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MORTIFIED MOMENTS

The infamous “perp walk”, most likely we have all seen it played out on the nightly news. Someone is taken into custody and is seeking to hide their face in any way possible from the glaring lights of cameras. Hoping against hope to hide their identity, as the embarrassment factor of their actions and consequences are now brought to the fore front. While maybe not to the degree as someone on the news doing the “perp walk”, we at times have had a moment or two when we have been mortified, longing for a way to conceal self in order to slip away.



“Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.” (1Corinthians 10:12) Couple this thought with what is seen in 1John chapter one, verses eight through ten. *“If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.”* Remember John is writing to those who have put on Christ in baptism, hence children of God. Now embrace what is being set forth. Even in those

moments when we are mortified by our failure, we can cry out for mercy and forgiveness. *“We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”* (1John 2:1)

The author of Hebrews writes, *“For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of needs.”* (4:15-16) Factor in as well that He serves as our Mediator. *“For there is one God, and mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”* (1Timothy 2:5 see also Hebrews 8:5, 9:15)

Can you imagine how mortified Paul was when he came to realize that he had been so wrong, about Jesus? His zeal fueled his being a violent aggressor against the cause of Christ. Take some time to read over what Paul wrote in his first letter to Timothy, Especially in the first chapter and verses twelve through sixteen. Pay attention to the use of the words, mercy and grace. *“He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.”* (Titus 3:5) Amazing grace and mercy. (wbe)

With that thought in mind, imagine how the woman who was brought by scribes and Pharisees before Jesus upon having her immorality exposed in a most public fashion. There was a crowd gathered, and the following was said to Jesus, *“Teacher, this woman has been caught in adultery, in the very act. Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women; what then do you say?”* (John 8:4-5) The Pharisees and scribes used this woman as a tool in order to trap Jesus. They really didn’t care about her sensitivities or even her life.

Notice as the account unfolds, Jesus doesn’t answer their specific question. They pressed Him harder for an answer, to which He stated, *“He who is without sin among you, let him throw the first stone at her.”* (John 8:7) Beginning with the older ones in the crowd, they began to leave. Ultimately the woman was left alone with Jesus, when He said to her, *“Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?”* (John 8:10) Take note of what is seen in verse eleven. *“And she said, ‘No one, Lord’. And Jesus said, ‘Neither do I condemn you; go your way. From now on sin no more.’”* The ultimate of compassion, grace and mercy is clearly in evidence.

THE BULWARK