

**<sup>10</sup>When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?"**

**<sup>11</sup>She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more." John 8:10-11 NKJV**

Forgiveness is central to the gospel message. This woman was guilty – there was no disputing it, no defence for her. Punishment was due, which, according to the Jewish law of Moses, was death by stoning. The ultimate outcome, or wages, of sin is death (Romans 6:23). In God's justice, there must be punishment for sin. This has not changed, except that now someone else has taken the punishment for us.

God sent His own Son to be the substitute for us – He took our place and received the punishment that was due to us, on the cross – so we can be forgiven and declared innocent, acquitted of all our wrongdoings. He took all of our sin, past, present and future, upon His own body, became sin for us, was condemned and died in our place, so that we can be free. This is why He could say to this woman, "Neither do I condemn you."

But He didn't stop there, He called her to a life of obedience, saying "Go and sin no more."

Jesus has done everything needed to bring us into a beautiful life of freedom in His kingdom, because He loves us. He calls us to believe in Him, receive Him and follow Him.

Do we fully understand what Jesus did for us?

- 1) What does this passage teach us about God? How does it apply to you?
- 2) Jesus took the punishment due to us. What should our rightful response be to such an acquittal?
- 3) What does following Jesus mean to you?

Based on today's reading, what is one thing God is saying to you?