

BEDWELL GLOBAL MINISTRIES

**EXPOSITORY SERMON
May 2017**

**Email
PKBedwell@hotmail.com**

WEB PAGE - Bedwellglobalministries

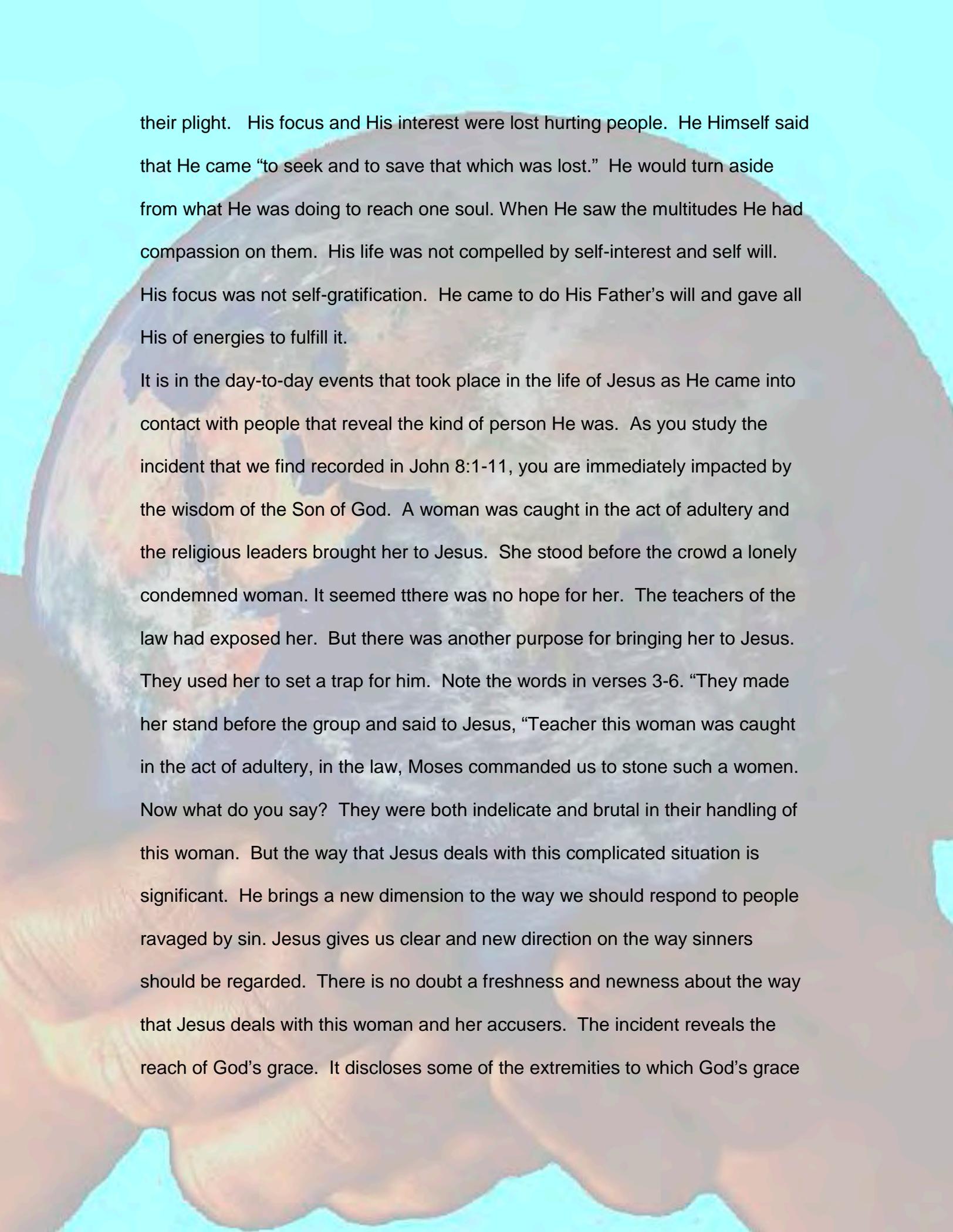
FALLEN!FORGIVEN!FREE!

Scripture Reading – John 8:1-11.

Introduction

As you read the four gospels in the New Testament, you cannot help but come into contact with Lord Jesus Christ. He is the central figure with which the writers of the four gospels were concerned. You feel His urgent spirit, you sense His deeply compassionate heart, and the power and authority of both His deeds and teaching impact you. As He moves on His journey to the Cross of Calvary, they make observations, they highlight His actions and reactions to different people both friends and enemies. He is not afraid to deal with difficult situations and wrestle with complex questions, some of which were intended to entrap Him. As He finds Himself in unique situations and encounters hostility and comes into contact many different vindictive people who hate Him and are threatened by Him, you learn who this man Jesus is. You will feel pulse of His compassionate heart, and marvel at the wisdom with which he deals with those who sought to destroy Him.

While He possessed power He never used it to destroy but to redeem souls in



their plight. His focus and His interest were lost hurting people. He Himself said that He came “to seek and to save that which was lost.” He would turn aside from what He was doing to reach one soul. When He saw the multitudes He had compassion on them. His life was not compelled by self-interest and self will. His focus was not self-gratification. He came to do His Father’s will and gave all His of energies to fulfill it.

It is in the day-to-day events that took place in the life of Jesus as He came into contact with people that reveal the kind of person He was. As you study the incident that we find recorded in John 8:1-11, you are immediately impacted by the wisdom of the Son of God. A woman was caught in the act of adultery and the religious leaders brought her to Jesus. She stood before the crowd a lonely condemned woman. It seemed tthere was no hope for her. The teachers of the law had exposed her. But there was another purpose for bringing her to Jesus. They used her to set a trap for him. Note the words in verses 3-6. “They made her stand before the group and said to Jesus, “Teacher this woman was caught in the act of adultery, in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such a women. Now what do you say? They were both indelicate and brutal in their handling of this woman. But the way that Jesus deals with this complicated situation is significant. He brings a new dimension to the way we should respond to people ravaged by sin. Jesus gives us clear and new direction on the way sinners should be regarded. There is no doubt a freshness and newness about the way that Jesus deals with this woman and her accusers. The incident reveals the reach of God’s grace. It discloses some of the extremities to which God’s grace

can and would go to redeem her. We read about a lost woman who suddenly found herself in the grip of Grace. She was, no doubt, fully captured by the reach of God's grace. What I see here is that,

1. A NEW NOTE IS SOUNDED. John 8:5.

Her accusers said to Jesus "In the Law, Moses commanded us to stone such a woman. Now what do you say?" They were not appealing to Jesus as an authority, because verse 6 reveals that they were setting a trap so that they would have a basis for accusing Him," However it backfired.

"An antique dealer spotted a valuable antique bowl in a hardware store. Although it was worth thousands of dollars, it was being used to feed the owner's cat. Not wanting to alert the owner to its value, the clever dealer said, "I'd like to buy your cat. I'll give you twenty dollars for him." The owner resisted until the dealer offered \$100.00 dollars at which point he sold the cat. The dealer then said, "I assume I'll get the bowl to go with the cat?" The owner replied "Oh no, that's my lucky bowl. I've sold 34 cats with it this week." The trap was set, The buyer thought he had trapped the seller but it backfired. This is what happened when the Religious leaders set out to trap Jesus. They thought that they had Jesus in a corner. If Jesus gave the decision to that the adulteress was to stoned to death, three results would follow,

i. Jesus would lose forever the name He had gained for love justice and mercy and would never again be called the friend of sinners.

ii. If He recommended death He would come into collision with Roman law for the Jews had no authority to pass or carry out the death sentence.

iii. If Jesus gave the decision that the woman be pardoned it would be immediately said that He was teaching men to break the Law of Moses, and that He was condoning and even encouraging people to commit adultery.

The question was “How was Jesus going to extract Himself from this trap?

They thought they had Him boxed in. But Jesus quietly stooped and wrote on the ground and when they kept questioning Him. He straightened up and said to **them, “if any of you is without sin, let him be the first to cast the stone at**

her. In that moment Jesus laid down the inflexible principle for His followers to follow. **Sinlessness is the only condition that qualifies us to throw stones at another. Campbell Morgan declared, “that one sentence put him out of the stone throwing business for the rest of his life.”** This was a new note

sounded by Jesus. There are three truths that I see in this new note sounded by Jesus. Firstly,

a.The Inflexibility of the Law was Rejected. John 8:7. Not the Law itself

but Its' inflexibility or the rigidity of its implementation, the harshness of their handling of it, or the method or spirit with which it was enforced. I know that there are those who would like to do away with the Law of Moses. But they are out of step with Jesus for He said, “I have not come to abolish the law and the prophets. I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.” Those who to abolish the Law open the door to spiritual and moral anarchy and they come into a clear confrontation with the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. The Law is an outflow of the Holiness of God. It is a revelation of His righteousness. To ignore it or to attempt to destroy it is an affront to God Himself. **One has said, “If we do less**

under grace than was done under the law then it is a disgrace.” But

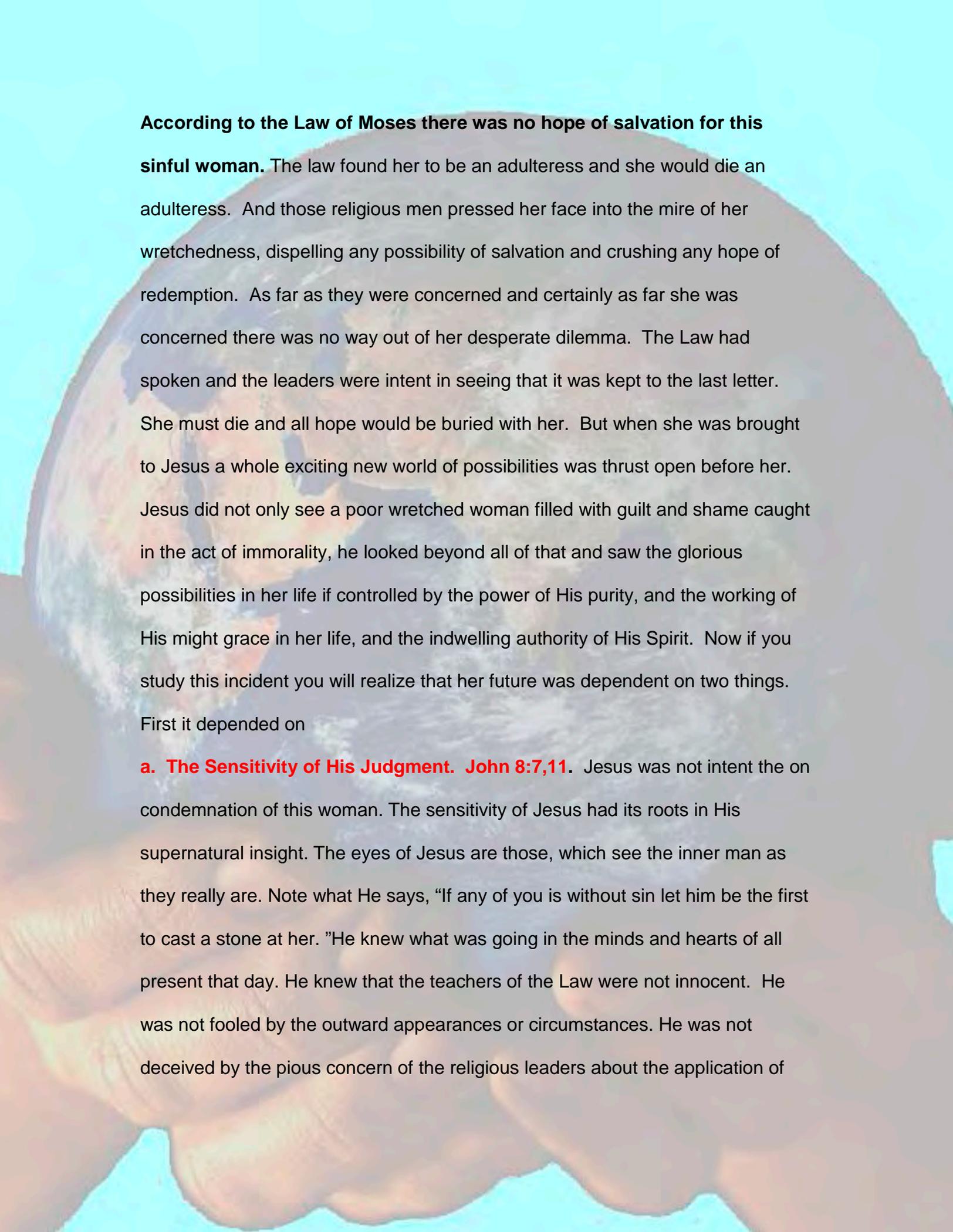
legalistic Jews had injected into the Law a spirit that should not have been there. They were concerned about its technicalities rather than its purpose. Some used it as a weapon to beat down on the people rather than to use it as an instruction to help and guide the nation. The Law did not have a heart to it. It could not reflect sympathetically on the broken battered lives of men and women. Jesus rejected the inflexibility of the Law. Note further,

b. The Impotency of the Law Is Revealed. John 8:3-5. Not its validity but its weakness, its powerlessness to save. Its inability to take the sinner out of his sin. The Law had callously dragged this adulterous women into the presence of Jesus, and in front of the crowd. It had condemned her. It had not saved her. She was well on her way to death. The law had set up the standard of God's requirement, but it was powerless to enable men and women to live up to it. It could fling a barrier of warning across the broad way that leads to destruction, but it could not turn souls away into the narrow way that leads to life. It could prescribe rituals for the purification of defilement and restore external cleanliness but it was powerless to deal with inward sin, because as Dr. J.H. Jowett would say, “sin is heart trouble not skin disease. The Law could admonish and condemn but it could not save. It could point out sin but it could not cast out sin. Karl Barth wrote, “the Law could not set human feet upon the rock of eternity and rid them of the sentence of death that had been pronounced over them because of sin.” Paul wrote in Romans 3:20, “no one can be declared righteous by observing the Law: rather through the Law we become conscious of

sin.” The Law brings the knowledge of sin but not deliverance from it. Notice too that,

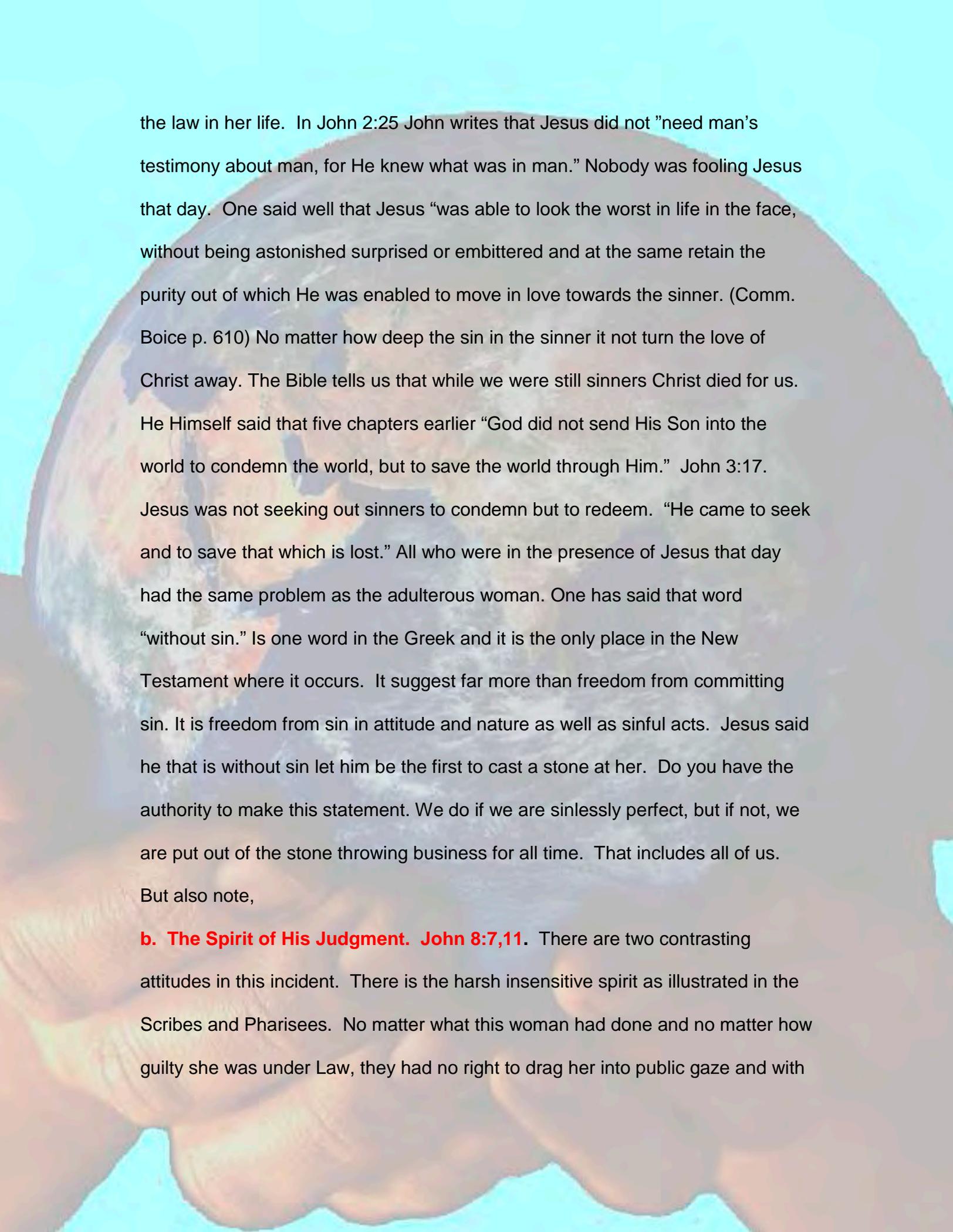
c. The Authority of the Word of Christ is Revealed. John 8:5. “The Law of Moses commanded us, they said...but what do you say.” They were not really appealing to His authority for they were setting a trap. Their authority was Moses and the Law, and to them that was the final word on the matter. They felt that they could rest secure in that. But the unexpected happened. A new authority was introduced whether they liked it or not. Jesus spoke to the problem before Him. He turned the tables on them and said in effect, “you accuse this woman of sin, but about what you? If you are sinless cast the first stone at her.” This was a word of authority. Jesus walked into time and history on a mission and He did so with great authority. The Gospel writer tells us that this man Jesus did not speak as the scribes and Pharisees but as one having authority. In Matthew chapters 5-7 you become aware of this man’s authority and no less than 5 times in chapter 5 in Matthew, He says “you have heard that it was said in old times but I tell you. There was a new authority introduced combined with a new power. John put it this way, ‘the Law was given through Moses BUT Grace and truth came through the Lord Jesus.’” The Scribes and Pharisees said to Jesus. “The Law of Moses commanded us to stone this woman....but what do say?” Jesus turned to the woman and said, “I do not condemn you, Go now and leave your life of sin.” And so it was that the authority of the Word of the Lord Jesus Christ is revealed. A new note is being sounded here. Secondly,

2. A NEW HOPE IS CREATED. John 8:7-11.



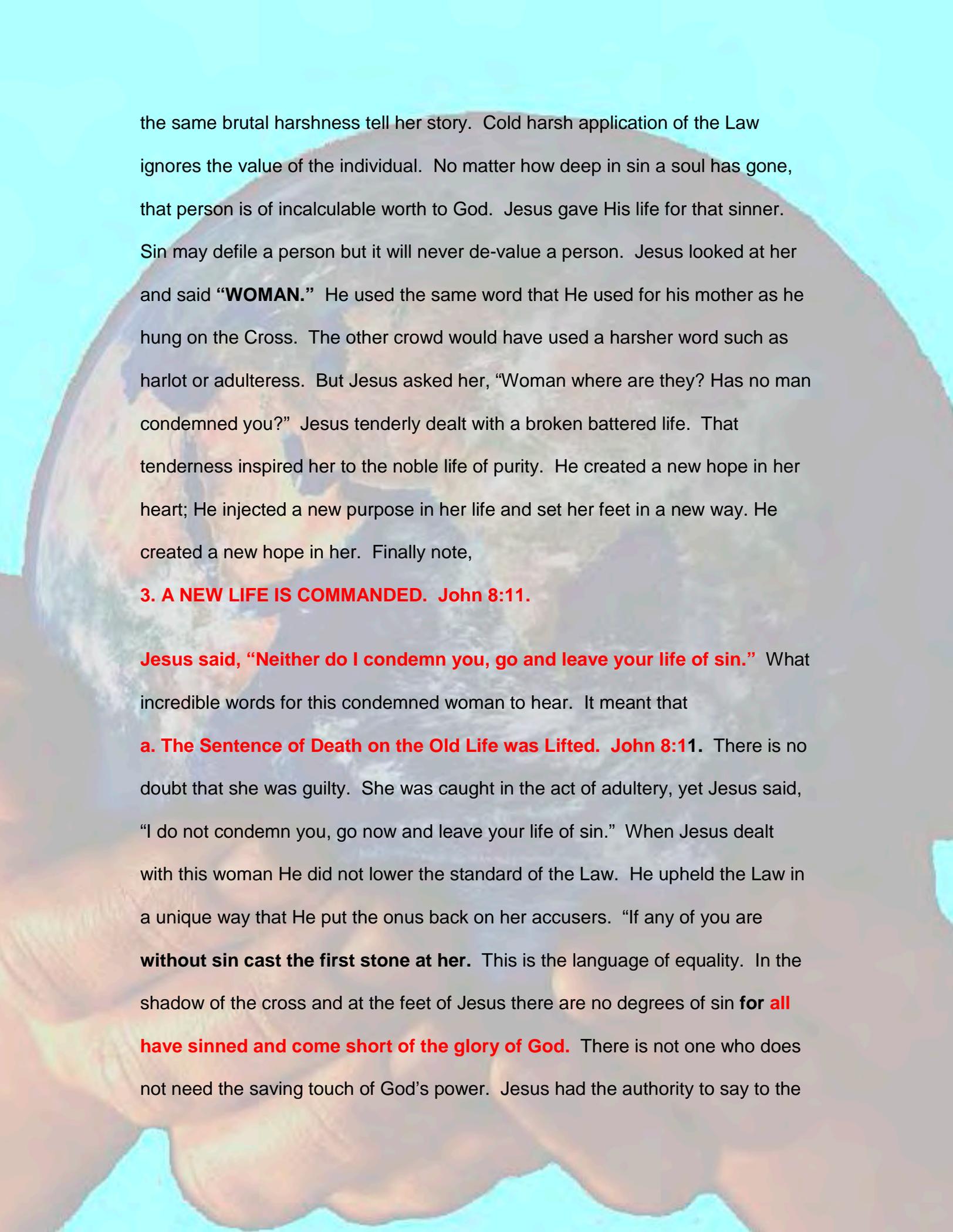
According to the Law of Moses there was no hope of salvation for this sinful woman. The law found her to be an adulteress and she would die an adulteress. And those religious men pressed her face into the mire of her wretchedness, dispelling any possibility of salvation and crushing any hope of redemption. As far as they were concerned and certainly as far she was concerned there was no way out of her desperate dilemma. The Law had spoken and the leaders were intent in seeing that it was kept to the last letter. She must die and all hope would be buried with her. But when she was brought to Jesus a whole exciting new world of possibilities was thrust open before her. Jesus did not only see a poor wretched woman filled with guilt and shame caught in the act of immorality, he looked beyond all of that and saw the glorious possibilities in her life if controlled by the power of His purity, and the working of His might grace in her life, and the indwelling authority of His Spirit. Now if you study this incident you will realize that her future was dependent on two things. First it depended on

a. The Sensitivity of His Judgment. John 8:7,11. Jesus was not intent the on condemnation of this woman. The sensitivity of Jesus had its roots in His supernatural insight. The eyes of Jesus are those, which see the inner man as they really are. Note what He says, "If any of you is without sin let him be the first to cast a stone at her." He knew what was going in the minds and hearts of all present that day. He knew that the teachers of the Law were not innocent. He was not fooled by the outward appearances or circumstances. He was not deceived by the pious concern of the religious leaders about the application of



the law in her life. In John 2:25 John writes that Jesus did not "need man's testimony about man, for He knew what was in man." Nobody was fooling Jesus that day. One said well that Jesus "was able to look the worst in life in the face, without being astonished surprised or embittered and at the same retain the purity out of which He was enabled to move in love towards the sinner. (Comm. Boice p. 610) No matter how deep the sin in the sinner it not turn the love of Christ away. The Bible tells us that while we were still sinners Christ died for us. He Himself said that five chapters earlier "God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him." John 3:17. Jesus was not seeking out sinners to condemn but to redeem. "He came to seek and to save that which is lost." All who were in the presence of Jesus that day had the same problem as the adulterous woman. One has said that word "without sin." Is one word in the Greek and it is the only place in the New Testament where it occurs. It suggest far more than freedom from committing sin. It is freedom from sin in attitude and nature as well as sinful acts. Jesus said he that is without sin let him be the first to cast a stone at her. Do you have the authority to make this statement. We do if we are sinlessly perfect, but if not, we are put out of the stone throwing business for all time. That includes all of us. But also note,

b. The Spirit of His Judgment. John 8:7,11. There are two contrasting attitudes in this incident. There is the harsh insensitive spirit as illustrated in the Scribes and Pharisees. No matter what this woman had done and no matter how guilty she was under Law, they had no right to drag her into public gaze and with

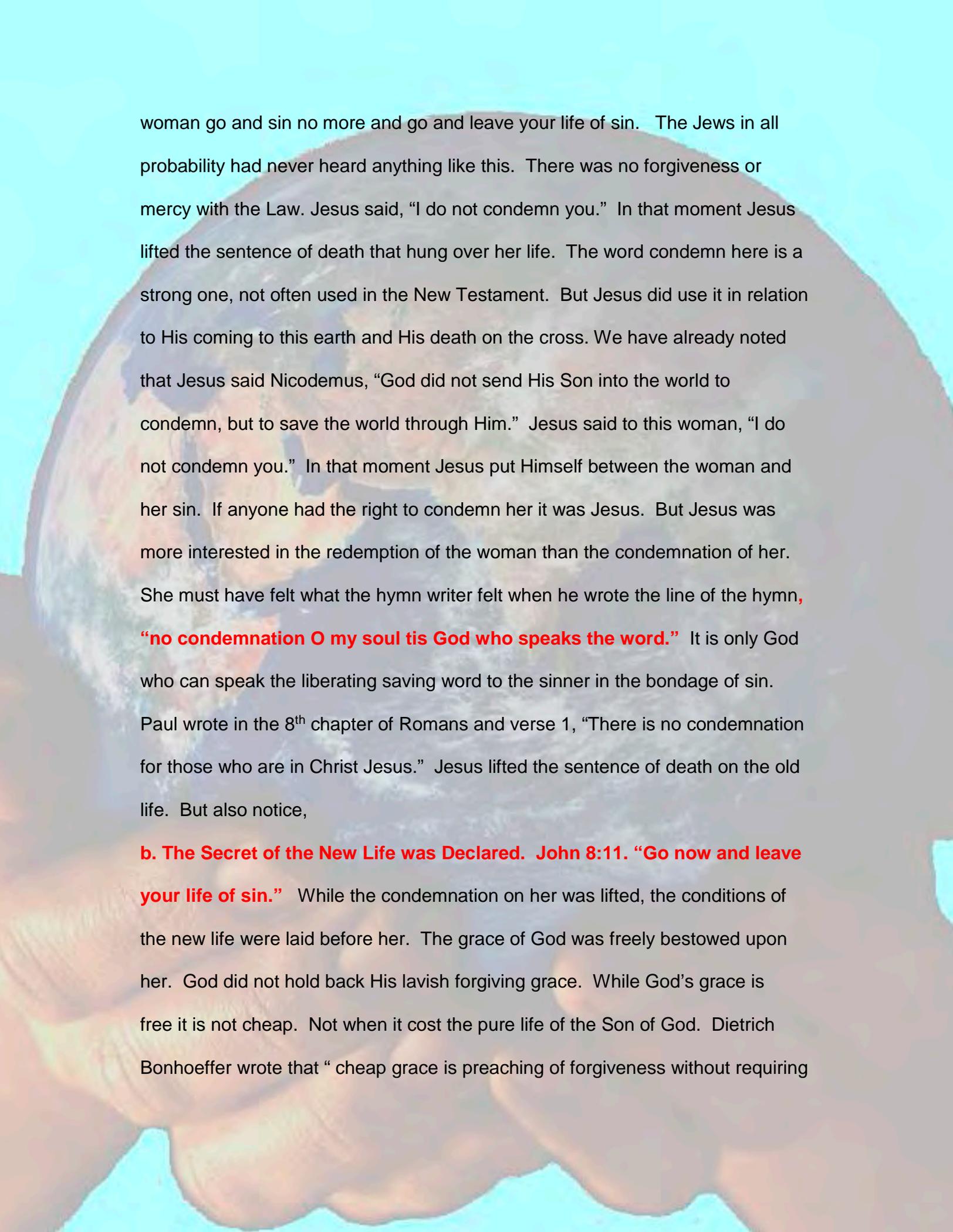


the same brutal harshness tell her story. Cold harsh application of the Law ignores the value of the individual. No matter how deep in sin a soul has gone, that person is of incalculable worth to God. Jesus gave His life for that sinner. Sin may defile a person but it will never de-value a person. Jesus looked at her and said **“WOMAN.”** He used the same word that He used for his mother as he hung on the Cross. The other crowd would have used a harsher word such as harlot or adulteress. But Jesus asked her, “Woman where are they? Has no man condemned you?” Jesus tenderly dealt with a broken battered life. That tenderness inspired her to the noble life of purity. He created a new hope in her heart; He injected a new purpose in her life and set her feet in a new way. He created a new hope in her. Finally note,

3. A NEW LIFE IS COMMANDED. John 8:11.

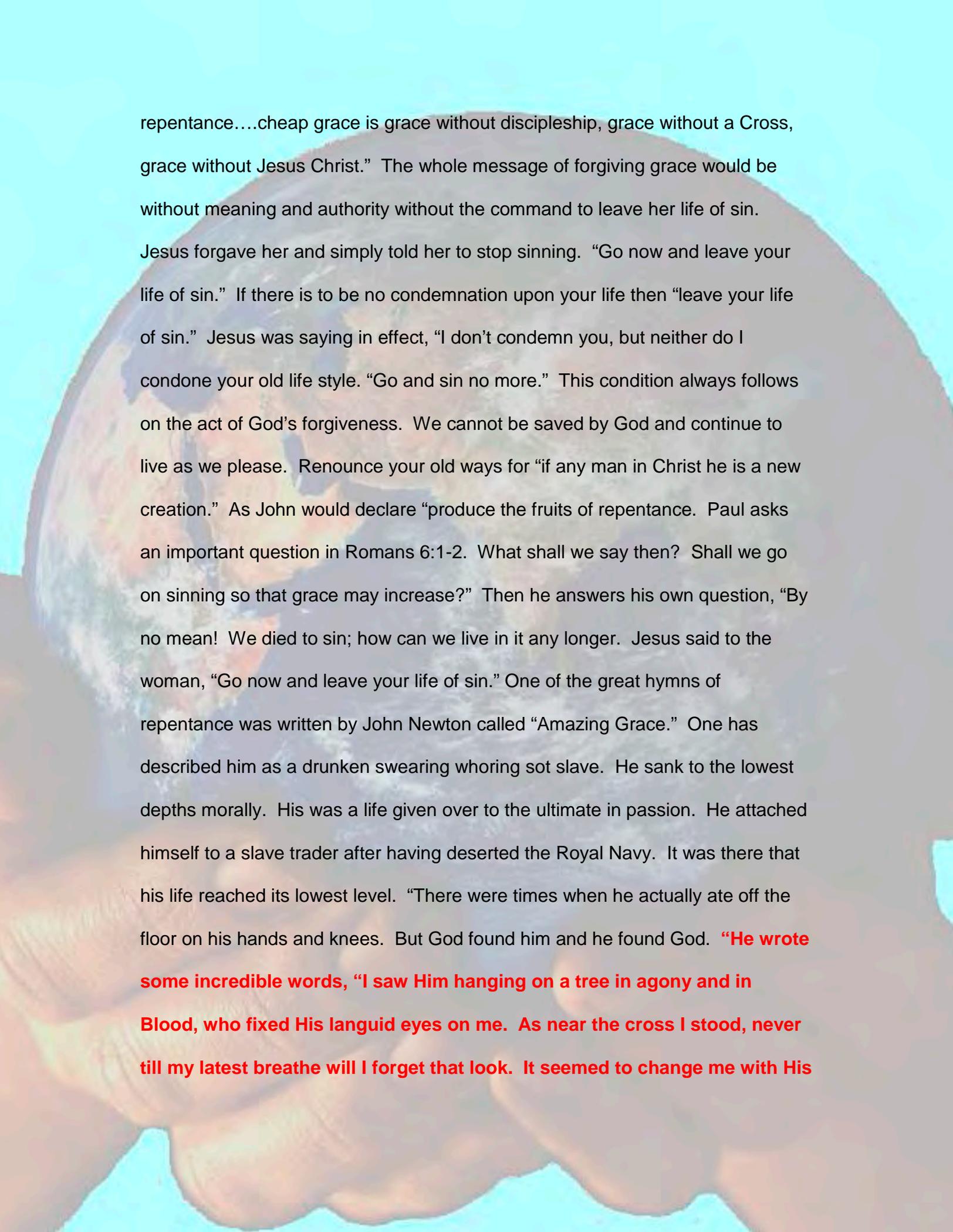
Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you, go and leave your life of sin.” What incredible words for this condemned woman to hear. It meant that

a. The Sentence of Death on the Old Life was Lifted. John 8:11. There is no doubt that she was guilty. She was caught in the act of adultery, yet Jesus said, “I do not condemn you, go now and leave your life of sin.” When Jesus dealt with this woman He did not lower the standard of the Law. He upheld the Law in a unique way that He put the onus back on her accusers. “If any of you are **without sin cast the first stone at her.** This is the language of equality. In the shadow of the cross and at the feet of Jesus there are no degrees of sin **for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.** There is not one who does not need the saving touch of God’s power. Jesus had the authority to say to the

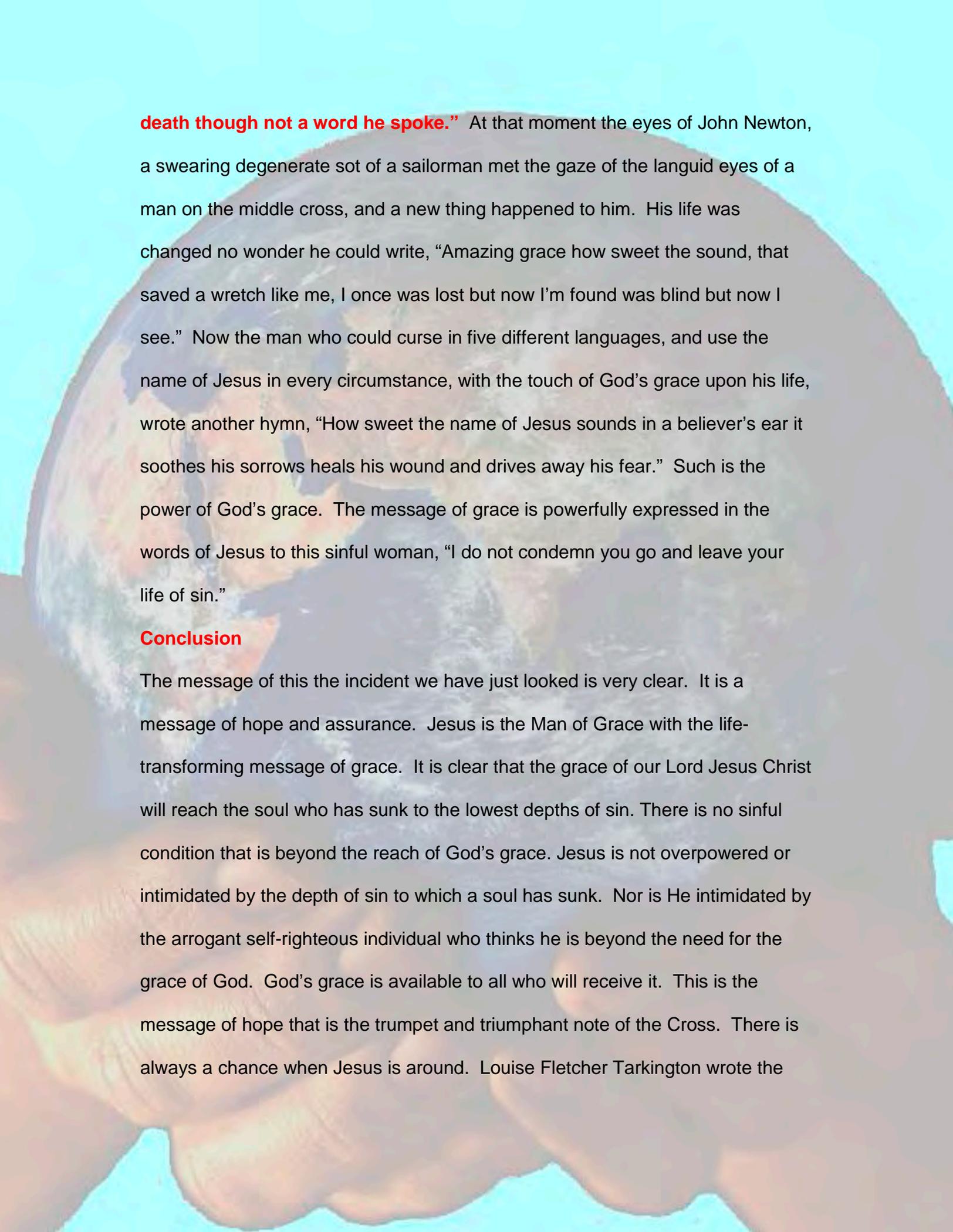


woman go and sin no more and go and leave your life of sin. The Jews in all probability had never heard anything like this. There was no forgiveness or mercy with the Law. Jesus said, "I do not condemn you." In that moment Jesus lifted the sentence of death that hung over her life. The word condemn here is a strong one, not often used in the New Testament. But Jesus did use it in relation to His coming to this earth and His death on the cross. We have already noted that Jesus said Nicodemus, "God did not send His Son into the world to condemn, but to save the world through Him." Jesus said to this woman, "I do not condemn you." In that moment Jesus put Himself between the woman and her sin. If anyone had the right to condemn her it was Jesus. But Jesus was more interested in the redemption of the woman than the condemnation of her. She must have felt what the hymn writer felt when he wrote the line of the hymn, **"no condemnation O my soul tis God who speaks the word."** It is only God who can speak the liberating saving word to the sinner in the bondage of sin. Paul wrote in the 8th chapter of Romans and verse 1, "There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Jesus lifted the sentence of death on the old life. But also notice,

b. The Secret of the New Life was Declared. John 8:11. "Go now and leave your life of sin." While the condemnation on her was lifted, the conditions of the new life were laid before her. The grace of God was freely bestowed upon her. God did not hold back His lavish forgiving grace. While God's grace is free it is not cheap. Not when it cost the pure life of the Son of God. Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote that "cheap grace is preaching of forgiveness without requiring



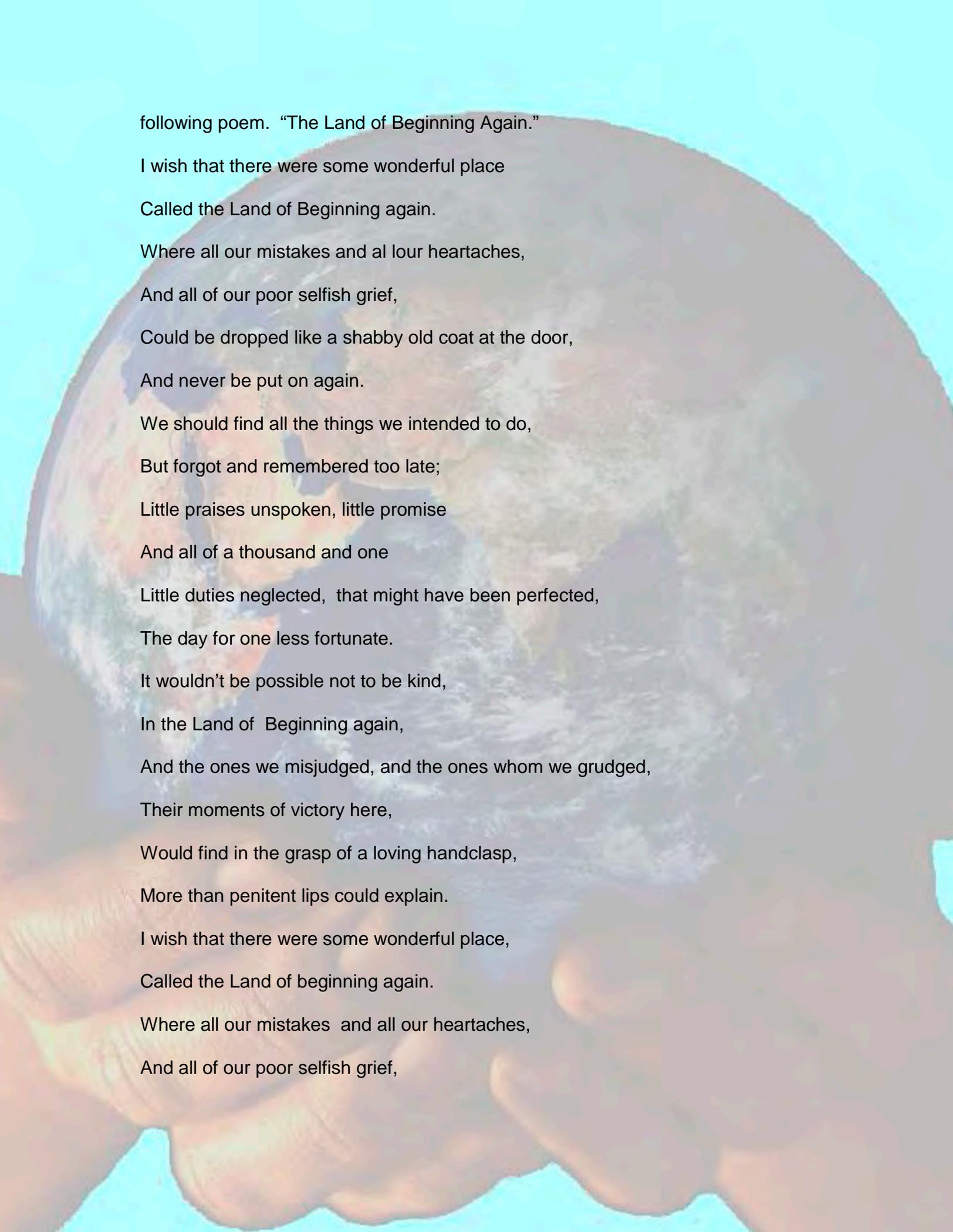
repentance....cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without a Cross, grace without Jesus Christ.” The whole message of forgiving grace would be without meaning and authority without the command to leave her life of sin. Jesus forgave her and simply told her to stop sinning. “Go now and leave your life of sin.” If there is to be no condemnation upon your life then “leave your life of sin.” Jesus was saying in effect, “I don’t condemn you, but neither do I condone your old life style. “Go and sin no more.” This condition always follows on the act of God’s forgiveness. We cannot be saved by God and continue to live as we please. Renounce your old ways for “if any man in Christ he is a new creation.” As John would declare “produce the fruits of repentance. Paul asks an important question in Romans 6:1-2. What shall we say then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?” Then he answers his own question, “By no mean! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer. Jesus said to the woman, “Go now and leave your life of sin.” One of the great hymns of repentance was written by John Newton called “Amazing Grace.” One has described him as a drunken swearing whoring sot slave. He sank to the lowest depths morally. His was a life given over to the ultimate in passion. He attached himself to a slave trader after having deserted the Royal Navy. It was there that his life reached its lowest level. “There were times when he actually ate off the floor on his hands and knees. But God found him and he found God. **“He wrote some incredible words, “I saw Him hanging on a tree in agony and in Blood, who fixed His languid eyes on me. As near the cross I stood, never till my latest breathe will I forget that look. It seemed to change me with His**



death though not a word he spoke.” At that moment the eyes of John Newton, a swearing degenerate sot of a sailorman met the gaze of the languid eyes of a man on the middle cross, and a new thing happened to him. His life was changed no wonder he could write, “Amazing grace how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me, I once was lost but now I’m found was blind but now I see.” Now the man who could curse in five different languages, and use the name of Jesus in every circumstance, with the touch of God’s grace upon his life, wrote another hymn, “How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer’s ear it soothes his sorrows heals his wound and drives away his fear.” Such is the power of God’s grace. The message of grace is powerfully expressed in the words of Jesus to this sinful woman, “I do not condemn you go and leave your life of sin.”

Conclusion

The message of this the incident we have just looked is very clear. It is a message of hope and assurance. Jesus is the Man of Grace with the life-transforming message of grace. It is clear that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ will reach the soul who has sunk to the lowest depths of sin. There is no sinful condition that is beyond the reach of God’s grace. Jesus is not overpowered or intimidated by the depth of sin to which a soul has sunk. Nor is He intimidated by the arrogant self-righteous individual who thinks he is beyond the need for the grace of God. God’s grace is available to all who will receive it. This is the message of hope that is the trumpet and triumphant note of the Cross. There is always a chance when Jesus is around. Louise Fletcher Tarkington wrote the



following poem. "The Land of Beginning Again."

I wish that there were some wonderful place

Called the Land of Beginning again.

Where all our mistakes and all our heartaches,

And all of our poor selfish grief,

Could be dropped like a shabby old coat at the door,

And never be put on again.

We should find all the things we intended to do,

But forgot and remembered too late;

Little praises unspoken, little promise

And all of a thousand and one

Little duties neglected, that might have been perfected,

The day for one less fortunate.

It wouldn't be possible not to be kind,

In the Land of Beginning again,

And the ones we misjudged, and the ones whom we grudged,

Their moments of victory here,

Would find in the grasp of a loving handclasp,

More than penitent lips could explain.

I wish that there were some wonderful place,

Called the Land of beginning again.

Where all our mistakes and all our heartaches,

And all of our poor selfish grief,

Could be dropped, like a shabby old coat at the door, And never put on again.

There is only one place where we could begin again with a clean slate. And is at the foot of the cross. It is the grace of God that makes this possible. We can leave our sin at the Cross of Calvary and they will never be held against us.

“There is know no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus.”

Romans 8:1.

