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August 13, 2023

Scripture: John 8: 1-11

Sermon Title: Grace and Love

Prayer...

Introduction:

- Enjoyed a few days with family at Cannon Beach...
- Love my girls. They are my world.
- Cannon Beach has meaning. Honeymoon, pregnancy, photos on water.
- Drive back on Wednesday talked about sermon with Karen. (Bad Story)
- Bad Story but Jesus as usual is impressive.

Reflection on Story:

- Why is this a bad story?
- Example of exploitation and oppression of women.
- They are going to stone her.
- They bring woman to Jesus to challenge his leadership. They use her.
- Where is the man? Nowhere to be found.

- Thankfully Jesus does a wise thing. He defends the woman and skillfully turns the tables on the oppressor using his wisdom. He bends down and writes on the ground and then convicts the accusers by asking whoever is without sin, throw the first stone. The oldest drop their stones first. Then he asks the women, has no one condemned you. She says no one. Jesus says then neither do I condemn you. He frees her from abusive men.
- In our world today, women and children continue to be exploited.
- Human Trafficking and the Porn Industry are examples.
- Statistics from White House, U.S.- Globally, an estimated 25 million people are subjected to human trafficking and forced labor, which is responsible for an estimated \$150 billion annually in illicit profits.

United Nations Report: According to the Report, the most common form of human trafficking (79%) is sexual exploitation. The victims of sexual exploitation are predominantly women and girls. Surprisingly, in 30% of the countries which provided information on the gender of traffickers, women make up the largest proportion of traffickers. In some parts of the world, women trafficking women is the norm.

The second most common form of human trafficking is forced labour (18%), although this may be a misrepresentation because forced labour is less frequently detected and reported than trafficking for sexual exploitation.

What can we do about it?

- Watch Sound of Freedom? I saw it on Friday. It tells the story of Tim Ballard,
- Sound of Freedom is a 2023 American action film directed and co-written by Alejandro Monteverde, and starring Jim Caviezel, Mira Sorvino and Bill Camp. Caviezel plays Tim Ballard, a former U.S. government agent who embarks on a mission to rescue children from sex traffickers in Colombia. It starts out with a young boy and girl being trafficked in Tegucigalpa Honduras, which is personal to me because I spent one month volunteering at Hogar de Amor y Esperanza (Home of love and Hope) when I was 21 years old.
- Shared Hope. Org is a local organization that raises awareness about sex trafficking. (Short Video)

Returning to the story of grace and love for the woman brought before Jesus.

- Jesus offers grace and love to the men and the woman.
- Jesus offers the grace and love of conviction to the men.
- Jesus offers grace to the woman. The victim often feels shame for what has happened and sometime victims become oppressors of others. Maybe this woman did need the reminder to go and sin no more, but I bet Jesus' voice was one of compassion and grace.

Conclusion:

We all are on a journey of receiving grace and love. Most of us in this room have a story of an unwanted sexual experience that created a wound in our lives. We probably also have sinned in some form in the area of sexual wholeness.

Jesus offers the word grace and love. The grace and love to convict the oppressor of sin and grace to heal the wounded.

The song Amazing Grace reminds us modern and historic slavery because it was written by John Newton, who once was a human trafficker of the slave trade. He later turned his life around and worked alongside William Wilberforce and John Wesley to end the slave trade

done by England. As we sing this song, may we remember to follow Jesus in protecting those who are victims and survivors of sexual exploitation. May we part of the answer through the grace, hope, and love of Christ.

Let me pray for us...

## John 8:1-11

8 1 while Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. 2 Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him, and he sat down and began to teach them. 3 The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and, making her stand before all of them, 4 they said to him, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. 5 Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?” 6 They said this to test him, so that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. 7 When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, “Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” 8 And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. 9 When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. 10 Jesus straightened up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” 11 She said, “No one, sir.”[a] And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.”][b]