

Everybody Must Get Stoned

John 7:58-8:11

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Video and audio versions available online:

<https://relentless-love.org/sermons/everybody-must-get-stoned-2/>

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Message

For the past two weeks, I've been absent from the pulpit, working on a journal article, and taking some time with my family. But I'm hoping that you remember that we've been preaching through the Gospel of John, and our last two sermons were from John chapter 7 which is all about Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles.

The Feast of Tabernacles concluded the Jewish feasts and was a picture of the conclusion of all time, when all nations would join in the worship Yahweh. On the last day of the feast, worshippers would dismantle their individual tabernacles and commune as one great living temple, just as the ancient Jews left their booths in the wilderness and then worshipped in the Promised Land in Jerusalem on the Holy Mountain. The Feast of Tabernacles was to be the greatest party that any person could imagine. Every great party has weird people that would NOT normally hang out together hanging out together and for some reason enjoying one another.

Jesus is the judgment of God that destroys our individual tabernacles and makes us into a living temple united by his life which flows from a fountain, opened at his cross, and through all things, filling all things with himself. John records Jesus revealing this in the temple in John 7 and 8, BUT at the start of chapter 8 there is a fascinating little story. It's not included in our most ancient manuscripts of John, and yet the story appears to have been well known in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th centuries.¹ So, it's possible that John added it to later editions of his gospel or, perhaps, one of his close followers. The story actually appears in different places in different manuscripts, but it appears most often in this place as John 7:53-8:11.

It seems likely to me, that someone thought, "That's a lot of text and it needs a story; that's a lot of theology but what does it mean and how does it look?" And then that someone remembered this story, remembered that it happened at the Feast, and then inserted it here in the Gospel. And I think they were very aware of the context for the insertion begins with this sentence:

John 7:53-8:1, “They went each to his own house, but Jesus went to the mount of Olives.” Last time we discussed what an ominous statement this is, for Tabernacles was all about becoming a common house, a living temple. And on The Mt. of Olives Jesus prophesies the destruction of the old stone temple and the end of the age, which is the opening of the fountain, and the construction of the living temple that is his Body and his Bride.

John 7:53-8:7:

They went each to his own house,¹ but 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 taught them.³ The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery and placing her in the midstⁱⁱ ⁴they said to him, “Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery.⁵ Now in the Law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?”⁶ 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.⁷ 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.”

Video clip: *Robot Chicken*, Season 2. Episode 1: *Suck It*
Warner Bros. Television (2006)

Scene opens on a man tied to a post surrounded by men with stones in their hands (about to stone him). Jesus [Seth Green] walks into the scene, one hand behind his back.

Jesus Let he who is without sin cast the first stone.

Jesus hits the guy tied to the pole in the head with a stone he was holding in his hand.

Jesus Blamo!

“Let he who is without sin cast the first stone.” Then, “Blamo” Jesus throws the first stone.ⁱⁱⁱ Death by stoning was utterly brutal [Peter picks up a stone]. The crowd would take a person outside the city and hurl stones at that person until they died—it was not only pain, torture, and death, but utter rejection. Only crucifixion was worse than stoning. [Peter sets the stone on the communion table] And yet we all want Jesus to hurl some stones, even if they’re itty-bitty stones; we want him to blame somebody and condemn somebody.

Adultery is an incredibly serious sin in Scripture. I don’t know of any physical act more damaging to a society than adultery—when people can’t be trusted to keep the most sacred of covenants, trust erodes and communities fall apart. But who should be blamed? Some folks might blame the woman, for it appears that she made the choice, she’s responsible—these people often call themselves “conservatives.” Some folks might blame the social factors that would drive a young woman to do such a things—That’s our choice; it takes a village don’t you know? And where’s the man? According to Scripture he also must die.

So, what do we do when we can’t agree on who to blame? Many sociologists argue that we find “scapegoats.” The term “scapegoat” is a reference to the Day of Atonement in Leviticus 16 when the high priest would confess the sins of Israel over a goat that was then released

into the wilderness. Sociologists, like Renee Girard, argue that this is how the social structures, Governments, Businesses, and even Religions of this world are formed. To unify a group, a leader identifies a scapegoat, blames the Scapegoat for all the evils experienced in the group, and so by accusing the scapegoat of evil, the group is convinced that they have made themselves good. You all become intimately acquainted with this process in every election cycle. Each party turns the other party into a scapegoat.

In our society, we elect a legislature and an executive who appoints a judiciary, that all designate scapegoats. But it didn't work that way in the Bible. God was the legislature, chief executioner, and judge. He told the Israelites whom to stone and so this was a trap set for Jesus. Would Jesus do what God commanded through Moses? And would he do it in violation of Roman law? The Romans had forbidden the Jews from performing executions.^{iv} Yet stoning is prescribed by God several times in the Law of Moses:

- In Exodus 19: If anyone touched “the Consecrated Mountain, the Holy Mountain,” they were to be stoned. (But weirdly in John 8 they're all standing on “the Holy Mountain”)
- In Deuteronomy 21: If a son is “stubborn and rebellious,” he's to be stoned. (But over and over, we'll read in The Prophets that all of Israel is stubborn and rebellious.^v)
- In Deuteronomy 22: If a man marries a young woman and fails to find the evidence of her virginity, and no one can produce it, the people of the city are to stone that young woman to death. That's horrifying...horrifying for the young woman...but maybe all of Jerusalem.

The prophets reveal that the Lord is betrothed to Jerusalem^{vi} who has been an unfaithful bride, which would mean that everyone in Jerusalem deserves to be stoned... except Jesus, the Bridegroom. And that raises another question: “Who should cast the first stone?” Deuteronomy 17 stipulates that it must be one of the witnesses. And the Talmud taught that it must be a reputable witness. And Jesus said, “let it be the one without sin.” And so, some argue that Jesus didn't break the law; brilliantly he pointed out that there were no reputable witnesses. And yet he was standing on the Holy Mountain, with the rebellious sons of Isreal, witnessing the betrayal of Jerusalem, his bride. And he is a reputable witness! Dare to believe Scripture just a wee bit, and it seems to be very clear that all of us, except Jesus, should be stoned.

So, how many of you would like to get stoned? Be honest. Raise your hands. This is Colorado. See? That's a funny thing about that phrase “getting stoned.” In our society it means two very different things that, upon reflection, might, in some way, be the very same thing. In the Old Testament there's a similar phrase “drinking the cup of staggering.” In Ezekiel 23, God tells Jerusalem that she will drink Samaria's cup and be filled with drunkenness and sorrow. In Zechariah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Psalms we read about God making Jerusalem drink the cup of staggering. It's a punishment—you will lose dignity, control, and self-respect. It's a punishment and yet weirdly one of our deepest longings.

In Ephesians, Paul writes “Don't be drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit...”^{vii} When people get stoned with drugs and alcohol, they lose themselves for a few hours and then find themselves enslaved and even more lonely. But Paul talks as

if we can lose ourselves in the Spirit and find ourselves in the Body of Christ, all drinking from the same fountain.

So, this is quite a scene: It happens at the Feast of Tabernacles, which is to be a picture of people losing themselves and finding themselves in the Body of Christ, as the bride of Christ, his living temple. It's then and there that these Pharisees throw this poor woman at the feet of Jesus demanding that she be stoned, when they all deserved to be stoned. And maybe, if they got stoned—truly died to themselves—they'd be able to join the Great Banquet, the endless party.

John 8:7-8:

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.”⁸ And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground.

We don't know what he wrote.

- Maybe it was Jeremiah 17:13, “Those who turn away from you shall be written in the earth for they have forsaken the fountain of living water...” he had just told them that he was the fountain of living water.
- Or maybe it was Isaiah 1:21 “How the faithful city has become a whore”
- Or maybe Genesis 2:7 “Then the Lord God formed humanity of dust... and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life”

John 8:9-11:

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.¹⁰ Jesus stood up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?”¹¹ She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.”

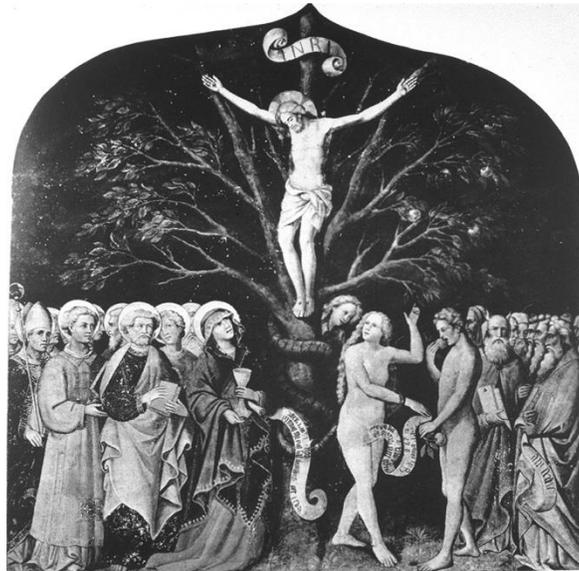
A week ago, last Thursday, I received a message from a friend who's a part of our church and watches messages with his wife online in Tennessee. It was truly encouraging, and yet he was troubled over something; he wrote, “With everything that just happened to Charlie Kirk and the weight of what's going on in our nation, I was honestly surprised that there wasn't a mention of him in the service...”

I thought, Well I haven't mentioned a lot of political violence in our services, including the assault on the capital. I reminded him that I didn't preach that week, I didn't know who Charlie Kirk was before that week, and I did pray that we could talk to each other without shooting each other—that is without stoning each other. But then I thought, you know, I am afraid to talk about this. We lost a lot of people years ago because I wouldn't tell people to vote against Donald Trump, and then an equal number of people who left because I wouldn't tell people to vote for Donald Trump. If I criticize Donald Trump, I'm not telling you to vote for Joe Biden. And if I criticize Joe Biden, I'm not telling you to vote for Donald Trump. I'm begging you to not confuse either one of them with Jesus.

But there does seem to be an unusual religious fervor around Donald Trump, and last week I soon learned that Charlie was a part of that fervor. And yet I also learned that Charlie was talking to people—people that opposed him and even talking openly about Jesus. He was talking to Van Jones at MSNBC, Bill Maher on his show on HBO, and even Gavin Newsome on his podcast, talking about Jesus as well as Trump. And so, I've been asking the question, "Why aren't we all talking to each other in America anymore, why is everyone so lonely, and why is everyone so intent on throwing stones, even in church, maybe especially in church, where it's supposed to be like The Feast of Tabernacles every weekend." I have a few ideas. What I say will be grossly inadequate but hopefully start some conversations.

Why we refuse to talk, but throw stones, and find ourselves all alone:

1. We've chosen knowledge without relationships. We've chosen knowledge rather than life. We've chosen knowledge about things over knowing and being known by people which, ironically, makes us all profoundly stupid.

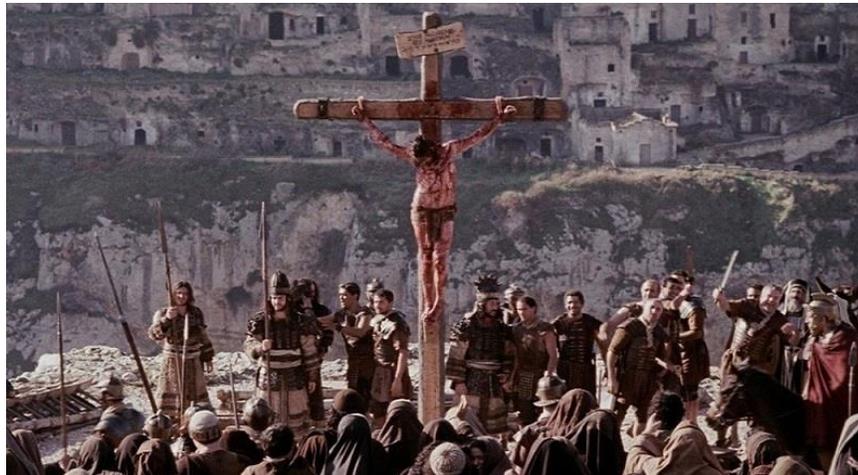


It's actually an ancient decision but most recently manifest in our cell phones. Have you ever sat in a room full of people, like your family, looked up from your cell phone and realized everyone's looking at their cell phones? And we're addicted to click bate and sound bites and so find ourselves dreadfully impatient with long conversations and complex ideas. We're each trapped by algorithms and imprisoned in silos:

- Click on something criticizing the President and you'll soon find a million reasons to hate the president.
- Click on something supporting the President and you'll be overwhelmed with good news about the president and think you know the president.

The truth is that we, humanity, have never ever known as many facts and, perhaps, never ever been so unaware of what anything means. And that's because Love, Beauty, Wisdom, Truth, Reason, Goodness and Life are not facts, but more than facts—they are actually a person.

In the Screwtape letters by CS Lewis, the senior devil advises the junior devil, saying, “Be sure that the patient remains completely fixated on politics. Arguments, political gossip, and obsessing on the faults of people they have never met serves as an excellent distraction from personal virtue...” Cell phones, social media, algorithms, are each a great way for the devil to do just that—the medium can kill the message. But we don't need to panic; we've had this problem before. People were immensely stressed over the printing press. And think how it must've been with the invention of writing. Up until that point, every word you heard was associated with a face that you saw, on a living person that spoke to you. Scholars argue that the alphabet was invented around the time of Moses in the Levant—that's Egypt and Israel. So, it's interesting that in Genesis, the Word of God shows up as a man, until the word of God is written in Stone—and now we call that the Law. The Law is knowledge about the Good and Love is being known by the Good. But, Good News, the Word that is the Man does show up again.



Gibson, Mel (Director). (2004). The Passion of the Christ [Motion picture]. USA: Icon Productions.

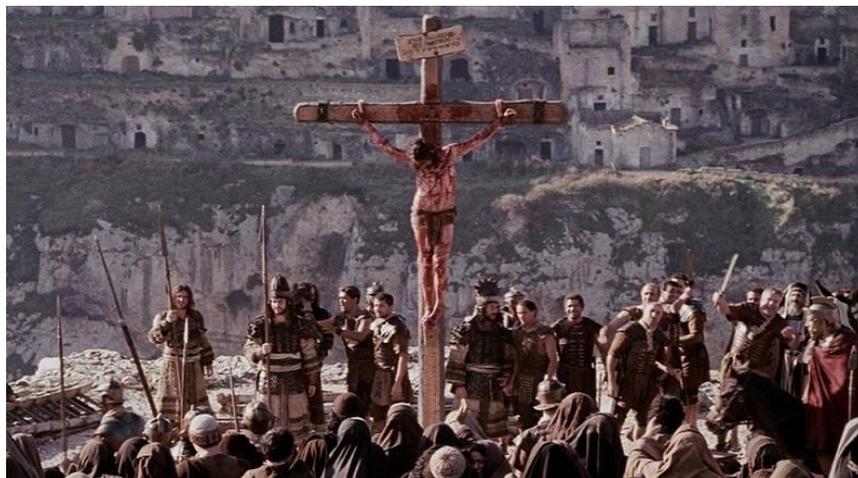
On a tree in a garden the Pharisees took knowledge of the Good and refused to be known by the Good, who is the Life; he is he living Word: Jesus.

2. We've surrendered to fear and renounced faith.

Faith means trust in another person, but if we stone persons, we have to trust our own knowledge of things. And so of course we're afraid, for it means that we must save ourselves. The Gospel is that we're not saved by what we know, we're saved by the one who knows us and rises within us as Faith Hope and Love. And that means that you and your neighbor can be wrong about stuff and therefore have a conversation without fear. It means that you can talk about things without judging persons, and we do need to talk about things in order to best love persons.

- We need to talk about our border policy to best love Americans and Mexicans—we're hurting both by refusing to talk
- We need to talk about abortion laws. My computer tells me that abortions have gone up since Roe was overturned, and yet I don't want to encourage abortions. We should be talking about that, and no one is.
- We need to talk about weapons. No one wants everyone to have access to nuclear bombs, and no one wants to take guns from Eskimos who like to go for walks in Polar Bear Country.
- We need to talk about Israel and Gaza and a world of unbiblical theology. And Christians should be leading that discussion, but we haven't read our Bibles and so we're afraid to lose our lives that we might find them.
- We need to talk about Jesus. Better yet, testify to Jesus.

There seems to be a deep insecurity in modern western Christians. I think it began with the Enlightenment when some people argued that the only things that were true were scientific facts that fit in your brain, apparently unaware that truth itself cannot be one of those facts. The insecurity grew worse after the Scopes Monkey trial, when some Christians thought they needed to respond to Darwinism with anti-intellectualism—then founded schools to teach anti-intellectualism. Teaching which morphed into an “evangelicalism” which produced millions of baby Christians converted by fear and thinking that faith was agreeing to a little set of intellectual propositions in the back of a pamphlet. In the 1970's we really got into proving the existence of God, when it's obvious God doesn't want to be proven he wants to be loved. Then, in the 1980's we started talking about the culture war and allied ourselves with political powers to win this war, which is exactly the culture with which we are to be at war. So, I think we all need to be more like Charlie Kirk—ready to talk about our faith with anyone. And maybe even better than Charlie Kirk, for we don't need to rely on politicians and arguments to do so...^{viii}



Gibson, Mel (Director). (2004). *The Passion of the Christ* [Motion picture]. USA: Icon Productions.

You don't need to prove Jesus; but when you live like Jesus lived, you will be all the proof that this world needs. He doesn't want people to sign on a dotted line; He wants a bride who falls in love with him for she sees him as he is—the Good and the Life of Love.

3. We've desired self-righteousness over righteousness, for we think self-righteousness is the only righteousness that there is.

Recently I've seen a lot of pictures of Donald Trump wearing this hat, handing out this hat, and I wonder if he believes his own hat. It says, "Trump Was Right About Everything."^{ix} Maybe he's trolling, just hoping for a response. And, in a way, that could be kind of refreshing; I think we're all tired of politicians who pretend to be humble while virtue signaling that they've been right about everything all along. Maybe he's trolling, or maybe it's just a joke, because he knows that it's obviously not true—he knows that he's often been quite wrong. I pray to God that he's not serious about his hat and so doesn't believe his own hat. And I pray that you don't believe it either. If he's really saying that he's been right about everything, it means that he's been wrong about nothing, which means he's never confessed a sin, and he has no knowledge of Grace.

1 John 1:8, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. . . . If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just (righteous) to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all un-righteousness." He cleanses us from unrighteousness because he literally is our righteousness.^x

- If you don't believe that Jesus is your righteousness, you'll desperately try to make yourself righteous, which will fill you with fear, for your relying on your own knowledge and now find yourself utterly alone.
- If you don't believe that Jesus is your righteousness, you'll compete for righteousness which is the very definition of wrongness—you'll try to beat your neighbor rather than love your neighbor—you'll start throwing stones.
- If you don't believe that Jesus is your righteousness, you'll look for scapegoats, be intimidated by diversity, hate equity, and abhor inclusion.

If you try to impose diversity, equity and inclusion from the outside, like the principalities and powers of this world, you'll just create uniformity, inequity, and exclusion, just like The Soviet Union or Nazi Germany. But when righteousness wells up from within you, you'll delight in diversity, equity and inclusion for that's the very definition of Life in a Body. My hand is different than my foot, yet equally valuable to me, and both are included in my body, for both are filled with my blood which flows from the fountain according to the logic in my brain. I cannot become more of who I am by hating parts of my own body... but only by forgiving every member of my body, and that's the righteousness of Christ and Judgment of God our father.



Gibson, Mel (Director). (2004). *The Passion of the Christ* [Motion picture]. USA: Icon Productions.

I hope you get the picture: Self-righteousness crucifies Righteousness. And yet, even as we take his life, he gives his life; that's the fountain. And that's also our secret weapon. A believer can bleed fire.

4. We've chosen taking without giving, vengeance that's not grace, and the Judgment that refuses to forgive.

And forgiveness is the fountain of righteousness, faithfulness, and knowledge—knowledge that's not taken but always fore-given. Forgiveness is the judgment of God. Like I said, I really didn't know anything about Charlie Kirk three weeks ago, and I suspect that we might disagree on some things, but it seems to me that when a troubled young man took Charlie's life, Charlie had already given his life, he had fore-given his life. And if so, that's not just Charlie. I watched his memorial service last week and heard his wife testify to NOT just Charlie, but Jesus.

Video clip: Charlie Kirk. (2025, September 21). *Building a Legacy, Remembering Charlie Kirk* YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zKX2rIn_q8o

Erica Kirk speaks at her husband's memorial, after his recent assassination.

Erica My husband Charlie, he wanted to save young men, just like the one who took his life. That young man. That young man. On the cross our savior said, "Father forgive them for they not know (sic) what they do. That man, that young man, I forgive him (through fighting back tears). I forgive him because it was what Christ did and is what Charlie would do. The answer to hate is not hate. The answer we know from the gospel is love and always love. Love for our enemies and love for those who persecute us.

Twenty minutes later the President spoke and said this.

Video clip: Charlie Kirk. (2025, September 21). *Building a Legacy, Remembering Charlie Kirk* YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zKX2rIn_q8o

United States President Donald Trump speaks at Charlie Kirk's memorial, after his recent assassination.

POTUS He (Charlie) did not hate his opponents. He wanted the best for them. That's where I disagreed with Charlie. I hate my opponent and I don't want the best for them, I'm sorry. I am sorry Erika. But now Erika can talk to me and the whole group and maybe they can convince me that that's not right. But I can't stand my opponent...As you know the depraved assassin who planned and executed Charlie's killing has been arrested and charged with capital murder. God willing, he will receive the full and ultimate punishment for his horrific crime. It's a terrible thing. Because you can't let that happen.

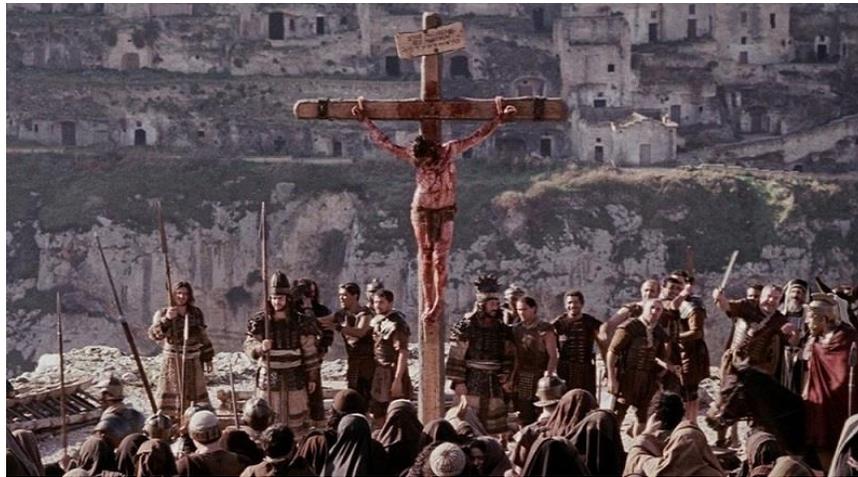
Did you notice a difference? It's like there are two kingdoms. Let's pray that Christ in Erika would change Trump, and the lie in Trump would not change Erika. And in case you think that the problem is only Trump, let me also remind you of this guy.

Video clip: C-SPAN. (2021, August 26). *We Will Not Forgive. We Will Not Forget.* YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CkgAZuUeAus>

United States President Joe Biden speaks from the Rose Garden, responding to a recent terrorist attack at Hamid Karzai International Airport in Afghanistan.

POTUS For those who carried out this attack, as well as anyone who wishes America harm know this, we will not forgive. We will not forget. We will hunt you down and make you pay.

The Two kingdoms are NOT Republican and Democrat. The Two kingdoms are the Kingdom of God and the Kingdoms of this World. If you're a believer, you no longer belong to the United States of America or any other kingdom of this world. St. Peter refers to you as an immigrant—1 Peter 2:11, sojourners and exiles. I am laying in Zion a stone, a stone of stumbling a rock of offense, but you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.



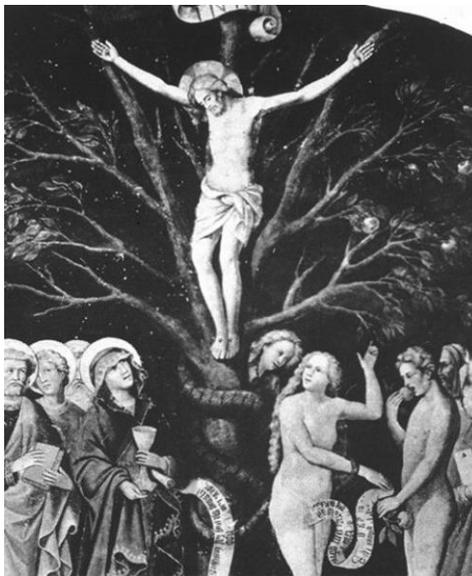
Gibson, Mel (Director). (2004). The Passion of the Christ [Motion picture]. USA: Icon Productions.

And St. Paul tells us that the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh (they're not vengeance, self-righteousness, fear, and information). Our weapons have power to destroy strongholds, undo the work of the Devil, and separate soul from spirit. Our weapon is the

fluid that flows from the fountain; it is the Life of the Truth, who is a Person incarnate in our flesh and oozing from our wounds when we forgive; we bleed fire, which is the judgment of God.

5. Why we're not talking to each other, throwing stones and feel so all alone.

We stone people and refuse to get stoned. I mean by that that, we think we're saved by scapegoating when in fact we're saved by the scapegoat. So, take just a moment: think of someone that you tend to scapegoat. It could be Donald Trump, Joe Biden, me (I'm often wrong so it makes sense), your mom, your dad, or your abuser or a group of people like the gays, or straight white males, the Mexicans or the Americans. Think of that person, or those people, that you blame, and now listen to the judgment of God spoken from the throne on that Day. He says, "Whatever you did to the least of these, my brothers, you did to me...and I let you...I have numbered myself with the transgressors."^{xi} That will make you drop your stone, and maybe that is the stone. Or take the blame train: Blame the Palestinians, who will blame the Jews, who will blame the Germans, who will blame the allies at the end of World War One, who will each blame someone else until we all find ourselves in a garden standing before a tree.



You can blame the One on the tree. He is the Wisdom of God, and it's God that subjected America to futility and consigned Donald & Joe to disobedience. You can blame him, but he doesn't blame you, as if you could've done differently, for you didn't know any differently.



Take his life and you'll see that he's given his life to you. He bears your sin, because he bears it within you, and so he brings you in from the wilderness, that you would die with him and rise with him as a living sacrifice called Love.



Take his life and he'll reveal that he's already given his life to you. Crucify him and he'll cry "Father forgive them they know not what they do." And that will make you drop your stone or maybe that is the stone.

- We think we win by making others lose.
- We think we're first by making others last.
- We think we're saved by throwing stones... and then Jesus says,

"Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone.

John 8:9-11:

But [and] when they heard it, (it often takes some time and some pain to hear) they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. ¹⁰ Jesus stood up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” ¹¹ She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.”

Next week we'll talk about “sin no more.” But before we end, I need to ask about “neither do I condemn you.” What I mean is, we need to ask, Did Jesus fulfill the law or not? If that woman was a betrothed virgin who committed adultery and Jesus knew it, didn't the law require a stoning? And if all those men were rebellious sons and Jesus witnessed it, wasn't he required to fulfill the law and throw the first stone? And if Jerusalem was betrothed to Yahweh, but actually unfaithful to Yahweh, and Jesus witnessed it, didn't he need to stone Jerusalem, didn't he need to make her drink “the cup of staggering?”

In Babylon, hundreds of years before Christ, King Nebuchadnezzar, the baddest king of the hottest nation in the world at the time had a dream and Daniel, the young Jewish prophet, interprets it for him. He tells the King that he saw an image, and it clearly represents Babylon and three more Empires to come—Persia, Greece and Rome. Then Daniel says to the King, “³⁴ As you looked, a stone was cut out by no human hand, and it struck the image on its feet of iron and clay and broke them in pieces. ³⁵ Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, all together were broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.”

Zechariah also saw the stone, but with “seven eyes like the eyes of the lamb.” Isaiah saw the stone, writing “the Lord of hosts... will become a stone of offense, and a rock of stumbling, a precious cornerstone.” Paul, Peter and Jesus all quote Isaiah about the stone and Jesus adds “the one who falls on the stone will be broken to pieces and when it falls on anyone they will be crushed.” Daniel continues in chapter 7 “to him, the son of man (the stone) was given dominion and glory and a kingdom that all peoples languages and nations should serve him.” John saw this in the Revelation, God destroys the harlot, and suddenly in her place on the Holy Mountain we meet the Bride who is His Body who is that old stone temple destroyed and rebuilt in three days—the Body of Christ.

Do you understand? The stone hit the earth as Jesus cried “Father forgive them they know not what they do.” God is Grace, and Grace is the stone, and Grace chooses to get stoned with us, and rise from the dead in us—his body and bride. God is the stoner; Jesus is the stone; and we must all get stoned... and become a temple of living stones. We must all die with him and rise with him; we must all lose our lives and find them in him.

- This is how God destroys the monster and makes the man.
- This is how Jesus cleanses the harlot and makes her his bride.
- This is how the Spirit turns rock hard hearts into living stones.

And when you see it, you'll drop your stone, you'll begin to worship, and you'll find yourself surrounded by a living body, you'll be home, even here and even now on October 28th in Denver Colorado in the US of A. I don't know about you, but when I think that someone like Tyler Roberts or Osama Ben Laden deserves to be stoned—I get a little rush, I feel a little self-righteous, and then I get nervous, and I feel very much alone. But when I remember that everyone deserves to be, needs to be, will be stoned. When I remember that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God and all will be justified by his grace as a gift. When I remember that everyone, but Christ, deserves to be stoned and Christ chooses to be stoned with each one of us. Well, I drop my stone, I genuinely feel like talking to my neighbors, I actually don't want to sin, and I no longer feel so all alone. It's not good for the Adam to be alone, said God in a garden on the holy Mountain.

This was written by a Jewish boy that read his Bible and met his Messiah.
[Bob Dylan's song, *Everybody Must Get Stoned* karaoke video plays for a sing-a-long]

Communion

And so, on the night that Jesus was betrayed by every last one of us, he took bread and broke it saying, "This is my body given to you." And he took the cup saying, "This is the covenant in my blood poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Drink of it all of you and do it in remembrance of me."

This is the cup of staggering, and this is the fountain. Song of Solomon "Eat oh friends, drink and be drunk with Love!" Love is strong as death. It's jealousy fierce as hell. Its flashes are flashes of fire. The very flame of the Lord."

Benediction

Now, I did NOT tell you who to vote for, did I? And I did NOT tell you that one candidate is just the same as the next, and so it doesn't matter who you vote for, did I? But I did tell you that we have all picked up a stone and when we see him [Peter turns and drops a stone] we will drop our stones and love the Lord our God our heart mind soul and strength, and we will love our neighbors as ourselves. We will repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Endnotes

ⁱ It's interesting that Papias, who knew John personally, speaks of a woman forgiven by Jesus that appears to have possibly been this woman.

ⁱⁱ *Mesos*: middle—The woman and Jesus are in the middle in the temple which was supposedly the sight of the garden of Eden. The woman, Jesus, and the tree are in the middle of the garden on the Holy Mountain where man (humanity) is made in the image of God.

ⁱⁱⁱ I think the folks at Comedy Central made the sinner a guy tied to a post, for not even they could stomach the idea of Jesus hurling a stone at a defenseless woman lying in the dust in the middle of all those men.

^{iv} These Pharisees and Scribes felt disempowered and insecure.

^v Jeremiah 4:17 “[*My people*] are stubbornly rebellious.” Ezekiel claims that Jerusalem is worse than Sodom, Ezekiel 5:6, 16:48. Lamentations 3:42-45, “We have transgressed and rebelled; You have not pardoned. You have covered *Yourself* with anger And pursued us; You have slain *and* not pitied. You have covered Yourself with a cloud, That prayer should not pass through. You have made us an offscouring and refuse In the midst of the peoples.

^{vi} Ezekiel 3,16, 23; Isaiah 50:1,54; The Revelation

^{vii} Ephesians 5:18

The neighborhood bar is possibly the best counterfeit there is to the fellowship Christ wants to give His church. It's an imitation, dispensing liquor instead of grace, escape rather than reality, but it is a permissive, accepting, and inclusive fellowship. It is unshockable. It is democratic. You can tell people secrets and they usually don't tell others or even want to. The bar flourishes not because most people are alcoholics, but because God has put into the human heart the desire to know and be known, to love and be loved, and so many seek a counterfeit at the price of a few beers.

With all my heart I believe that Christ wants His church to be . . . a fellowship where people can come in and say, "I'm sunk!" "I'm beat!" "I've had it!"

- *Dropping Your Guard*, Charles R. Swindoll, Chapter 8, Pg 128.

^{viii} In Scripture, Israel is denounced by prophets over and over for relying on other nations, like Egypt, Syria, and the US, rather than relying on God.

^{ix} To a visitor who described himself as a seeker after truth the master said, "If what you seek is truth, there is one thing you must have above all else." "I know. An overwhelming passion for it." "No. An unremitting readiness to admit you may be wrong."

- Anthony DeMello, Writings selected by William Dych, S.J., *Anthony DeMello* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1999), p. 79

^x Jeremiah 23:6, 33:16; 1 Corinthians 1:30

^{xi} Matthew 25:31-46, Isaiah 53:12, Luke 22:37