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PHYSICAL SINS AND SPIRITUAL SINS PART 2

In the previous article we covered the incident in Matthew 9, where Jesus Christ told a paralyzed man "your sins are forgiven you". In this article we'll start with examining the only other instance when Jesus Christ also told someone "your sins are forgiven".

This particular event is only recorded in Luke 7:36-50. Where Matthew 9 deals with the forgiveness of physical sins, this account in Luke 7 deals with spiritual sins. Let's take a closer look at it.

FORGIVENESS OF SINS IN LUKE 7:36-50

The account opens with a Pharisee named Simon inviting Jesus Christ for a meal. While everyone is seated, an uninvited woman enters the room.

And, behold, **a woman** in the city, who was **a sinner**, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, (Luke 7:37)

The woman had a reputation which was common knowledge in that community. It seems likely that in our modern terms she was a prostitute. This conclusion is also implied by the Pharisee's response in verse 39.

But whatever sins she was known for are immaterial. She comes into the house with a very expensive item, **an alabaster box with very fragrant oil**, the equivalent of what we today call "a 100% pure essential oil", or perhaps it was even diluted somewhat with a carrier oil. This ointment was the best quality that was available.

At a different occasion, near the end of Christ's ministry, another woman came with a similar alabaster box of ointment, and in that situation the ointment was estimated to be worth "300 pence" (see Mark 14:3-5), which was equivalent to **a year's wage for a laborer**, thus quite a lot of money. The ointment in our account in Luke 7 was very likely of similar value.

Verse 38 shows what happened next.

And (she) stood at His feet behind *Him* **weeping**, and began to **wash His feet with tears**, and did wipe *them* with the hairs of her head, and **kissed His feet**, and **anointed *them* with the ointment**. (Luke 7:38)

Here is the situation:

1) The woman managed to gain access to the house.

2) The woman has lived an immoral life with a known reputation.

3) She is crying, expressing great remorse over her past life.

4) She doesn't say a single word, but lets her actions speak for her.

5) She gets down on her knees behind Jesus Christ.

6) She then washes Christ's feet with her tears.

7) She has no towel and uses her long hair to dry Christ's feet.

8) Then she kisses Christ's feet.

9) Then she anoints Christ's feet with the expensive ointment.

10) Undoubtedly the fragrance of the oil filled the whole house.

11) During this whole time nobody has said a word.

12) But the Pharisee has a very judgmental attitude towards Christ.

So what do the woman's actions tell us?

The woman was aware of Christ's preaching and teaching. Quite likely at some point she had been in the crowd of thousands of people, who had heard Christ speak. Very likely she had also been witness to some of Christ's miracles of healing people. At any rate, **she was convinced that Jesus Christ was the Son of God**. Hearing Christ teach and preach had motivated her to want to change her life.

After hearing Christ she had evaluated her own life, and Christ's teachings had **motivated her** to want to change. She was determined to reject the life of immorality that she had been living, and she wanted to make **a new start** to her life. She very likely had a total change of mind about how to live her life. Such a change of mind is precisely what we mean by saying that somebody has **repented**. And Christ had been preaching repentance, so she was quite likely familiar with the concept of changing from our past lives.

From that time **Jesus** began to preach, and to say, **Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand**. (Matthew 4:17)

So she seeks out Jesus Christ in order to have her guilty past taken from her conscience. She probably used all the money she had to buy the expensive ointment. Then, instead of verbally asking for forgiveness, she performed the most menial of services in that society ... washing someone else's feet.

She also didn't care what anybody at that meal thought of her. **She humbled herself** in front of all those people. And drying Christ's feet with her long hair was the ultimate act of humility, with a total unconcern about how she looked to all the people there.

She desperately wanted her past blotted out, to start a new life of obedience to all of God's laws. And she believed that Jesus Christ had the power and authority to remove her guilty past. And that means that she was convinced that Jesus Christ was the Son of God ... otherwise she would not have done these things.

Perhaps she had even heard Jesus Christ when He said:

Come unto Me, all *you* that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (Matthew 11:28)

This woman was doing exactly what Jesus Christ had said in Matthew 11:28, bringing her heavy burden to Jesus Christ. She desperately wanted to be freed from the heavy load of her immoral past. And she must have understood that Jesus Christ preached the forgiveness of sins.

That is what this woman's actions were saying.

And that is exactly how Jesus Christ accepted her actions. And she was willing to commit to the way of life that Jesus Christ was preaching.

So let's continue in Luke 7.

Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw *it*, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if He were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman *this is* that touches Him: for **she is a sinner**. (Luke 7:39)

The Pharisee doesn't say a word, but in his mind he is very critical of Jesus Christ, for Christ letting this woman do all these things to Him. Christ recognized this critical attitude on the Pharisee's part. So Christ presented another teaching situation.

And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto you. And he said, **Master, say on**. (Luke 7:40)

Christ now presents a very short parable.

There was a certain creditor who had two debtors: the one owed 500 pence, and the other 50. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, **which of them will love him most?** (Luke 7:41-42)

This parable is easy to understand. The creditor represents **God**, **the woman** owed 500 pence, and **the Pharisee** only owed 50 pence. But the Pharisee had no idea how this parable applied to him personally.

So the Pharisee replies with the correct answer.

Simon answered and said, I suppose that *he*, **to whom He forgave most**. And He said unto him, you have rightly judged. (Luke 7:43)

Now comes the explanation.

And He **turned to the woman**, and said unto Simon, **do you see this woman**? I entered into your house, **you** gave Me no water for My feet: but **she** has washed My feet with tears, and wiped *them* with the hairs of her head. (Luke 7:44)

You gave Me no kiss: but **this woman** since the time I came in has not ceased to kiss My feet. (Luke 7:45)

My head with oil **you** did not anoint: but **this woman** has anointed My feet with ointment. (Luke 7:46)

In other words, the Pharisee Simon had not really been a very good host. Notice the contrasts Jesus Christ presents between the Pharisee and the woman.

Back then, at least giving people water to wash their own feet, if there wasn't a servant available to do that, was considered to be an expression of basic hospitality for even unimportant visitors. But Simon hadn't really been friendly towards Jesus Christ, because the things mentioned in these three verses were all basic requirements for **important visitors**. But Simon didn't judge Jesus Christ to be important enough to do all these things.

In other words, Jesus Christ is demonstrating that Simon loved Him far less than the woman loved Jesus Christ. So now Jesus Christ presents the conclusion to draw from these three contrasting actions between Simon and the woman.

Wherefore I say unto you, **her sins, which are many, are forgiven**; for **she loved much**: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loves little. (Lu 7:47)

Jesus Christ starts with acknowledging that the woman's sins were "many". Then Christ said that her sins were forgiven. He then also repeats this statement to the woman herself.

And He said unto her, **your sins are forgiven**. (Luke 7:48)

In Part 1 of this series of articles I explained at length the terms “**physical sins**” and “**spiritual sins**”. The only reason we add the word “spiritual” to the word “sins” is to distinguish these sins from sins that are “not unto death”, i.e. to distinguish them from physical sins.

And the only reason we use the term “physical sins” is to address a category of sins that is included in the Hebrew and Greek words translated as “sin”, but which category of sins is not included in the meaning of our English language word “sin”. In English we don’t really have a word that refers to “physical sins”, sins that don’t imply some moral guilt; so we have to resort to a two-word description for that category of sins. Calling sins spiritual sins and physical sins is **to avoid excluding physical sins from the meaning of the English word “sin”**.

If our English word “sin” had the completely identical meaning to the biblical Hebrew and Greek words translated as “sin”, then we would not need to use the words “spiritual” and “physical” in our references to sins. See the first article for more details.

Note also one other point.

Mr. Armstrong is the one who coined the expression “physical sins” for this category, and we’ll stay with that term. But realize that the expression “physical sins” does not refer to all sins that are physical. Killing, stealing and adultery are physical actions, but they constitute “spiritual sins”. The term “**physical sins**” really refers to sins that are “**not unto death**” (see 1 John 5:16-17), sins that don’t automatically incur the 2nd death penalty if they are not repented of.

Because **these sins** don’t involve a wrong attitude towards God or God’s way of life, therefore they **don’t have a spiritual component**. And that makes them “physical sins”. Sins like killing, stealing and adultery, on the other hand, **all have a spiritual component**, and therefore those physical actions are not in the “physical sins” category. By “a spiritual component” I mean that these sins all involve **the spirit in man thinking in certain ways**. All sins designated as “physical sins” don’t involve that type of thinking by the spirit in man. But most of the time when we talk about “sins”, without any additional qualifications, we are in fact referring to “spiritual sins”.

Right, let’s get back to the woman whose sins were forgiven.

One point Jesus Christ also made with this short parable is that **critical people invariably don’t see the level of their own guilt before God**. And therefore they also don’t receive forgiveness from God. This is something Jesus Christ spelled out more fully in another parable, which is recorded in Matthew 18:23-35.

In that parable a debtor appears before God. He owes God 10,000 talents. That debtor represents **every single one of us** in our initial relationship to God. We are indebted to God with a debt that is impossible for us to pay off. So if we are willing to repent, then God will forgive us this huge debt. But after our debt has been forgiven, then God also watches, amongst other things, how we treat our fellow human beings.

The man who had been forgiven this huge debt then treats a fellow servant who owed him a mere 100 pence in **an extremely harsh way**, with no mercy whatsoever. There were about 6,000 pence in one talent. So the 10,000 talents represented **60 million pence**. Thus while 100 pence was approximately 3-months wages for a laborer, it was a totally insignificant amount compared to 60 million pence.

So the man who owed God 60 million pence treats a fellow-servant who owed him only 100 pence very harshly.

In that parable God then addresses the man whose 60 million pence debt God had forgiven.

Then his lord, after that He had called him, said unto him, O **you wicked servant**, I forgave you all that debt, because you desired Me: should not you also have had compassion on your fellow-servant, even as I had pity on you? (Matthew 18:32-33)

God was angry with this cruel servant.

And his lord was wroth, and **delivered him to the tormentors**, till he should pay all that was due unto him. (Matthew 18:34)

The point I am making here is that **critical people** who don't see their own guilt also **don't receive forgiveness** from God, even when they keep God's laws. This is something we need to recognize.

Just because people say the right words "I have sinned", that doesn't necessarily mean that they actually see their own guilt. Their subsequent actions will reveal whether or not they recognize the magnitude of their own sins. The right words alone are not sufficient.

This concept is also part of the message of the parable Jesus Christ told Simon the Pharisee. For the sake of establishing a comparison, in that parable Simon's debt of 50 pence is forgiven. But **in practice** with his attitude **Simon's sins were not forgiven**. Before God Simon was still in his sins ... and in reality **he also owed God "10,000 talents"** and not just 50 pence.

Now let's come back to this woman.

The paralyzed man in Matthew 9 (see the previous article) and this woman are both told "your sins are forgiven". For the paralyzed man the problem was a physical disease that had been caused by some "physical sins", and for the woman the problem was sins of immorality. The paralyzed man wasn't looking for forgiveness of his (spiritual) sins; he was only looking for healing. This woman was not looking for physical healing; she was looking for forgiveness of her (spiritual) sins.

Both of these people expressed faith in Jesus Christ, and both of them received what they were looking for. The paralyzed man was forgiven his physical sins, some foolish actions that had caused his paralysis, and then he was healed. But he was not forgiven his spiritual sins of breaking the 10

commandments. So there was no pressure on him to immediately become a follower of Jesus Christ, lest he went back into the world. He need not have become a disciple right then, because he would still have his opportunity for salvation in the 2nd resurrection.

This woman, on the other hand, was forgiven her spiritual sins of immorality. This forgiveness put great pressure on this woman. When Christ told her “your sins are forgiven” she was at **the same point as someone coming out of the water of baptism** and then being told by the minister “all your sins are forgiven”. So the forgiveness of her spiritual sins meant that **she was being given her one opportunity for salvation**. She has to be in the 1st resurrection, or else she will be in the lake of fire. For her there was no 2nd resurrection option.

She had fully met the requirements for baptism. She certainly had faith in Jesus Christ and she also was repentant, as demonstrated by her actions. So she was the equivalent of an obvious baptism candidate. Jesus Christ was giving her the opportunity to be in the 1st resurrection. Jesus Christ then said to her:

And He said to the woman, **your faith has saved you**; go in peace. (Luke 7:50)

Faith is a key requirement both, for divine healing from God, and also for the forgiveness of sins like immorality. Now with the paralyzed man whose sins were forgiven, **the healing was the evidence** that sins had indeed been forgiven.

Note also that in this situation with the woman Jesus Christ **did not say** anything like “go and **sin no more**”, something he said to another woman who had also been involved in immorality. In other words, Jesus Christ did not feel that it was necessary to admonish this woman in any way. When a person’s **repentance** really **becomes obvious**, as in her case, then there is also no need for any warnings to not sin again.

Here with this woman there was **no immediate evidence** that her sins had been forgiven. And that is always the case with spiritual sins, that there isn’t any visible evidence at the time when the sins are forgiven. Instead, with the forgiveness of spiritual sins the only outward evidence, that sins have indeed been forgiven, consists of **the changes in the person’s life** over a period of time, which changes are evidence of God’s holy spirit being put to use in the person’s life.

Put another way, the fruits of the holy spirit that are produced by someone are proof that the person’s past sins have been forgiven, and that the person then received God’s holy spirit. But **it takes time** for it to become evident that someone’s sins have indeed been forgiven by God, because it takes time to produce “good works”. It takes time for the holy spirit to bear fruits.

Now this woman is never again identified in the New Testament. It was important to maintain her anonymity, even as God does not broadcast our personal secret sins. Now I don’t know that this is correct, but I strongly suspect that she became a disciple, and was one of those people who received God’s spirit on the Day of Pentecost in Acts chapter 2. She had the hallmarks of a true Christian: she had faith, and she was determined to turn her life around. Those attributes put her on a par with the original 120 people on the day of Pentecost. Perhaps she is anonymously included in Acts 1:14?

And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James *the son* of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas *the brother* of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, **with the women**, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brethren. (Acts 1:13-14)

Perhaps this woman was included in the expression “with the women” who were together in the days leading up to Pentecost that year. Her character and commitment would certainly make it possible for her to fit into that group.

Notice also that Jesus Christ said “your faith has **saved you**”. The gospels record that Jesus Christ **only** said this statement “your faith has saved you” to **two people**. Understand that saying that faith has “saved you” is a reference to **access to the 1st resurrection**. Jesus Christ did not use this expression “saved you” to refer to this present physical life being “saved”; Christ used this expression “saved you” to refer to the opportunity for salvation.

The **only other recorded time** Jesus Christ said to someone “**your faith has saved you**” is recorded in Luke 18:35-43. In that instance a blind beggar heard that Jesus Christ was passing by. That beggar then appealed to Jesus Christ.

And he cried, saying, Jesus, ***You*** **Son of David**, **have mercy on me**. (Luke 18:38)

The expression “You son of David” is important, because this shows that this blind beggar recognized and fully accepted that Jesus Christ was the promised Messiah. The beggar accepted this on faith. But his request is not to have his sins forgiven. His request is to be healed of his blindness.

When people told him to be quiet, he only shouted the same words louder, again acknowledging Jesus Christ as the Savior. So Jesus Christ instructed people to bring this blind man to Him. Now Christ obviously knew that the blind man wanted to have his sight restored. But Christ nevertheless asked him to state his request openly.

Saying, What do you want Me to do for you? And he said, Lord, **that I may receive my sight**. (Luke 18:41)

The blind man is not asking for any sins to be forgiven. He didn’t have a guilty conscience about anything he had done. He himself had not brought his blindness upon himself by any of his actions. At some point his vision had weakened and he had become blind. So here is Jesus Christ’s response.

And Jesus said unto him, receive your sight: **your faith has saved you**. (Luke 18:42)

The man’s faith was demonstrated by his persistence in wanting to be heard by Jesus Christ, by calling Jesus Christ a “son of David”, and by referring to Christ as “Lord”. And Jesus Christ acknowledged that

the man had faith. So Christ healed him.

But the story doesn't end there!

And immediately he received his sight, **and followed Him**, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw *it*, gave praise unto God. (Luke 18:43)

This man is different from all the other people who were healed by Jesus Christ. Other healed people went back to their homes and continued with their lives. But **this man** upon being healed **followed Christ**, meaning that he **became a disciple**. He wasn't yet repentant ,and so there is nothing here about any sins being forgiven. He wasn't yet repentant, but he did have faith in Christ, and he did have a good attitude. So the expression "has saved you" **gave him the opportunity** to have his sins forgiven, and to become a disciple

So here is the distinction.

When Jesus Christ used the expression "your faith has **made you whole**" (e.g. Matthew 9:22, Matthew 15:28, Mark 10:52, etc.), then Christ was only referring to **the person being healed**. That's all.

On the other hand, when Jesus Christ used the expression "your faith has **saved you**", then Jesus Christ was referring to the person being given **the opportunity to be in the 1st resurrection**. **Without** the added benefit of "your **sins** are **forgiven**", as is the case with this man here whose sins were not forgiven, it means that such a person (i.e. someone whose faith "has saved them", in this case the formerly blind beggar) is **only a prospective member** of God's Church. The opportunity is there, and faith is already present. But the person **still needs to repent** before becoming a member of God's Church.

And the formerly blind man took that opportunity, and immediately "followed Christ". He became a disciple.

Getting back to the woman in Luke 7, notice also that Jesus Christ told her to "**go in peace**". Another way to state this is to say "go with **a clear conscience**, because your past has been forgiven". Her crying, which produced so many tears that they were enough to wash Jesus Christ's feet, showed that she had been greatly troubled. Her guilty conscience had troubled her. So when Jesus Christ told her that her sins had been forgiven, that opened the door for her to have peace of mind, and to let go of the forgiven past. So **she went in peace**.

Right, now let's also look at how Jesus Christ dealt with the woman who was caught in adultery. And then we can compare these two accounts.

GO AND SIN NO MORE

On two occasions Jesus Christ told someone “go and sin no more”. Let’s first look at the occasion when a woman caught in the act of adultery was brought to Jesus Christ. This account is found in **John 8:3-11**. It is only recorded in John’s Gospel.

This incident took place early in the morning on a **Last Great Day** during Christ’s ministry. The Pharisees had schemed to have one of their own followers seduce a married woman. So when their own man was having sex with this married woman he had seduced, they swooped into the room and held the woman in custody.

Their own man conveniently disappeared into the shadows. After all, catching a woman in the act of **adultery always requires two people**, otherwise it cannot be in the very act of adultery. And with adultery **the man always bears the greater blame**. But the Pharisees had let the man go, because the man was one of them.

Clearly **the woman had been framed** by the Pharisees, so that they would have something for which they could criticize Jesus Christ.

As already stated, this all occurred on the Last Great Day. And this incident ties in closely with what will happen in the 2nd resurrection. So let’s also keep that in mind.

This **woman** caught in adultery actually **represents everybody** who will come up to physical life **in the second resurrection**. Those people are all resurrected **guilty before God**. And the people in the second resurrection will not all be automatically repentant. That is one of the lessons of this incident. Rather, the people in the 2nd resurrection will all be confronted with their sins before God. **Some** will **repent** and some **others won’t repent**.

Some of the people in the 2nd resurrection will not repent, even though **Satan will be bound** and not able to influence a single human being at that point in time. To not repent will be their personal choice, and therefore in due time they will end up in the lake of fire.

Satan was the original cause for all the sins of the people who will be in the 2nd resurrection, because Satan is the great tempter. But even after Satan has been removed, **the problems Satan caused will in many cases continue to fester**. Even though Satan is bound permanently just before the second resurrection takes place (Revelation 20:10-12), yet **the problems Satan created** during the first lifetime of the people who come up in the second resurrection, **will in many cases continue**. In the second resurrection they will come up with the same frame of mind which they had at the time when they had died. That mind was fully tuned to Satan’s selfish ways. And that mind needs to be changed.

So on that particular Last Great Day Jesus Christ first dealt with the woman’s accusers. He confronted them in a specific way, and they just couldn’t get out of there fast enough. They had obviously embarrassed the woman, and so Jesus Christ then embarrassed them. Only after that did Christ deal with the woman.

That's some background. So now let's look at the account.

And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto Him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst. They say unto Him, Master, **this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act**. (John 8:4)

They had planned that adultery because they wanted to catch Jesus Christ in an impossible situation. While Moses had commanded that adulterers should be put to death, that instruction was not really carried out amongst the Jews at that time. And the Romans did not approve of that. **Under Roman law a husband could kill the adulterer but not his own wife**, with certain other limitations imposed on the husband. So this situation, asking Christ about killing the wife but not the adulterer, is the opposite of the Roman law. Furthermore, according to Roman law, only the defrauded husband had the right to kill the adulterer, and anyone else could not carry out this penalty.

So if Jesus Christ had said "**she should die**", then He would be in trouble with the Roman authorities, and the Pharisees would have been able to accuse Him before the Romans. But if He would say "**she should not die**", then Christ would be disagreeing with Moses. So the Pharisees thought they had a win-win case against Jesus Christ with this woman caught in adultery.

And so the Pharisees present their case to Jesus Christ.

Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but **what do You say**? (John 8:5)

Recall that **on two occasions** Christ told the Pharisees specifically that they were an adulterous generation.

But He answered and said unto them, **An evil and adulterous generation** seeks after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: (Matthews 12:39)

A few chapters later the questioners also included Sadducees.

A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And He left them, and departed. (Matthew 16:4)

At that time adultery was common amongst the Pharisees. So Christ called them "a generation of adulterers"! In other words, their question in John 8:5 was **totally hypocritical**.

Verse 6 tells us that with either answer the Pharisees believed they had something to accuse Jesus Christ with. But Jesus Christ was apparently not even listening to them.

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*. (John 8:6)

This means that there was a layer of dust on the ground. What He wrote with His finger is not recorded. But that writing is the most important detail in this incident. My guess is that He wrote t**he names of the Pharisees** standing before Him, together with **their acts of adultery** and other law-breaking activities. For example, He might have written something like “Joe Pharisee, you committed adultery with Naomi Levi”, and “Jacob Pharisee you committed adultery with Mary Abrahams”, etc.

I say this because Jesus Christ wrote things that **exposed the sins of those Pharisees**, and that made them squirm and leave in a hurry. And when one Pharisee left, Christ wiped that writing out, and wrote down a sin from the next Pharisee who was looking over Christ’s shoulder at the ground, to see what was written there.

After writing quite a few names on the ground, Christ stood up and replied to them.

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. And **again He stooped down, and wrote on the ground**. (John 8:8)

Christ is busy writing more names with more sins in the dust. Now note the next verse.

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. (John 8:9)

So all the Pharisees leave, but the multitude is still there. Here is what this verse tells us.

1) The Pharisees didn’t all spontaneously leave upon hearing what Jesus Christ had said. No, **they left in a strict hierarchy**. That is a very revealing statement.

2) The Pharisees had a very strict pecking order, which went from the eldest Pharisees down to the youngest Pharisees.

3) So why didn’t they all leave spontaneously, with those nearest to the exit going out first? **Why this strict hierarchy** in walking away?

4) The Pharisees did not leave because of the words Jesus Christ had spoken. **They left because of what they could read in the dust**.

5) It was what they could read in the dust that turned the words Christ had spoken into **a warning and a threat**!

6) In a group with such a hierarchy you don't push yourself in front of someone who is more important than you. No, you let **the more important people get in front** of you.

7) They all wanted to see exactly what **Christ had written in the dust**. So the most important older Pharisees got to look at Christ's writings first. And **they saw their own secret sins displayed** for anyone to read.

8) When they turned around and left as quickly as possible, **the next people** in the hierarchy **stepped forward and looked** down at the writing. By that time Christ had written their names and their secret sins. So they likewise turned around and quickly got out of there. This process continued to the most junior Pharisees present at that incident.

9) Christ's writings implied: if you want to cast a stone at the woman, then **I will reveal your secret sins to the world**, and you too will need to be stoned.

10) Let's understand that the Pharisees were not at all impressed with Christ's statement "he that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her". On its own **that statement meant nothing to them**. They didn't have a conscience about putting an innocent man to death. They certainly didn't heed that statement when it came to killing an innocent Jesus Christ.

11) **It was Christ's writing** on the ground that exposed the secret sins of each Pharisee. That writing on the ground put a bite into the statement "he that is without sin ...". And the most important ones amongst the Pharisees saw the writing first. As each Pharisee turned to leave, so Jesus Christ wiped out that man's record of sins, and then wrote the next person's sins in the dust.

So much for the Pharisees.

Then the woman, who represents the vast majority of all people who have lived since the flood, is left without any accusers. So now Jesus Christ asks the woman a question:

When Jesus had lifted up Himself, and saw none but the woman, He said unto her, **Woman,** where are those your accusers? has no man condemned you? (John 8:10)

The point here is that in the second resurrection anyone who is inclined to be critical of anyone else in the second resurrection will very quickly have his own sins pointed out, **with the distinct possibility of those sins being made public should that be necessary**. That's the message of Jesus Christ writing with His finger in the dust on the ground (see John 8:6). So within a very short time there will be no accusers around.

Writing in dust means that it can very easily be wiped out. Writing in dust has no permanence. So God is prepared to very readily forgive the sins of all the people in the 2nd resurrection. But they must seek repentance first.

For every single person in the second resurrection their past guilt will be strictly between them and God. All of them will be guilty, but not yet condemned. And they will all have the opportunity to appeal to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, to have their past guilt forgiven.

Here is the next verse addressed to this woman.

She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, **Neither do I condemn you**: **go, and sin no more**. (John 8:11)

Here there is no threat of something worse coming along if she did continue to commit adultery. She is not condemned, but **neither are her past sins forgiven**. That is something we should take note of.

“Go and sin no more” is not forgiveness. It is an instruction to stop transgression God’s laws. It is **an instruction to repent**. And that is exactly the message to all the people in the 2nd resurrection. Christ’s message to those people is: go and sin no more. They are not condemned, and **their fate is not yet determined** when they are resurrected to 100 years of physical life.

They will have the opportunity to have their spiritual eyes opened, like the blind man in the next chapter (John 9). And they will have the opportunity to repent and become a part of God’s Family.

Now **let’s compare** the accounts that deal with these two women.

1) Both women had been involved in sins of a sexual nature. **Both were guilty of the same sins**. Their sins were “spiritual sins”. Neither situation involved any “physical sins”.

2) The one woman came to Christ on her own initiative. She desperately wanted to see Jesus Christ. The other woman was brought to Christ against her own will. The Pharisees had forced her to appear before Jesus Christ. She had no request of any kind for Jesus Christ.

3) The woman who anointed Christ’s feet had faith and was repentant. The woman taken in adultery neither had faith nor was repentant. She hadn’t wanted to come in the first place.

4) The woman who anointed Christ’s feet had **great humility** and willingly humbled herself before many people. The woman taken in adultery had been **greatly embarrassed** by the Pharisees who had forced her into this situation.

5) Neither woman said anything in this account, until Jesus Christ asked the one woman a question. But of their own accord they had nothing they wanted to say to Jesus Christ. The one woman wanted her actions to convey what she couldn't say in words.

6) The woman who anointed Christ's feet was greatly bothered by her guilty conscience. For the woman taken in adultery there is no indication that her conscience bothered her, beyond being greatly embarrassed by the circumstances.

7) The woman who anointed Christ's feet was told "**your sins are forgiven**". This was in reference to her sexual sins. Even though her past sins were many, she is **not** told to go and "sin no more". Jesus Christ was confident that she would do that on her own (sin no more as she had done in her past lifestyle), without needing to be admonished to do so.

8) In addition this woman was also told "**go in peace**". This implied that she should let go of any feelings of guilt for her past conduct. A guilty conscience is the greatest thief of peace. And that guilty conscience had been cleared by the forgiveness of her sins.

9) This woman is also commended for her **faith**. Faith is one of the prerequisites for establishing contact with God.

10) The woman taken in adultery does not have any faith. And **she does not have her sins forgiven**. Neither is she told to "go in peace". Jesus Christ did not condemn her, but He did admonish her to "**sin no more**". This statement represents a warning, and implies punishment if not heeded. With neither condemnation nor forgiveness of sins, hers is still **an open case**. She still had to prove herself, before she would have her sins forgiven.

11) It is likely that the woman who anointed Christ's feet will be in the **1st resurrection**.

12) And it is likely that the woman taken in adultery will be in the **2nd resurrection**. Her adultery in fact occurred in the night part of the Last Great Day, a Holy Day that represents the 2nd resurrection. She was then brought to Christ the following morning, on the day part of the Last Great Day.

And that about covers these two incidents. In the next and final article in this series we'll cover the only other instance when Jesus Christ told someone "go and sin no more". And that will then conclude our discussion of the subject of sin.

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