

“Jesus Stooped Low to Take Our Place!”

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Listen to this from 1 John 3:19-20, *“By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart; for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything.”* This goes right along with what Paul said in Romans 8:1, *“There is therefore no condemnation for those who are IN Christ Jesus.”* God loves us so much, He showers us with His grace!

We live in a world that spends more time and energy condemning us than lifting us up! Even though Jesus loves you without end, Satan is active and working his hardest to have you feel guilty and lost!

Almighty God spoke creation into existence, He said, *“Let there be”* and there was! That was until the 6th day! On that day, God stooped down, took the dust of the ground, and formed man. You and I are so precious to Him that words alone were not enough, God personally took time and formed us!

Open to John 8. Jesus was out among the crowd teaching them but the scribes and Pharisees wanted to see how He would handle a big problem! They would do anything to try and have Him do something wrong! Jesus followed His Father’s example and stooped too! Look at verses 3-11, *“The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst they said to him, “Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?” This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, “Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.” And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground. But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus stood up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.”* Grace is a God who stoops!

Open to Romans 8. You and I are so precious to Jesus. Even after His death, resurrection, and ascension, He speaks for us before His Father in heaven. Because of His sacrifice, you and I are seen as forgiven and holy. Look at verses 33-34, *“Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.”*

For as much as Jesus is our Advocate, John called Satan our Accuser! Listen to Revelation 12:10, *“For the accuser of our brothers and sisters has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.”*

You and I are easy targets! We sin continually! Satan gives us an account of each of our sins and we listen to his accusations and take them to heart! We see ourselves as enemies of God who are worthy of nothing, standing guilty because we continue to turn against Him. Satan picks up on our own guilty conscience and makes us feel even lower! Condemnation is Satan’s preferred method compared to Jesus’! Listen to Jesus’ words in John 10:10, *“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”*

Satan’s condemnation brings nothing more than guilt! But Satan’s accusations are worthless! In the waters of Baptism you’ve been washed clean of your sins and declared God’s own! In His body and blood, in, with an under the bread and wine, at the Lord’s Table, you receive the forgiveness won for you on the cross and empty tomb! So who do you trust, your Advocate or your Accuser?

Open to 2 Corinthians 7. Satan's condemnation will destroy! But conviction from the Holy Spirit brings about a change in heart! Look at verse 11, "*For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, but also what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the matter.*"

Listen to what Max says about this forgiveness, "*In the Chinese language the word for righteousness is a combination of two characters, the figure of a lamb and a person. The lamb is on top, covering the person. Whenever God looks down at you, this is what He sees: the perfect Lamb of God covering you!*"

Knowing what Jesus has done for you as He came to earth for you and covered you with His perfection, can fill you with confidence to stand firm against all the attacks of Satan that try to tear you down! The fruit of grace? Saved by God, raised by God, seated with God. Gifted, equipped, and commissioned! Satan is left speechless and without ammunition!

I heard this story on K-Love this week: a blind woman was getting on a plane, holding the arm of the flight attendant who was guiding her down the aisle. As she's going through 1st class, she hears the voice of a man asking the attendant where she was going to be seated.

The blind woman then hears the man gathering up things and say, "She can have my seat and I'll go in the back of the plane." As the woman sat down in 1st class, she realized she had only paid for her seat in the back. This man gave up some of what he had paid and paid for her to sit in 1st class!" Jesus gave up heaven to come to save you and me! It was an act of His infinite grace! He stooped down for all! It truly was the Great and Sweet Exchange!

As you wake each morning and greet a new day, may you see the world God has given you and the blessings He showers on you each and every day. May your heart be changed and may you lovingly and boldly proclaim because of all He's done living IN you, "*GRACE happens here!*"