all Greek manuscripts show it in 81% (1350 out of 1665).
11. Wikipedia ... says that 1495 include it and 267 do not, which is an inclusion rate of 85%.
12. For more early evidence ... https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus_and_the_woman_taken_in_adultery.

H. *Is there internal evidence for the passage?*

1. Without these twelve verses, what is the transition from 7:52 to 8:12? It is very awkward, for it would have Jesus address the Jews again that were in an angry private conference.
2. Why would a corrupter insert a spurious passage in the middle of a Pentecostal section, which was known by any with minimal religious knowledge to extend from 7:37 to 8:12? There would have been a great outcry over such an insertion into a well known passage.

I. *Is there external explanation for its removal?*

1. Recall I Sam 13:1 and II Chr 22:2 where critics alter or remove text they cannot explain.
2. Augustine wrote, “Certain persons of little faith, or rather enemies of the true faith, fearing, I suppose, lest their wives should be given impunity in sinning, removed from their manuscripts the Lord’s act of forgiveness toward the adulteress, as if he who had said, Sin no more, had granted permission to sin.”
3. Very early, quite fitting, John 7:37–8:12 was read on Pentecost, excluding 7:53-8:11, which might detract from a Pentecostal reading, thus the passage was preached without the pericope, which Burgon considered the conclusive reason for any mss. missing it.
4. Manuscripts were thus marked before 7:53 and after 8:12 to not read it for Pentecost.
5. Yet the story of the adulteress was well known, confirmed as scripture and read on St. Pelagia’s day, October 8, of the ancient Greek church, the guardians of Koine Greek.

6. Vaticanus and Sinaiticus were likely taken from Origen's Hexapla by direction of Eusebius to fulfill a commission from Constantine for fifty Bibles, which if Origen had a hand in the New Testament, twisted as he was of things sexual, might lead to its removal.
7. Fenton Hort in 1886 gave the concluding work against the passage up to that time.
8. Corrupting I Samuel 13:1 ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/bible/scripture/bible-babel.php>.
9. Corrupting Ahaziah's age ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/bible/scripture/ahaziah-contradiction.php>.
10. Proverbs Babel by modern translators ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/proverbs-babel-2.pdf>.

J. *Is there is a related controversy?*

1. The last 12 verses of Mark's gospel are also denied to be inspired scripture of the Bible.
2. There are about 50 verses missing in modern versions, with these two places totaling 24.
3. The explanation for attacking, questioning, or removing the verses is the same as in John.
4. Of the 3,119 Greek manuscripts in existence today, none of which is complete, over 1800 have this section of Mark, with only three lacking the verses (B and Aleph, of course)!
5. However, it is known by all that B (Vaticanus) has a very unusual space for the passage.
6. Further external evidence of all kinds is overwhelming with great weight for the verses.
7. The internal evidence is as simple as quick reflection on the gospel ending with 16:8!
8. For much more detail about Mark 16:9-20 ... <http://bibletranslation.ws/download/snappmark.pdf>.
9. For more detail on Mark 16:9-20 ... <http://www.apologeticspress.org/apcontent.aspx?category=13&article=704>.
10. More detail ... <http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=oKWGSz-B75w%3D&tabid=321&mid=1053>.
11. For the gap in B ... <http://www.kjvtoday.com/home/should-the-longer-ending-of-mark-mark-169-20-be-in-the-bible>.

K. *For further study of the Pericope Adulterae controversy.*

1. About the controversy ... https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus_and_the_woman_taken_in_adultery.
2. Short intro ... <http://www.evidenceunseen.com/bible-difficulties-2/nt-difficulties/john-acts/jn-753-811-does-this-belong-in-the-bible/>.
3. John Burgon in favor ... <http://textualcriticism.scienceontheweb.net/TEXT/Burgon.html>.
4. Dr. Edward F. Hills in favor ... <http://www.bible-researcher.com/adult-hills.html>.
5. More ... <http://www.truthinmydays.com/a-call-for-serious-evangelical-apologetics-the-authenticity-of-john-753-811-as-a-case-study/>
6. More detail defending the KJV ... <http://brandplucked.webs.com/john753811.htm>.
7. In favor of the passage with many linked documents ... <http://pericopedeadultera.org/>.

1 Jesus went unto the mount of Olives.

Jesus went.

- A. The chief priests and Pharisees went to their houses after a meeting (7:40-53).
- B. Rather than go to His house, since He lived in Galilee, He went outside the city.

Unto the mount of Olives.

- A. The Mount of Olives was 1-2 miles outside the city, where Jesus often resorted.
- B. We find Him there at other times as well (Matt 24:3; 26:30; Luke 21:37; 22:39).
- C. We do not know where He spent the night, but He did refer to foxes (Mat 8:20).
- D. At other times the Lord Jesus continued in prayer all night to God (Luke 6:12).

2 And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them.

And early in the morning.

- A. Our Lord did not hit the snooze button often, because of His Father's business.
- B. We want to follow His holy example of energetic zeal for the kingdom of God.
- C. Though He had been teaching the previous day and rejected, He returned again.
- D. He was instant in season and out of season, just as He required (II Timothy 4:2).
- E. They that seek me early shall find me (Pr 8:17); Lady Wisdom is always there.

He came again into the temple.

- A. He came again to the temple, after the intervening time at the Mount of Olives.
- B. The temple was the house of God – the one we may refer to as the fourth house.
 - 1. Jacob called a place Bethel – house of God – for God appeared to him there.
 - 2. Moses built God a house – the tabernacle – but it was only a temporary tent.
 - 3. David and Solomon built God a great palace that Nebuchadnezzar destroyed.
 - 4. Zerubbabel, and Herod, built the latter temple/house that Rome destroyed.
 - 5. The local church is also the house of God – the fifth one and greatest of all.

And all the people came unto him.

- A. Should we, like Arminians, assume that this is all the people in world history?
 - 1. We understand *all the people* to be limited to those in Jerusalem at this time.
 - 2. We know *all the people* to be limited to those willing to hear Jesus preach.
 - 3. We know *all the people* cannot include scribes and Pharisees soon to appear.
- B. Like Mary, they came to hear Jesus, by the details that follow (Luke 10:38-42).
 - 1. We have a mutual eagerness here similar to the days of Ezra (Neh 8:1-12).
 - 2. The feast officially ended the previous day (7:37); this shows some desire.
 - 3. Though Jesus will soon expose most of them as carnal hearers (Jn 8:30-34).
 - 4. It is helpful to remember that seed in poor ground may spring up with joy.

And he sat down.

- A. The liberty of preaching different ways should free us from traditional bondage.
- B. The only pulpit in the Bible was a platform for Ezra to stand upon (Neh 8:4).
- C. His posture indicated His authority to teach and intention to be at it for a while!

And taught them.

- A. Jesus healed, multiplied lunches, and calmed storms, but He primarily taught.
- B. A great part of New Testament religion is understanding truth (I Cor 14:15).

3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,

And the scribes and Pharisees.

- A. Scribes were employed to maintain and explain the law, so also called lawyers.
 - 1. Herod gathered scribes and chief priests for our Lord's birthplace (Mat 2:4).
 - 2. The scribes were teachers, because the people found Jesus better (Mat 7:29).
 - 3. It was scribes that interpreted and applied scripture about Elijah (Mat 17:10).
 - 4. Jesus gave scribes authority from Moses that was to be obeyed (Matt 23:2).
 - 5. As teachers of scripture, they hindered men and fleeced men (Mat 23:13-15).
- B. Pharisees were the straitest, most conservative, of the Jewish sects (Acts 26:5).
 - 1. The Pharisees were a constant thorn in the side of Jesus during His ministry.
 - 2. They were a further thorn, even after conversion, to the apostles (Acts 15:5).
 - 3. It is an equal or worse sin against truth to be conservative rather than liberal.
 - 4. For more about Pharisees, see the extensive notes at John 3:1 of these notes.
- C. Frustrated by lack of success the day before, they used a new tactic (7:40-53).
- D. Note how they would not enter the kingdom and hindered others (Luke 11:52).

Brought unto him a woman taken in adultery.

- A. Consider the event of bringing a woman taken in adultery into a public forum.
- B. Since adultery, the very act of it, is intercourse, was she clothed or not here?
- C. Many questions arise as to what woman, what kind of woman, was she hired, was she seduced, was she a believer, was she one of their wives, what man, where was the man, was the man one of them, why bring only one, etc., etc.
 - 1. We trust the mind and will of God and His every word, so we go no further.
 - 2. Catholics say her name was Susanna, espoused to an old decrepit man Manasseh, and she died a saint in Spain, where she had followed James!
- D. We thank God for a clear statement by the Spirit and John of their evil (Jn 8:6).
 - 1. There was no honest or sincere inquiry about righteousness, truth, wisdom.
 - 2. Therefore, Jesus' response should be understood carefully, only in this light.
 - 3. This scene is a trap – the woman did not seek help; Jesus did not seek her.
 - 4. Jesus did not happen or choose to view capital punishment from a false trial.
 - 5. This scene is a trap – it is not a debate or sermon about private sexual sins.
 - 6. Issues at stake are legal matters of due process involving Moses and Rome.

And when they had set her in the midst.

- A. Putting the woman before Jesus and His hearers was the setting for a challenge.
- B. They truly did not care about the woman, righteousness, or the Law of Moses.
- C. This woman was a pawn (thus no man) to see if they could checkmate the King!

4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

They say unto him, Master.

- A. Flattering titles may ruin men by praise, but not Jesus (Job 32:21-22; Pr 27:21).
 - 1. Master, or Rabbi, was a title Jesus condemned for His men (Matt 23:5-12).
 - 2. Thus, we avoid all such titles today as Reverend, Father, and even Pastor.
 - 3. We do not reject the titles in other roles, and we do not reject the nouns.
 - 4. Complimentary or flattering titles may corrupt some, but not the Lord Christ.
- B. They did not respect Him as a Master, Rabbi, or Teacher, for they hated Him.
 - 1. This flattering title was part of feigning themselves just men (Luke 20:20).
 - 2. They did not come to learn – they came to trap Him in order to destroy Him.
 - 3. Their allegiance was not to Moses or his law, but rather their jobs (Jn 11:48).
 - 4. Before the chapter ends, they will call Him a Samaritan with a devil (8:48)!
- C. Wise men learn very quickly to discern whether a man wants to learn or not.
 - 1. Men that do not want to learn are always fools, and they may be scorners.
 - 2. Fools and scorners are to be rejected, for they waste time and are dangerous.
 - 3. Solomon, Jesus, and Paul warned (Pr 23:9; 26:4; Matt 7:6; II Tim 2:23; etc.).

This woman was taken in adultery.

- A. Adultery is sexual intercourse, or by extension, other sexual intimate acts reserved for spouses, in which one or both of the persons is married to another.
- B. Therefore, either the woman was married, or the man was married, or both.
- C. Even before Moses, this sin was heinous and judged (Job 31:9-11; Gen 38:24).

In the very act.

- A. The language here means they took the woman during intercourse with a man.
 - 1. How convenient they happened on such a thing while going to Jesus! Not!
 - 2. There is every reason by motive and circumstances for it to be a conspiracy.
- B. Adulterers do all they can to hide their sin, especially the act, especially then.
 - 1. Job and Solomon described the use of night for cover (Job 24:15; Prov 7:9).
 - 2. More about sin at night ... http://www.letgodbetrue.com/proverbs/commentaries/07_09.php.

5 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

Now Moses in the law commanded us.

- A. These men did not care about Moses any more than they cared about Caesar.
 - 1. The Holy Spirit will declare in plain terms their plan to accuse Him (8:6).
 - 2. They had a well-formed plan to trap Jesus, but He by wisdom defeated them.

3. Jesus had already told them to search Moses, for He wrote of me (Jn 5:39).
- B. They appealed to the highest authority in Israel – the word of God by Moses.
 1. As Jews, they heard it read, memorized it, and wore it over outer garments!
 2. They refer to Moses almost as God, though the Son of God was before them.
 3. Keep in mind that this event occurred under the old covenant of Moses' law.
- C. If they had a heart for truth, which they did not, they might have consulted Him.

That such should be stoned.

- A. Moses did command capital punishment for adultery (Lev 20:10; Deut 22:22).
- B. Moses did command stoning for very similar sex violations (Deut 22:21,24).
- C. However, death was required for both of the parties (Lev 20:10; Deut 22:22).
- D. If these accusers were exact, then the woman was betrothed, thus the stoning.
- E. Rather than be distracted by a minor point, we assume either case for simplicity.
 1. The woman was betrothed only, thus her stoning was required by Moses.
 2. Or, because of the contextual setting for Deut 22:22, stoning is implied.
 3. On what basis should we leap to some other form of death for adultery?

But what sayest thou.

- A. They did not want His judgment of the sin other than to trap and destroy Him.
 1. If Jesus ruled for stoning, they could report Him to the Romans (Jn 18:31).
 2. If Jesus ruled for stoning, they could charge with hypocrisy (Matt 21:31).
 3. If Jesus had acquitted her, they could have accused Him contrary to Moses.
 4. If Jesus had acquitted her, they could have charged He was changing law.
 5. If Jesus had acquitted her, they could have charged Him with lasciviousness.
 6. If Jesus had turned her over to Pilate, they could have accused Him a traitor to Israel (Rome did not then have laws of capital punishment for adultery).
 7. If all failed, Jesus deciding a case judicially, not theoretically, was a crime.
- B. They were no different at all here than with Caesar's tribute (Matt 22:15-18).
 1. While they did adore Moses' law (even wearing it), they had no heart for it.
 2. They regularly asked Jesus about the legality of things (Matt 12:2,10; 19:3).
- C. It is key to grasp the setting, their wicked intentions, and Jesus' knowledge of it.
 1. Jesus was under the old covenant, so His response will be the law of Moses.
 2. They were not truly asking about His opinion of the Law, so forget a lesson.
 3. Jesus did not come to destroy the Law but rather to fulfill it (Matthew 5:17).
 4. His rebukes in the Sermon on the Mount corrected their tradition, not Moses.
 5. Jesus at this time was still fully under the old covenant, the Law of Moses.
 6. Jesus was not a judge of crimes as He had no office for it, yet (Luke 12:14).
 7. There is not a lesson here that God in the New Testament is more merciful.
 8. The lesson of our Lord's wisdom is greater than any lesson of compassion.

- D. Jesus avoided their dilemma directly but created another one to confound them.
1. Like Caesar's tribute, He avoided a direct answer for *de facto* implications.
 2. Here He avoided their simplistic dilemma to press other legal requirements.

6 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.

This they said, tempting him.

- A. We thank God for the clear statement by the Spirit and John of their evil plan.
- B. There was no honest or sincere inquiry about righteousness, truth, or wisdom.
- C. Therefore, Jesus' response should be understood carefully, only in this light.
- D. This scene is a trap – the woman did not seek help, and Jesus did not seek her.
- E. Jesus did not happen or choose to view capital punishment from a false trial.
- F. This scene is a trap – it is not a discussion or sermon about private sexual sins.
- G. The issues at stake are legal matters of due process involving Moses and Rome.

That they might have to accuse him.

- A. They did not want His judgment of the sin other than to trap and destroy Him.
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 3. If Jesus had acquitted her, they could have accused Him contrary to Moses.
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 5. If Jesus had acquitted her, they could have charged Him with lasciviousness.
 6. If Jesus had turned her over to Pilate, they could have accused Him a traitor to Israel (Rome did not then have laws of capital punishment for adultery).
 7. If all failed, Jesus deciding a case judicially, not theoretically, was a crime.
- B. Not only did the Pharisees try Caesar's tribute, but also divorce law (Matt 19:3).
- C. Luke records their desperate, diabolical desire to accuse Him (Luke 11:53-54).

But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground.

- A. Instead of answering them – with one of the several options – He ignored them
 1. He showed rather clearly His avoidance of any role as judge in such matters.
 2. He took away their eager anticipation of an answer by which to accuse Him.
- B. Everyone wants to know what He wrote, but God did not tell us what He wrote.
- C. Everyone wants to know what He wrote, but they went away by what He said.
 1. They continued asking Him, because His writing had no impact at all (8:7a).
 2. It was His speech that arrested their persistence and convicted them (8:7b).
 3. They will leave Him shortly by what they heard, not what they saw (8:9).

- D. There are truly many things we could speculate that Jesus wrote on the ground.
 1. He might have written on the ground, “Where is the man?” We do not know.
 2. He might have written on the ground, Leviticus 20:10, to seek both parties.
 3. So-called great men speculated creatively e.g. Grotius, Jerome, Abrose, etc.
 4. Some mss. add stuff like, *their sins who accused her, and the sins of all men.*
- E. Trusting every word of God includes denying speculation of what is not written.
 1. It is hard for ministers, some more than others, to resist a chance to entertain.
 2. It is a shame this passage of scripture has led to many creative speculations.
 3. Be careful of speculation, or you will replace glasses with spittle (Jn 9:6-7)!
- F. There is no harm or risk taking time to answer men, especially wicked enemies.
 1. Solomon taught wisdom for righteous men of studying to answer (Pr 15:28).
 2. Not all men or questions deserve an answer (Pr 23:9; Matt 7:6; II Tim 2:23).

As though he had not heard them.

- A. His action here, recorded by the Spirit and John, was not to convey information.
 1. The language implies He wrote nothing useful, but rather ignored them all.
 2. Rather than be confounded by their trap, He ignored the woman and them.
 3. He showed holy disdain in His initial response, and He used it again shortly.
- B. There was no good or profitable reason for Him to answer them, though He did.
 1. Their intention was evil, so His lack of interest or respect was appropriate.
 2. He was not a civil judge (Luke 12:14); they had Moses’ power (Mat 23:1-3).
 3. This was not a theoretical or theological issue, but practical with a woman.
- C. These words are not in the original, being added by our honest KJV translators.
 1. Note the italics, which in the KJV indicates words interpolated by the Greek.
 2. What should we do? Did they have any basis to add the interpolated words?
 3. We trust their words here as much as ... *the brother of* ... in II Sam 21:19.
 4. We trust their words here as much as ... *am* ... in Ex 3:6 and Matt 22:32.
- D. Can you sense feelings of success? They foolishly thought – He cannot answer!

7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

So when they continued asking him.

- A. Why did they continue *asking* Him? Because His writing did not answer them.
 1. Note – they did not start *answering* Him, because He did not write questions.
 2. Note – they will continue to *ask* Him until He actually speaks His response.
- B. He wisely ignored a very graphic and personal situation by stooping to write.
 1. He did not grant these fools and scorners any honor for their evil dilemma.

2. He reduced the weight and threat of their dilemma by ignoring the situation.
- C. Can you sense feelings of success? They foolishly thought – He cannot answer!
 1. They could have used His response to reassess their situation before disaster.
 2. Haste makes waste; these fools had not thought through their vulnerability.
- D. Luke records their desperate, diabolical efforts to force Him (Luke 11:53-54).
- E. We can say they were *importunate*, but the better word would be *impertinent*.

He lifted up himself, and said unto them.

- A. Having ignored them sufficiently for His purpose, He stopped writing to speak.
- B. He had an answer for them, and He redirected them from His dilemma to theirs!
- C. Note wisely – He did not engage at all, for even a second, about any questions.
 1. Details were irrelevant, for they were sinning at every level of this situation.
 2. You know it is a simple person, if he/she gets caught up in irrelevant details.
 3. There are usually broader, deeper, and far more important matters at stake.
 4. In an argument, it is better to cut the tap root than to prune irrelevant twigs.
 5. In debate, it is better to blow up the foundation than toss pellets at windows.
 6. They wanted to debate this matter with Him and accuse one way or another.
 7. Instead, He removed all distractions to focus instead on their qualifications.

He that is without sin among you.

- A. The abuse of these words is Legion; it is our wisdom to reclaim them for truth.
 1. Effeminate Christians excuse sin by hyper-grace heresy. Think Joel Osteen.
 2. Liberals and situation ethicists love this passage to condemn strict judgment.
 3. Ignorant Christians think Jesus instituted a gentler law than Moses taught.
 4. They think that easy forgiveness is the real law of Jesus Christ and His love.
 5. Christians indiscriminately use these words to acquit and overlook any sin.
 6. Yet they viciously attack those applying scripture as legalists, Pharisees, etc.
 7. They ignorantly connect Matthew 7:1 – *Judge not, that ye be not judged.*
 8. Their new idea of no judgment uses a sinful mantra – *I'm OK, you're OK.*
 9. They think Jesus shamed accusers by saying – *Nobody is perfect; we all sin.*
 10. Interpretations like above are confused heresy and compromise the gospel.
 11. Heresy of liberty of lifestyle ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/they-promise-them-liberty.pdf>.
 12. Heresy of false grace ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/true-grace-and-false-grace.pdf>.
- B. Jesus defended, explained, obeyed, and applied God's law stricter than anyone.
 1. From circumcision and dedication to a last Passover and full burial (Ga 4:4).
 2. He declared full commitment to the law and its least details (Matt 5:17-20).
 3. He did not compromise the Seventh Commandment and capital punishment.
 4. Jesus did not change judging others, even to death, when the sin justified it.
 5. Jesus did not put a guilt trip on those that must judge others, though sinners.
 6. Jesus did not restrain or restrict judgment of offenders by imperfect judges.

7. Jesus was under the old covenant, so His response will be the law of Moses.
 8. In this case He wanted it done by the book and told them to get started on it.
 9. Jesus under law unlike Paul ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/bible/scripture/jesus-or-paul.php>.
- C. The context of this situation must be fully understood and consistently applied.
1. A text without a context is a pretext, especially the abuse of these words.
 2. The Jewish accusers were scribes and Pharisees – knowing the law perfectly.
 3. Rome had ordinarily taken away the right of capital punishment (Jn 18:31).
 4. This woman had not sought Jesus for forgiveness; Jesus had not sought her.
 5. There is no sign of repentance like others (Luke 5:8; 7:37-38; 19:8; 23:42).
 6. They were afraid of public exposure (Matt 21:23-27; 22:46; John 11:47-53).
- D. Interpretation is by two steps: what a text cannot mean; then what it does mean.
1. This is seen by the first rule of Bible study – overall context (II Pet 1:20-21).
 2. If Jesus' words are *general sin* – all judgment by imperfect rulers must end.
 3. If Jesus' words are *sexual sin* – all judgment by imperfect rulers must end.
 4. This is absurd; these men had no conscience about sin, Jesus, or the woman.
 5. Once you start down this foolish path, parents could not even judge children.
 6. This cannot be true or even close, because judgment is taught on every page.
- E. The target of his words – *among you* – was the scribe and Pharisee accusers.
1. It is important to see His wise sentence here was for the conspirators only.
 2. He already had an audience of others that had gathered early (John 8:1-2).
 3. He would continue addressing them as soon as this interruption was over.
 4. He did not address them to cause guilt or restraint when judging elsewhere.
 5. They sat in Moses' seat, so they had the authority to judge her (Matt 23:1-3).
 6. These men knew the rules, and Jesus knew they knew the rules, thus brevity.
 7. If they had a case, and He granted it to them, they should do it righteously.
 8. Any that had seen her in sin and could righteously accuse her should do so.
- F. *He that is without sin* – is not general sinfulness, general sins, or ordinary sins.
1. There is no man without sin in general; they knew it as well as we know it.
 2. If you make it sin in general, there can never be any judgment by any man.
 3. This is not a discussion of original sin, total depravity, or any related subject.
 4. The context requires us to think sin in a matter of accusing another for death.
 5. Moses' Law carefully governed accusers and judgments for any punishment.
 6. If you loosen this contextual chain, you will start down a path without truth.
 7. The woman they had brought was not the result of a coincidental discovery.
 8. They had her, without her adulterer, as a pawn, pressing capital punishment.
- G. *He that is without sin* – is not sexual sins, actual adultery, mental adultery, etc.
1. There is no man without any sexual sins; they knew it as well as we know it.
 2. If you make it sexual sins here, there cannot be any judgment by any man.
 3. This is not about sexual sin, actual or fantasy, divorce and remarriage, etc.
 4. The context requires us to think sin in a matter of accusing another for death.

5. Moses' Law carefully governed accusers and judgments for any punishment.
 6. If you loosen this contextual chain, you will start down a path without truth.
 7. The woman they had brought was not the result of a coincidental discovery.
 8. They had her, without her adulterer, as a pawn, pressing capital punishment.
 9. Jewish history indicates so much adultery that the test of jealousy was not followed, for guilty men were fearful to try wives under oath (Hosea 4:14).
- H. *He that is without sin* – these men were sinning against the legal rules of Moses.
1. Moses' law, which they had invoked, was severe to unrighteous witnesses.
 2. Their vigilantism had clear violations of what *Moses in the law commanded*.
 3. Capital punishment, serious as it was and is, had clear rules to be followed.
 4. Two witnesses were needed; they had not presented one (Deut 17:6; 19:15).
 5. Both parties to adultery were to be killed, not one (Lev 20:10; Deut 22:22).
 6. Witnesses had to be fully honest or suffer the same judgment (De 19:16-21).
 7. Witnesses had to be very righteous without any conspiracy (Ex 23:1-2,7).
 8. Witnesses with the above criteria had to throw first (Deut 17:6-7; 13:6-11).
 9. The Jews knew this rule, for they kept it when stoning Stephen (Acts 7:58).
 10. Jesus' reference to who was to throw the first stone is for legal due process.
 11. They said she was caught in the act, but these accusers sinned several ways.
 12. God's hatred of corrupt trials and witnesses was known (Exodus 20:16; Leviticus 19:16; Proverbs 6:16-19; 12:17; 19:5,9,28; 21:28; 24:28; 25:18).
- I. *He that is without sin among you* – intends only legal sin by them for execution.
1. There is an ellipsis here to be added – He that is without sin – *in this matter* and/or *in this legal process* and/or *in this capital accusation*.
 2. This is clearly the context, and we go with context above any other factors.
 3. These men knew the rules, and Jesus knew they knew the rules, thus brevity.
 4. Their question to Jesus was in light of Moses' law, not trends of casual sex.
 5. Jesus answered regarding Moses' law, not about an increase of pornography.
 6. If any other interpretation is made, then any and all judgment is weakened.
 7. If any other interpretation is made, Jesus went much farther than He needed.
 8. Jesus answered questions about legality of tribute and divorce the same way, without any sentimental tickling of depraved hearts for a righteous response.
 9. This is exactly how – *Neither do I condemn thee* – should be interpreted.
- J. Rejoice at Jesus' incredible wisdom to avoid taking any position on the matter.
1. He avoided the law, morality, the woman, circumstances, a conspiracy, etc.
 2. He turned the tables totally and neatly back on them to do their stated duty.
 3. They sat in Moses' seat, so they had authority to judge her (Matt 23:1-3).
 4. The result was as described in scripture – they fell in their net (Pr 9:15-17).
 5. If you cannot or should not deal directly, then fetch a compass (Acts 23:6).

Let him first cast a stone at her.

- A. He defended their use of Moses by telling them to go ahead and stone her now.
 - 1. He did not enter into conflict with Moses, Rome, or anyone but themselves.
 - 2. They had judicial authority from Moses, as they and He knew (Matt 23:1-3).
 - 3. He granted their premise – she must be stoned – to find a proper executioner.
 - 4. If she was guilty of a capital crime, let righteous witnesses execute her now.
 - 5. He indirectly (not as clear to us as to them) appealed to rules of Moses’ law.
 - 6. In this case He wanted it done by the book and told them to get started on it.
- B. *Let him first cast a stone* – these men were sinning against legal rules of Moses.
 - 1. Moses’ law, which they had invoked, was severe to unrighteous witnesses.
 - 2. Their vigilantism had clear violations of what *Moses in the law commanded*.
 - 3. Capital punishment, serious as it was and is, had clear rules to be followed.
 - 4. Two witnesses were needed; they had not presented one (Deut 17:6; 19:15).
 - 5. Both parties to adultery were to be killed, not one (Lev 20:10; Deut 22:22).
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 - 10. Jesus’ reference to who was to throw the first stone is for legal due process.
 - 11. They said she was caught in the act, but these accusers sinned several ways.
 - 12. God’s hatred of corrupt trials and witnesses was known (Exodus 20:16; Leviticus 19:16; Proverbs 6:16-19; 12:17; 19:5,9,28; 21:28; 24:28; 25:18).
- C. It is one thing to condemn with words but quite another to execute with stones.
 - 1. If Jesus had stepped in and turned it into a debate, they could blast away.
 - 2. But with silence and the onus back on them, they considered more carefully.
- D. Did Jesus try to bring the woman to repentance and accusers to conviction? No!
 - 1. She did not ask or seek help, confess, repent, or reform from what is written.
 - 2. Jesus had not sought her or a capital trial to teach justice about private sins.

8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

And again he stooped down.

- A. He settled the matter in one simple sentence, so He returned to ignoring them.
 - 1. He was not in a position at this time as a judge over them – they could do it.
 - 2. He had reminded them of the terms of judgment, and they could stone her.
- B. So far from their dilemma giving Him any pause or trouble, He ignored them.
 - 1. He did not ask a single question about the woman or the circumstances.
 - 2. He did not consult with His apostles about all the ramifications of the issue.
 - 3. He did not ask for the scriptures, since He was not learned (John 7:15).

- C. His pause, far from the usual intense back-and-forth, gave them time to reflect.
 - 1. The fury and heat of verbal battles usually is more instinctive than reflective.
 - 2. Having turned Moses against them, they might fear public exposure of them.
 - 3. Public exposure occurred before, causing them to avoid Him (Matt 22:46).
- D. They could withdraw inconspicuously from Him, though He did see each one!

And wrote on the ground.

- A. Rather than worry what He wrote, concern yourself with what He said to them.
- B. It was what they heard that convicted their consciences and drove them away.
- C. Some manuscripts add stuff like – *the sins of every one of them*. Who knows?

9 And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

And they which heard it.

- A. They which heard it were the woman’s accusers He had exclusively addressed.
- B. Jesus did not address those there to hear Him – only the accusers to trap Him.
- C. It was what they heard that convicted them, not what He wrote on the ground.
- D. Therefore, we can remove all speculation and deal directly with Jesus’ speech.

Being convicted by their own conscience.

- A. This is another example of a collective noun – their own conscience (singular).
- B. They were convicted by our Lord’s words, which turned Moses against them.
 - 1. They were convicted they could not kill her with so many faults in the trial.
 - 2. They knew Moses’ law better than you could, and they knew its legal terror.
 - 3. They knew that Jesus with a couple more sentences could expose their evil.
 - 4. They knew any Roman legality they had planned would now condemn them.
 - 5. They were not convicted about having recently surfed the Internet for porn.
 - 6. They were not convicted about unkindness to their children that morning.
 - 7. Such men turn away for similar reasons (Mat 21:23-27; 22:46; John 11:48).
- C. These men did not have a conscience against personal sin out of love to God.
 - 1. They did not repent to Jesus or make any reformation; they only slunk away.
 - 2. These men in six months will conspire, arrest, abuse, and cruelly kill Jesus.
 - 3. These men had no compassion for a paralytic (John 5) or blind man (Jn 9).
 - 4. These men will violently stone Stephen to death while looking like an angel.
 - 5. Their conviction was only legal errors and risk of public exposure or death.
- D. You do not have to be born again to have a strong conscience (Rom 2:12-16).
 - 1. Thus the laws of the Gentiles throughout the world without the law of God.

2. Thus laws of nature like hair length, opposite-sex love, parental honor, etc.
 3. Thus the candle of the Lord that is put in all men, per Solomon (Pr 20:27).
 4. More about conscience ... http://www.letgodbetrue.com/proverbs/commentaries/20_27.php.
- E. Each man's conscience is an individual thing depending on many factors in life.
1. The oldest would ordinarily be the wisest and most prudent in the situation.
 2. Once one man left, the eldest by context, conviction would be even greater.
 3. As the group dwindled, each man left would have rising conviction and fear.

Went out one by one.

- A. The oldest man present, more wary with the wisdom of age, left the scene first.
1. Jesus' wise choice to stoop down and write allowed the man to leave quietly.
 2. Once one man left, the eldest by context, conviction would be even greater.
- B. Jesus accused that generation of being a very adulterous one (Matt 12:39; 16:4).
1. The prophets often accused Israel of adultery; they once partied with Moab.
 2. Paul confirmed the hypocrisy of the Jews about this very sin (Romans 2:22).
 3. They claimed that the stones would run out before men needing to be stoned.
 4. While this is not the point of our Lord's word to them, it surely did not hurt.

Beginning at the eldest, even unto the last.

- A. Older men, knowing more, and with fewer hormones of all kinds, think better.
- B. Once the oldest and most esteemed left (think Jewish seniority), it became easy.
- C. It does not say to the youngest, but rather the last, to indicate all accusers left.
- D. Let older believers of both men and women be grave and sober (Titus 2:1-3).
- E. Those closest to retirement and the most legal and public experience left first.

And Jesus was left alone.

- A. Free from the accusers, but not without His apostles or the listening audience.
- B. Another example, among countless others, of context dictating definitions.
- C. If Jesus was left alone, absolutely considered, what of the woman with Him?

And the woman standing in the midst.

- A. Jesus and the woman were left standing in the midst of the original audience.
- B. This had been a trap with her as pawn; she had not pursued Jesus in repentance.
- C. This had been a trap using her; Jesus had not intervened in capital punishment.
- D. There is every reason to see the apostles and dozens or hundreds of hearers.
- E. As at other times, they were treated to Jesus Christ humiliating the best Jews.
- F. This benefit would not help them, for they would soon be exposed themselves.

10 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her.

- A. He had written nothing of consequence that we know from what is written here.
- B. His single suggestion of legal guilt, which was Moses' Law, had defeated them.
- C. He did not need to see that the accusers were gone, for He knew it immediately.

Woman, where are those thine accusers.

- A. Jesus spoke to the woman for the first time, for the event was hardly about her.
- B. She had first appeared before the crowd by accusers both graphic and violent.
- C. Jesus, the woman, and the crowd knew witnesses were needed for execution.
- D. He did not ask her of the truth of the accusations, conviction, repentance, her understanding of Bible morality, her husband's welfare, her fear of death, etc.

Hath no man condemned thee.

- A. Are you guilty, woman, according to Moses' Law, which requires accusers?
- B. Since I answered that you could be stoned, are there any here to execute it?
- C. They did condemn her unofficially as witnesses, but not judicially or officially.
- D. There was no left at all, unofficially or officially, to execute Moses' judgment.

11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

She said, No man, Lord.

- A. Free from the evil monsters, she had no man yet accusing her of a capital crime.
- B. She addressed Jesus as Lord. It is insufficient evidence for much, but it is nice.

And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee.

- A. The abuse of these words is Legion; it is our wisdom to reclaim them for truth.
 - 1. Effeminate Christians excuse sin by hyper-grace heresy. Think Joel Osteen.
 - 2. Liberals and situation ethicists love this passage to condemn strict judgment.
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 12. Heresy of false grace ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/true-grace-and-false-grace.pdf>.
- B. Jesus did not start a lax approach to adultery or any sexual sin, but the opposite.
1. God had not changed; He still hated adultery, and Paul would teach it often.
 2. The law of Moses had not changed (they were still under the old covenant).
 3. He next declared her actions were sinful and she should desist from them.
 4. Jesus in His famous Sermon included lustful thoughts and divorce abuse.
 5. Scribes that altered manuscripts due to fear of wives missed His doctrine.
- C. His words – *Neither do I condemn thee* – intend only legal judgment of stoning.
1. There is no reason to take “condemnation” by Him different than from them.
 2. Jesus will condemn the Jews strictly in this chapter (8:21,23-24,44,47; etc.).
 3. This is not an opinion of adultery, but rather the lack of civil office to judge.
 4. Jesus was not a civil judge in such matters among the people (Lu 12:13-14).
 5. This is not an opinion of adultery, but rather a lack of witnesses to proceed.
 6. This is clearly the context, and we go with context above any other factors.
 7. If any other interpretation is made, then any and all judgment is weakened.
 8. If any other interpretation is made, Jesus went much farther than He needed.
 9. This is exactly how – *He that is without sin among you* – is to be interpreted.
- D. There is nothing in His words of her salvation, and lack of follow-up confirms.
1. Do not be sentimental about the woman, for we know next to nothing of her.
 2. Do not read more into the Lord’s lack of condemnation than legal freedom.
 3. There is no evidence of her regeneration, repentance, or even reformation.
 4. Jesus laid out the will of God for her as all forms of revelation do to all men.
- E. There is nothing here to even slow down condemnation according to scripture.
1. Jesus will condemn the Jews often in this chapter (8:21,23-24,44,47; etc.).
 2. Another sexual sinner is in I Cor 5:1, but Paul condemned (I Cor 5:2-13).

Go, and sin no more.

- A. He confirmed adultery as sin in the next words for her to stop the sin in context.
- B. Where there was adultery, Jesus exposed the guilty parties well (Matt 19:3-9).
- C. This is not more than what creation, conscience, providence, and scripture do.

Textual Summary:

1. There is sufficient evidence – external and internal – for the verses in the Bible.
2. There is both scriptural (our four F’s) and manuscript evidence for the verses.
3. Scribes removing the verses showed their ignorance like they do in other places.
4. Dean Burgon’s explanation for textual confusion due to lectionaries is helpful.
5. Obsessive adoration and infatuation with Vaticanus and Sinaiticus blind critics.
6. Comparable deletion of Mark 16:9-20 is further evidence of textual superstition.

Interpretational Summary:

1. The entire event was a staged attempt to trap Jesus in an impossible dilemma.
2. There is more weight and value in His wisdom than compassion on the woman.
3. There is far more appeal to Moses' trial law for witnesses than for sexual purity.
4. There is enough information to avoid speculating what Jesus may have written.
5. Jesus did not change the holy law of God at all about adultery but confirmed it.
6. Jesus did not alter validity of imperfect authority but rather of evil conspirators.
7. The New Testament God is no different than the Old when judging sexual sin.
8. *He that is without sin* – is not general or sexual sins but legal sins as witnesses.
9. *Neither do I condemn thee* – is not compassion but His lack of formal office.
10. *Neither do I condemn thee* – is not a change in anything but a lack of witnesses.
11. Jesus did not come to destroy the law or prophets, but to fulfill (Matt 5:17-20).
12. Using this passage to lessen God's holy demands and judgment of sin is heresy.

Practical Summary:

1. There is a proper way for all justice to be applied, so make sure you do it right.
2. Be not many masters, knowing we shall receive greater condemnation (Jas 3:1).
3. All men are sinners, but it does not change God's officers applying His justice.
4. There is no obligation to answer fools; in fact, to do so is sin yourself (Pr 26:4).
5. If Jesus could rescue and deliver this woman, He can and will also deliver you.
6. You are guilty of adultery as much or more than her in several obvious respects.
7. Jesus confirmed marriage, so hate any defrauding or treachery in your marriage.
8. You have been warned – *go, and sin no more* – so keep your conscience alive.
9. Do everything you can to cultivate, educate, and empower your conscience.
10. There is nothing here against capital punishment or judgment in other spheres.

12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying.

- A. If the verses, 7:53 – 8:11, are removed here, the connection to 7:38 is awkward.
- B. But if the contested verses are left, Jesus spoke again to His hearing audience.
- C. The scribes and Pharisees in the conspiracy against Jesus had all left (John 8:9).
- D. But this does not preclude, as the context proves, other Pharisees present (8:13).

I am the light of the world.

- A. These are some of the most precious and profound words in the whole Bible.
 1. If you love the living and written word of God, then memorize this verse.

2. Since we are all Gentiles, we were in great darkness (Isaiah 9:1-2; 11:10; 42:6-7; 49:6; 60:1-3; Luke 2:32; 24:46-47; Acts 13:47-48; 26:17-18; 28:28).
 3. This confident, declarative statement by the Lord of glory is absolutely true.
 4. Without Him, you have no light; you shall spend eternity in black darkness.
- B. Light is a precious thing considered from a wide variety of angles and senses.
1. As soon as you open the Bible, you read about light driving away darkness.
 2. You sleep during each day's dark parts, because darkness is not a good time.
 3. Children or some adults are afraid of the dark, due to unknown without light.
 4. We speak idiomatically of a light or light bulb glowing when we understand.
- C. The world is a dark place, and darkness is primarily wickedness and ignorance.
1. The scripture testifies that the whole world lieth in wickedness (I John 5:19).
 2. The scripture teaches that the whole world has no light of truth (Isaiah 8:20).
 3. He is born as an ass's colt and is buried like sheep (Job 11:12; Ps 49:14,20).
 4. He dirties himself after birth, whenever frightened, and when he departs life.
 5. The best man has come up with in morality or wisdom is perverse profanity.
 6. They hate each other and want to kill each other – while singing of self-love!
 7. They are perversely cruel on abortion, divorce (for any cause), sex (without love or commitment), unions (intimidation and threats), taxation (punishing savers and rewarding debtors), marriage (same-sex), children (transgender), diet (salt, fat, meat), women (pornography), bodies (cremation), etc., etc.
 8. The consequences and results of this darkness are evident to a thinking man.
- D. What is *light* here? It is righteousness, truth, and wisdom of God against man.
1. Light is righteousness, opposite of sin, as in God (John 3:19-21; I Jn 1:5-10).
 2. Light is truth, the opposite of the lies of men (Ps 19:8; 43:3; 119:105,130).
 3. Light is wisdom, the opposite of the dark folly of men (Pr 6:23; Ps 119:130).
- E. Jesus is the light of the world; He alone represents righteousness, truth, wisdom.
1. He is the Founder and Leader of our religion, and you should worship Him.
 2. There are many false leaders of false religions of various kinds and degrees.
 3. Compare Mohamed, Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Theresa, Nero Caesar, Pope Frank, Josef Stalin, Siddharta Gautama, John Lennon, Stephen Hawking, Sitting Bull, Amenhotep III, Hirohito, Charles Darwin, Joseph Smith, etc.
 4. Consider the ignorance, oppression, immorality, or hopelessness of all these.
 5. Only Jesus knows the Creator, Jehovah, and His character and will for man.
 6. Only Jesus knows the origin of life and sin, the result of sin, and cure for sin.
 7. Only Jesus knows the damnation of souls and the way of salvation for some.
 8. Only Jesus knows how families should function and society optimize liberty.
 9. Only Jesus did anything good in His life that left good for all men to enjoy.
 10. Only Jesus had a meaningful death that opened up the way to Jehovah God.
- F. Jesus fulfilled prophecies of a great *light* (Is 9:2; 42:6-7; 60:1-3; Matt 4:12-17).
1. He was the light of the world; faith saved from darkness (John 8:12; 12:46).

2. *Light* prophesied and fulfilled in Jesus was gospel light of a spiritual sort.
 3. This was new light that dispelled Jewish darkness under the old covenant.
 4. The Gentiles were great benefactors of this light in their inherited darkness.
- G. John wrote often that Jesus was the light (Jn 1:4-5; 3:19; 8:12; 9:5; 12:35,46).

He that followeth me.

- A. Follow Jesus, making Him Lord and Master, and you a disciple, for His light.
1. It is not *hearing* that counts, for it condemns and brings God's judgment if there are not radical changes altering your life (Jas 1:21-25; Lu 8:18; 12:48).
 2. It is not *believing* that counts, for mental assent or agreement is no more than the devils, if without life-altering works (Jn 12:46; James 2:14-26; Gal 5:6).
 3. It is not *words* that count, for they bring judgment, whether by emails, texts, blogs, or a bumper sticker (Is 29:13-14; Mat 7:21-23; I Jn 1:6; 2:4; Tit 1:16).
 4. These three common pretensions of religion mean nothing and offend God.
 5. More of being doers, not hearers ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/doers-of-the-word.pdf>.
 6. The parable of the sower ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/parable-of-the-sower.pdf>.
- B. It is following Jesus that counts – changing your life to live as He directs you.
1. Jesus called apostles to follow Him, and they left all to do so (Matt 4:18-20).
 2. But Jesus called others that fussed about their pagan families (Matt 8:19-22).
 3. A true follower of Jesus turns his life upside down to match His (Lu 19:1-9).
 4. What Zacchaeus did do, the rich young ruler would not do (Matt 19:21-22).
 5. The Thessalonians turned from idols to serve God and Jesus (I Thes 1:9-10).
 6. The Ephesians burned all their books of magic of great value (Ac 19:18-20).
- C. A true follower of Jesus – a real disciple – continues in His word (John 8:31).
1. Such obedient disciples were first called Christians in Antioch (Acts 11:26).
 2. Starting and turning back is Lot's wife and worse (Lu 17:32; II Pet 2:20-22).
 3. It is does not matter if you start with joy (Matt 13:20-21; Heb 3:6,12-14).
 4. More about being a Christian ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/what-is-a-christian.pdf>.
- D. You choose every day whether you will follow Jesus or a damnable alternative.
1. The worst alternative is your heart, for it is deceitful and desperately wicked.
 2. Then there is the world, God's enemy and the cause of His burning jealousy.
 3. Both are fed and provoked by the devil Himself, the archenemy of Jesus.
- E. How do you follow Jesus? Make every choice to fully obey His plain doctrine.
1. Baal's prophets, Catholic nuns, kamikaze pilots, Mormon missionaries, suicide bombers, and Jehovah's Witnesses show zeal for nothing and no one.
 2. He puts Himself and saints of God far above your family (Matt 10:34-37).
 3. He tells wives exactly how to submit and reverence their husbands for them.
 4. Your lips are not yours. You owe every word to His glory and others' profit.
 5. Your time is His. He gives you days, and He demands and deserves a return.

6. Do you follow Jesus – is He Lord of these things in your life: work ethic, food and drink, hair length, obeying a boss, civil rulers, sex, clothing, music, books, television, Internet, money, friends, debts, moods, anger, contentment, prayer, enemies, giving, and everything else in your life?
 7. *The Lord of Details* ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/christ/he-is-lord-of-all/sermon.php>.
 8. *Your Body Is the Lord's* ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/your-body-is-the-lords.pdf>.
- F. There are consequences for rejecting light of all kinds that God freely offers.
1. Lady Wisdom gave harsh warning about rejecting her (Pr 1:20-33; 8:32-36).
 2. Without excuse due to truth, He turns men to reprobate minds (Ro 1:20,28).
 3. Since man rejected God's light, He has eternal darkness for him (Jude 1:13).
 4. Since His light reproves (Eph 5:13), sudden destruction is next (Prov 29:1).

Shall not walk in darkness.

- A. You were born in darkness to dark parents in a dark world with a dark future.
- B. The Bible does not have anything good to say about Gentiles (Eph 4:17-19).
 1. Jesus the light visited us 2000 yrs ago, but the darkness missed Him (Jn 1:5).
 2. We are Gentiles – dark (Acts 11:18; 13:47-48; 14:27; 17:29-31; I John 2:8).
 3. But Christ's light shined to us (Romans 15:9-16; Eph 2:11-18; I Tim 3:16).
 4. Let us make sure that there is no darkness in us at all (I John 1:5-6; 2:9-11).
- C. As John shifted to Jesus and redemption, he assumed and taught total depravity.
 1. Jesus is Light of the world, but man rejects it (John 3:18-21; Job 24:13-17).
 2. Though they had timed prophecies and many miracles, they loved darkness.
- D. What is *comprehend* in 1:5? What natural man cannot or will not do to Christ.
 1. **Comprehend.** To grasp with the mind, conceive fully or adequately, understand, 'take in'. Compare such uses in Job 37:5 and Ephesians 3:18.
 2. Natural man cannot discern/know, *comprehend*, spiritual things (I Cor 2:14).
 3. Jesus said they can discern weather ... but not God on earth (Matt 16:1-4).
 4. Jesus taught even a man rising from the dead would not help (Lu 16:27-31).
- E. There is light and life in Christ Jesus for following Him with both heart and life.
 1. There is righteousness, truth, and wisdom for every part of life for disciples.
 2. He came to give His children life and abundant life in Him (John 10:10).
 3. If you lose your life for His sake, you will find it; save it, and you will lose.

But shall have the light of life.

- A. The light of Jesus Christ's religion depends on vital life and leads to final life.
 1. God gives eternal life through Jesus Christ for us to know Him (Jn 17:2-3).
 2. With revelation confirmed by our obedience we know all about eternal life.
 3. Our practical wisdom about all aspects of life is through Christ's doctrine.
- B. The light here requires following Jesus Christ, so it is primarily practical light.

- C. Jesus, the Word of God, is the Word of Life and the eternal life (I John 1:1-4).
 - 1. He is so full of life and the power of life – His name is I AM THAT I AM.
 - 2. Since He created all things (1:3), He gave life to all the things needing it.
 - 3. He is the origin and source of life; He gave everything breath (Acts 17:25).
- D. In the Word of God, in Jesus our Lord, was eternal life and the gift of vital life.
 - 1. The life under consideration results in light, which is eternal and vital life.
 - 2. Jesus is the Source and Giver of this life; it was not merely His for Himself.
 - 3. God the Father had life in Himself, and He gave it to the Son (John 5:21-29).
 - 4. The Holy Spirit quickens into life; without it there is no light (John 6:62-66).
- E. We choose by immediate context and all of John for eternal life for gospel light.
- F. Jesus gives eternal life so His elect might know God and His Son (John 17:2-3).
 - 1. The understanding of God and Christ via faith is by eternal life (I John 5:20).
 - 2. Belief in Jesus Christ is evidence of prior life (John 5:24; I John 5:1,4; 4:15).
 - 3. The Ephesians were in darkness until quickened by grace (Eph 2:1-3; 5:8).
 - 4. If you believe God's record of Jesus Christ, it proves you have eternal life.
 - 5. Light is the evidence of eternal life, for you would not see or care otherwise.
 - 6. Following Jesus saves from darkness by having the light of life (John 8:12).
 - 7. God's spiritual operation on men includes the gift of life for spiritual light (John 1:13; 3:3-8; 5:24-29; 6:44-45,62-66; 8:43,47; 10:26-29; 17:2-3; etc.).
 - 8. This operation is sovereign and monergistic for the elect (II Cor 2:14-17; 4:1-7; II Tim 2:10; Eph 2:1-3; Phil 2:12-13; Jas 1:18-21; I Pet 1:21-23; etc.).
- G. It is heresy to teach that Jesus Christ is the light, and the light is the life of men.
 - 1. Men must have life before they can see light, just as the next verse declares.
 - 2. Without life, men love darkness over light; they will not come (Jn 3:18-21).
 - 3. The devil blinds the minds of all unsaved men to not see light (II Cor 4:2-4).
 - 4. God shines in men's hearts by light-giving force like creation (II Cor 4:5-6).
 - 5. You are not enlightened to get life; you are given life to then be enlightened.

13 The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.

The Pharisees therefore said unto him.

- A. Our Lord's words provoked the Pharisees, who considered themselves the light.
 - 1. They had just proved their darkness by moral corruption and legal rebellion.
 - 2. They were zealous in missionary endeavors to make proselytes (Matt 23:15).
 - 3. To admit Jesus was the light of the world was to demote Israel and them.
- B. Those that respond negatively ... or with but ... have the trait of the Pharisees.
- C. These blind, stubborn men opposed Jesus and themselves (II Timothy 2:25-26).

Thou bearest record of thyself.

- A. They rebutted Jesus by declaring that Him being light was merely His opinion.
 - 1. This is ordinarily a true point of evidence and logic and carries little impact.
 - 2. However, this was no ordinary man, and they should have considered it.
- B. It is a fact Jesus declared earlier that self-testimony has little value (Jn 5:30-31).
 - 1. His words there are to be understood as self-testimony without confirmation.
 - 2. Jesus had taught earlier that John the Baptist testified of Him (John 5:32-35).
 - 3. Beyond John, the miracle-working power of God was a testimony (Jn 5:36).
 - 4. Beyond John and miracles, the Jewish scriptures told of Him (John 5:37-40).

Thy record is not true.

- A. They had not proven their blasphemous allegation – as they called Jesus a liar.
- B. It is easy to make allegations, but difficult to prove them, as at His trial later.

14 Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.

Jesus answered and said unto them.

- A. Jesus responded to a blasphemous charge of being a deceiver with some grace.
- B. He showed a gentle side while dealing with the fools and scorners (Pr 26:4-5).

Though I bear record of myself.

- A. Testimony of Himself was insufficient, but what He testified was certain truth.
- B. Jesus had earlier declared self-testimony was not authoritative (John 5:31), and there He gave three other witnesses – John, miracles, and scripture (Jn 5:32-40).
- C. Jesus did declare truth about Himself here, but He will shortly name a witness.

Yet my record is true.

- A. What Jesus declared about Himself (or anything else) was without proven error.
- B. And His commission from Another was sufficient evidence for truth (Jn 7:18), which He had taught just a day or so earlier, but they cared not for comparison.

For I know whence I came, and whither I go.

- A. Jesus beautifully argued here of their ignorance of His origin and destination.
- B. Where Jesus came from and where He was headed was truth He fully grasped.
- C. Jehovah sending Jesus, sustaining Him, and receiving Him again proved truth.
- D. But they, nor the world, knew where Jesus was from nor where He would go.

But ye cannot tell me whence I come, and whither I go.

- A. Jesus beautifully argued here of their ignorance of His origin and destination.
- B. Where Jesus came from and where He was headed were things they knew not.
- C. He stood before them, and 33 years of His history were well known, but they could not and/or would not admit that He was from God on a divine mission.

15 Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man.

Ye judge after the flesh.

- A. He ridiculed their inability to judge beyond what they could sensually perceive.
- B. Remember, He condemned them in the previous chapter for this fault (Jn 7:24).
- C. They looked at Jesus and saw nothing more than an unlearned Galilean talker.

I judge no man.

- A. Jesus did judge, quite often; so what does this mean? See the previous clause.
- B. He will admit in the very next verse that He did judge, but by divine approval.
- C. He did not judge only by sensual perception, for He had true spiritual wisdom.
- D. He did not judge harshly and hypocritically without the Spirit as they often did.

16 And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.

And yet if I judge.

- A. Jesus did judge, and He said so, correcting any false sense of the previous verse.
- B. However, when Jesus did judge, He did with the full approval and favor of God.

My judgment is true.

- A. You accuse me of testifying of myself, but I judge men in agreement with God.
- B. You claim to accept judgment from God, but I am one with Him and from Him.

For I am not alone.

- A. I am not a singular Person declaring things of myself without any corroboration.
- B. God gave me a divine commission as His Son, and we are one in all judgment.
- C. Therefore, there are two bearing witness and bearing judgment – God and me.

But I and the Father that sent me.

- A. Almighty God, His Father, whom they did not know, agreed with His judgment.
- B. God Jehovah, His Father, whom they claimed to know, sent Him into the world.

17 It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.

It is also written in your law.

- A. They made much of Moses in 8:1-11, so Jesus again used Moses against them.
- B. He appealed to Moses' law of witnesses to show His agreement with scripture.
- C. You charged me with false testimony of myself, but I have another witness!

That the testimony of two men is true.

- A. Moses' law only required two witnesses for legal process, and Jesus had God!
 - 1. The minimum necessary for legal evidence and truth was two witnesses.
 - 2. Better evidence and truth required three (Num 35:30; Deut 17:6; 19:15).
- B. In His earlier explanation of this legality, He listed three witnesses (Jn 5:30-40).
 - 1. Jesus did not appeal to John Baptist here; His second witness was Jehovah.
 - 2. Jesus did not appeal to His works here; His second witness was His Father.
 - 3. Jesus did not appeal to scripture here; His second witness was almighty God.

18 I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.

I am one that bear witness of myself.

- A. Jesus admitted what He said in 8:12 was self-testimony and a witness of one.
- B. However, He had set the trap that He only needed one more witness for Moses.

And the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.

- A. God the Father had testified of Jesus Christ as true, which made two witnesses!
- B. How did God testify of Christ? Take your pick ... from virgin birth to miracles to John the Baptist from God to voice from heaven to wisdom at twelve, etc.
- C. We must rightly divide scripture – were Jesus and God one? or two? Think!
 - 1. They were one in divine nature and agreement about truth (John 10:30; etc.).
 - 2. They were two and separate in our Lord's office as mediator (I Cor 15:28).
 - 3. In the work of redemption there was a truly a Sender and a Sent Persons.

19 Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.

Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father?

- A. They knew He was Jesus of Nazareth, so they had no confusion about Joseph.
- B. But they also knew He claimed God as His Father (John 2:16; 5:17-23; 6:32).
- C. They mocked Jesus about His stated Father, taunting Him for God's presence.

D. We see a difference between knowing Pharisees and ignorant hearers (Jn 8:27).

Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father.

- A. He did not tell them His Father was God again. They did not deserve clear truth.
- B. The question was insincere, to mock Him, so He did not help them (Pr 26:4-5).
- C. He declared the terrible fact they were ignorant about God and His Messiah.

If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.

- A. Tracing divine revelation backward, He proved their ignorance of God Himself.
- B. Jesus fulfilled every prophecy and every trait of being Immanuel – God with us.
- C. Jesus is the express image of God – the clearest view of God you will ever see.
- D. As John opened this epistle, the only begotten Son has declared God (Jn 1:18).

20 These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.

These words spake Jesus in the treasury.

- A. This particular temple session was in the treasury, which started earlier that day.
- B. The temple Zerubbabel started and Herod finished was a very large facility.
- C. Consider how the early church gathered along with Jews still observing the law.

As he taught in the temple.

- A. The chapter opened with Jesus returning to the temple to teach those gathering.
- B. The Jews sought to kill Him, but He returned to the most public place to preach.

And no man laid hands on him.

- A. The Jews had sought to kill Him (Jn 5:16-18), and His words only increased it.
- B. As the previous chapter (7:30,44), they could do nothing without God's leave.
- C. Before this chapter ends, He will avoid their murderous attempts again (8:59).

For his hour was not yet come.

- A. It was not yet time for them to arrest, charge, and crucify Him for His people.
- B. It was His hour and time to preach and perform miracles; He would die later.
- C. It is God's timing that controls all events in life, no matter efforts otherwise.

Practical summary and application:

1. Do you comprehend this world's darkness?
2. Do you comprehend your own darkness and wildness?
3. True light – righteousness, truth, and wisdom – is only in Jesus.

4. Are you following Him? How so? Hearing? Believing? Saying?
5. Are you following Him? How so? Attendance? Bibles in house?
6. Are you following Him? Like a real disciple in all areas of life?
7. Are you following Him? With a fraction of the zeal of devil worshippers?
8. The Father loveth the Son, and we owe Him all our love and all our lives!
9. There is more light to those that will rise up and wake up to Christ (Eph 5:14).

21 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.

22 Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.

23 And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.

24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.

25 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning.

26 I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

27 They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.

28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

30 As he spake these words, many believed on him.

31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

33 They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.

36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

37 I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.

38 I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.

39 They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.

40 But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.

41 Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.

42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

43 Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.

44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

45 And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.

46 Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

47 He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.

48 Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?

49 Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.

50 And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth.

51 Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.

52 Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death.

53 Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?

54 Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:

55 Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying.

56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.

57 Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

59 Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.