**Cranach – Christ and the Adulteress**

**This links to the story from John 8**

*“2Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him and he sat down and began to teach them. 3The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery; and making her stand before all of them, 4they said to him, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. 5Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?” 6They 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. 7When 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.” 8And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. 9When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders; and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. 10Jesus straightened up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” 11She said, “No one, sir.” And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.”*

* No saints in the picture only Jewish high people (?)
* Only Jesus is able to judge – based on he is without sin can cast the first stone
* Sola Scriptura
* Not as ornate - i.e. Jesus doesn’t even have a halo
* Jesus has a humble face
* Directing attention to the adulteress who is shamed – he is showing that he can forgive this woman
* Uses subtle theme – Jewish reformation of ideas to Christianity. Typology to show reformation from Roman Catholic to Protestant theology
* Jesus is in the middle – main person rather than a hierarchy so rejecting the position of the papacy
* All people are equal to each other and therefore equal to the adulteress – no hierarchy
* No intercession involved – looking and dealing directly with Jesus rather than the saints
* Jesus is caring in stark contrast to the soldiers in the picture
* The ‘lady’ feels happy (what!?)
* You feel sorry for the lady but are conscious of the theology which is saying in contrast that we are in no position to judge this woman
* She is an adulteress because of the exposure of her top
* No symbolism involved – directly accessing the theology rather than being distracted
* Threat of violence is imminent – man holding rock
* Group fully prepared to judge the woman in contrast to what Jesus says
* Reflects Jesus’ power and authority – commanding attention and is the key source for morality
* Ironic body language – Jesus invites all to throw stones but in fact none are able to as only God is able to judge
* The reference is solely pointed to the biblical text – 2 ways:
  + The text is written specifically out – it shows the speech of Jesus but also the primacy (importance) of the Word above and beyond the actions/tradition
  + The image is new to panel painting – the image comes out of a focus on the text to provide a focus on the concept of Judgement and justification
* The image focuses on words and faith rather than actions.
  + Justification by faith rather than justification by deeds.
* The image is of contemporary people (shown through their dress specifically their armour) still judging the adulteress despite the fact Jesus instructed people not to judge her when he was still alive (I.e. over 1500 years ago!) A commentary on whether people have actually learnt anything under the previous Catholic tradition or whether they need to re-learn their biblical accounts, as taught under the Reformation/Protestant tradition
* Shows the John 8 clash between Jesus and the Pharisees as the clash between Jesus and the Roman Catholics.
* **Who do we identify with in the picture?** 
  + If we identify with the stone thrower/crowd we can relate with those emotions with the desire to judge others but not be judged ourselves. If we relate with them we assume that we are ourselves without sin. However, Jesus’ words highlight, as do the actions of the crowd in the Johannine account, remind us that despite our self-evaluation, we are all sinners in some form or another.
  + If we identify with the adulteress we are aware of our sins and SO IS JESUS but he does not condemn rather he forgives. We relate to the feeling of UNDERSRVED FORGIVENESS. So we try in broken way to live our lives free from sin. We acknowledge we may not achieve this but we know that we will be forgiven if we TRUST IN JESUS. Some might call this Justification by faith.
* **What do we learn about Cranach?**
* Cranach is a protestant. This is shown through the range of images that he creates, his personal relationship (WHAT?!) with Martin Luther. They were friends nothing else. They spoke about theology. Not that stuff. Also he creates a series of images which link to show his theology I.e Christ blessing ze little children. Ja.

<http://www.colnaghi.co.uk/media/colnaghiPmedia/Cranach_Catalogue.pdf>

<http://static.royalacademy.org.uk/files/cranach-education-guide-248.pdf>