

Set up: Cancel Culture - Sin, Entrapment & the Law of Grace



The Message Frame: What are our Pivot Point and Bookends for this 'Lens'.

Bookend perspective – Covenantal Context refresher.

The God of all Creation, the only True Creator God, who “calls things that are not, as if they already are” – the unequalled transcendent Deity – decides to incarnate, take on human form and dwell physically among us.

This unthinkable and never to be paralleled event – this mission – had several longed for outcomes, reconcile humanity to Father God, to restore order and renew life to a fallen creation etc. However, there was one role and function in this mission that underpinned and was imperative for all other outcomes, and the reason for the title Saviour of the world.

- First announcements by Gabriel to Joseph (Matthew 1:21, She will give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus [He Saves], because he will save his people from their sins.”)
- First proclamation by Elijah revisited – John the Baptist (John 1:29, “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.”)
- The God-Man’s begins His ministry with the first sermon, recorded in Mark 1:15; “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.” Repent of what?
- “For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.” (John 9:39)

Again, our covenantal bookends and our pivot point for this message is around dealing with the Divine utopian wrecking ball of sin.

The Lens for Engagement with Scripture:

Have you ever had an unpleasant or even nasty 'gotcha' moment? A set-up that either made you look silly or incompetent or just embarrassingly speechless? If you can, share that with the person next to you...

Open with an account though not validated as true, also, not untrue, of [New York Mayor, Fiorello LaGuardia](#) started serving as Mayor of New Youth City toward the end of the Great Depression in 1933 Great Depression and the Night Court Incident

Introduction to Scenario

Jesus Christ, THE cultural changing agent, like any who have sought to interfere with the existing order was a target for being set up. (Proto-cancel culture conniving) For those of us familiar with the Gospels, will know the of this attempt to 'set-up' Jesus in His final week of ministry.

The Voice frames it like this

Mark 12:13-17

12 The leaders are stunned to learn they will face judgment themselves. It goes against everything they believe about themselves and about God.

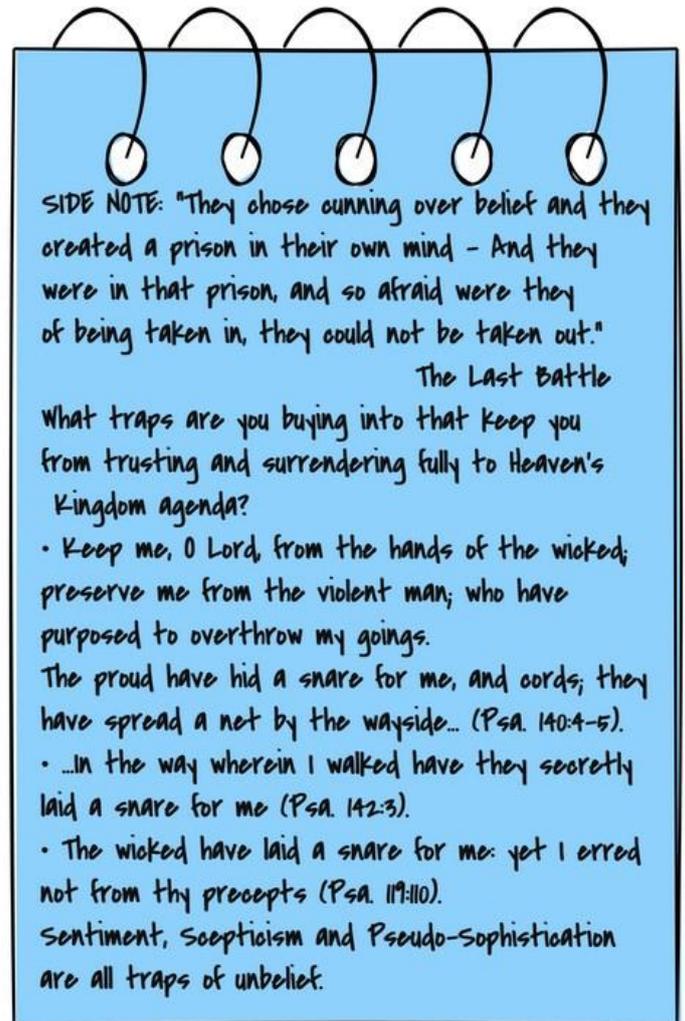
¹³ Then some Pharisees and some of Herod's supporters banded together to try to entrap Jesus. ¹⁴ They came to Him and complimented Him.

Pharisees: Teacher, we know You are truthful *in what You say* and that You don't play favourites. You're not worried about what anyone thinks of You, so You teach with total honesty what God would have us do. *So tell us:* is it lawful that we Jews should pay taxes to the Roman emperor or not? ¹⁵ Should we give or not?

Of course, Jesus sees right through it, and gives yet another unassailable response. *But this was not the first time...*

Our lens today, is the account of the woman caught in adultery – in the very act.

Text is John 8:1-12 – some earlier manuscripts did not have this specific recorded account, but scholars agree this event happened); Deuteronomy 17:7; 22:22-24 and in part Leviticus 20:10, 20)



- i. Sermon on the Mount Matthew 5 verse 20-28. The Call to a higher standard.
- ii. Our context starts in John chapter 7 verse 25 – Jesus’ reputation is starting to really grow. He is becoming popular and renowned, despite His best efforts to avoid such a populist consequence. The people are all but convinced Jesus is truly a prophet, but now they are beginning to really wonder if He is the Christ, the Messiah.
- iii. The power brokers, the Pharisees are jealous and loosing control
- iv. It’s now in John chapter 8 that we find Jesus teaching in the temple and people are riveted – they are soaking it all up – listening, learning and most of all expecting.
- v. It is here, right now at this profound moment that a mob bursts in with a woman who had been caught in the very act of adultery.
- vi. What is the rule – Deut 22:20-24 she should be put to death. (This includes stoning, but more at the end of other punitive actions – talk later) This is incredibly serious business. Brutal death is the prescription for those who break the ‘marriage covenant’ via adultery – Keep that in mind.
- vii. But where is the other party to this sin? One must not ‘teach from silence’, but we can speculate that perhaps he was prominent and connected? A Roman perhaps, so fear or cultural indifference meant he was ignored? Perhaps an unwitting participant that had no idea she was already married? Again, we can only guess. However, Jesus had an out here. Without both accused being present He could declare a ‘no trial’ – He could sidestep this public entrapment. He could use a legal technicality to wash His hands of the mess.
- viii. Ah, but that would not deal with the blatant covenant breaking sin that was before Him. Sin, the prime and central reason for his appearing – it was this wrecking ball of creation humanity that He wanted to bring down, undo and destroy. John 9:39 *“For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.”*
 - He had to justify her actions, or
 - Use a loophole or
 - Condemn her for stoning to fulfil the law.

As the Messiah He could not walk away from this, and the Pharisees knew it... this was their big Cancel Jesus culture moment! So, He is trapped, or is He?

Penalty

- Build a scaffold or take her to a cliffs edge
- Throw her over.
- Then the immediate accusers were to pick up 20 kilo rocks and throw them at her first – then the community follows. (Deuteronomy 17:7)

Action

Jesus bends down and writes in the dust. Why do this? A distraction? Very unlikely. Thinking time? Son of the Living God, nope. Let's look at Jeremiah 17:13 (Jesus is about to unravel their 'justice' system, not by detuning the egregious nature of this clearly prohibited immoral act, but by re-acquainting them with the shocking harm of unfaithfulness in all its forms. *O Lord, the hope of Israel, all who forsake you shall be put to shame; those who turn away from you shall be written in the earth, for they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living water.* Is Jesus writing names and sins, or is He outlining this principle as a mirror and this mirror convicts each accuser?

Jesus doesn't, he cannot ignore, reclassify, redefine or dismiss this heinous act. This covenant breaking wrecking ball – a mere shadow of the fallen nature of a world in rebellion, ignoring righteousness, or redefining, reclassifying, dismissing sin or worse calling evil good and good evil (Isaiah 5:20) This not only fails to deal with guilt, sin, and the harm it causes, but only amplifies the shocking effects of this *cancer* to creation.

Note there is no mitigation with Jesus. He doesn't diminish her sin, her error. He still calls it **sin** and according to the legal prescriptions from God, there are penalties. By asking the question of the crowd, He isn't trivializing the sin, He isn't trying to bring about the 'well, we all make mistakes, come on let it go, so when you mess up we can let you go to', rubbish – No! I believe Jesus is shifting emphasis and focus away from the need to punish the error to the focus on how do we conquer this sin and master it. (Genesis 4:7) The law was never meant to be about deterrent, rather transformation. Not about avoiding bad actions, whilst still harbouring evil thoughts. It's about finding the best God has and moving toward it. (Isaiah 29:13-14)

- ☑ Jesus now uses yet another I.E.D. (Improvised Evangelistic Device) He demonstrates again the powerful Messianic role He was sent to fulfill and introduced a profoundly powerful new vehicle to deal with sin – Grace, Undeserved favour leading to repentance, forgiveness and new conduct.
- ☑ Let he who is without sin cast the first stone.
- ☑ When all the accusers had left the scene Jesus stands up and looks around. Then asked the *adulterer* “has no one condemned you?” The woman replies ‘No one Lord!’ Jesus then responds in His role as righteous judge and only one who could condemn her... “Neither do I.” This is not a deferring to consensus or democratic process; this is a megaphone to amplify the message of Grace and how it must be received. This adjudication is a lifesaving gift help you end the behaviour, not a sin perpetuating loophole.
- ☑ Then neither do I, but this new underserved favour enables you to depart without punishment, but also with the enabling to never repeat this again.
- ☑ This sin could have been ‘buried’ under the rocks of legal judgement, and it will not be repeated in this context – ‘conduct’ removed, but removing the agent or...
- ☑ It can be buried under the new Justice framework of Grace. This new construct not only relieves and releases from guilt, but it also more importantly empowers, equips, and enables to cease from sin. Transcending the law. Conduct ceases because agent has been transformed.

How are we engaging this power platform?

Addendum

HOW TO ESCAPE FROM SATANIC SNARES

- *Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me (John 14:30 KJV).*
- *Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak (Mark 14:38).*
- *We all know that everyone fathered by God will not make sin a way of life because God protects His children from the evil one, and the evil one can't touch them. (1 John 5:18 Voice).*
- *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: (1 Peter 5:8 KJV)*
- *So then, since Christ suffered physical pain, you must arm yourselves with the same attitude he had, and be ready to suffer, too. For if you have suffered physically for Christ, you have finished with sin.[a] 2 You won't spend the rest of your lives chasing your own desires, but you will be anxious to do the will of God. (1 Peter 4:1-2 NLT)*
- *Regardless of what they do or say, God's foundation is strong and firmly in place, etched with this seal: "The Lord knows the ones who belong to Him,"^[b] and, "Everyone who invokes the name of the Lord ought to stop doing what they know to be wrong."*

Look, in the mansions of the rich and powerful you will find everything from silver and gold serving bowls to wooden containers and clay jars; some are used for special occasions—where honor is important—others are used for more mundane tasks. 21 So tell them, if they will clean up their lives and purify themselves from dishonorable teachings that lead people astray, then they can become honorable vessels, consecrated and useful to the Master, made ready for every good work He has in store.

Timothy, run away from youthful desires. Instead, direct your passion to chasing after righteousness, faithfulness, love, and peace, along with those who call upon the Lord with pure hearts. (2 Timothy 2:19-24 Voice)